

**The Europe for Citizens Programme** aims at encouraging EU citizens to play a greater role in the development of the European Union and to bring Europe closer to its citizens. By funding projects in which citizens can participate, the Programme is promoting Europe's shared history and values, and a sense of ownership.

Town Twinning projects aim to bring citizens together from twinned towns to debate issues on the European political agenda and develop opportunities for citizen engagement and volunteering at EU level. (Funding and grants available up to 25000 euros per annum).

The trip really revolved around the participating youngsters from the member states who took part in youth workshops and debates on the current position of the EU. These workshops were well represented by representatives from the EU including consuls, councillors and the Hungarian Ambassador to France.

The festivities took place across three different towns in the Touraine and Berry District, including Loches, Buzancais and Flère-la-Rivière. Dancers and musicians in their national dress gave performances at every venue. The standard of performances was particularly high at these events, notably from Russia, Greece and Germany.

The celebration of the Fête Nationale on Friday 14 July culminated in open air concerts, torchlight processions and fireworks displays in Buzancais and Loches.

The following day guests, volunteers and host families were invited to the European Village in Buzancais where there were further performances of song and dance and handcraft demonstrations. Stalls offering samples of local produce from every participating country had also been set up and proved very popular with everyone.

Overall it was a very joyous weekend in glorious weather and it was wonderful to see so many young people from across Europe forming friendships and enjoying themselves.

( too bad we are no longer really involved at the same level thanks to BREXIT)

Virginia Fowler