



MEDIA RELEASE

Spa (Belgium), 19th May 2023

EHTTA General Assembly, Café of Europe and Europe Day all celebrated in Baden bei Wien!

The European Historic Thermal Towns spring **General Assembly** was held in Baden bei Wien from 9th to 11th May 2023, and 65 representatives from 15 countries participated in the full programme.

The General Assembly officially welcomed new member Baile Herculane from Romania and new Associate Members, the Catalan Thermal Towns Association and Métropole Grand Nancy. They each received the official membership plaque and the diploma of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

EHTTA's **Café of Europe** looked at the topic "Music in Spa Towns" with an impressive opening for the audience with Johannes Leopold Mayer, author and music editor, accompanied by pieces from Mozart, Beethoven, who had both lived and worked in Baden bei Wien. After lectures about modern festivals in spa towns with examples from Spa (Belgium), Bad Kissingen (Germany) and Baden bei Wien (Austria) the audience was invited to the Beethoven house to learn and listen to the famous musician's life and works.

The **Bathrobe Addicts** event made a big impression on the public of Baden bei Wien. Created in the Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central, the concept ("*Les Across du Peignoir*" in the original French) has started to travel around Europe. Member towns have picked up the idea, and after Spa it was Ourense in Galicia last year and now Baden bei Wien which have committed themselves to this movement. "We want to bring the attitude, this very special feeling of comfort and wellbeing back to our town" said tourism director Klaus Lorenz.

The next EHTTA General Assembly will be held in Budapest on 30th November – 1st December 2023.

Europe Day - Press Conference in Baden bei Wien

Another event to run alongside EHTTA's General Assembly was a celebration of Europe Day (9th May). Mayor of the host town, Baden bei Wien, Stefan Szirucsek held a press conference for local media together with two vice presidents of the European Historic Thermal Towns Association. As Chairman of the Great Spa Towns of Europe World Heritage Site as well as a member of EHTTA, he welcomed all the delegates, and said how pleased he was that EHTTA was holding its General Assembly in Baden bei Wien around Europe Day, putting the town at the centre of European Thermalism during these three days.

Mayor Stefan Szirucsek said: "Thermal cities were and are places where people from all over the world meet. These cities played a leading role in the development of tourism in Europe, they stand for sustainable cultural development and they focus on the protection of the built-up and natural environment."

Isabelle Grégoire, EHTTA Vice President, said:

"We are a proud network of thermal towns, regions and even villages, which represent a very special European phenomenon – that of thermalism and spa towns. Baden bei Wien, like my own town of Spa in Belgium is an especially good example of this phenomenon – and it is one of the reasons that Baden bei Wien and Spa are among the eleven towns that make up the Great Spa Towns of Europe World Heritage Site, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2021. We are very happy to say that all eleven towns of the Great Spa Towns of Europe, are also part of EHTTA."

She continued, "On this very special day today, on EUROPE DAY, it is not only a great opportunity to take part in this European reunion, it makes me – all of us - even more proud to be able to share it with the people in Baden, in Austria and all over Europe."

During the press conference EHTTA Vice President Markos Danas shared more details about the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme with the media present, pointing out that there are 14 Cultural Routes crossing Austria, among them the very new Historic Cafés Route, the European Route of Jewish Heritage Route, the European Mozart Ways, Transromanica and the Via Habsburg, to name just a few. These examples show the opportunity the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns has to develop closer thematic partnerships in the future – in Austria and all other countries where member towns and regions have "crossing routes".

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See below for further information.

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#ThermalTravels #HistoricThermalTowns #Cultural Routes #MySpaTown

Notes for Editors

1. EHTTA is a membership organisation representing over 50 members in 18 countries.
2. EHTTA was certified as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 2010 and is one of 48 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe which provide a wealth of leisure and educational activities for all citizens across Europe and beyond and are key resources for responsible tourism and sustainable development. The certification "[Cultural Route of the Council of Europe](#)" is a guarantee of excellence.
3. EHTTA was founded in 2009 with six Founding Members: Acqui Terme (Italy), Bath (UK), Ourense (Spain), Salsomaggiore Terme (Italy), Spa (Belgium) and Vichy (France).
4. In September 2022, EHTTA signed the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism.