

Neues von der Senioren Union

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Visiting Poland and Münsterland

In the last few weeks, the chairman of the Senior Citizens' Union Cottbus, Armin Ehrlichmann, has been traveling a lot. His voluntary tours took him to Poland and Münsterland, here accompanied by Manfred Wuschech. The following excerpts from his reports: A seminar by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation took place from April 13th to 16th, 2011 in Wolsztyn/Poland under the title "Seniors – co-shapers of society in Poland, Germany and Europe". A fitting place, which has moved back and forth between Germany and Poland six times in the last 200 years and which went down in history as Robert Koch's research site.



The program included topics such as "The changing status of seniors, from grandparents on the stove bench to active seniors in the community," which was presented by Dr. Röpke. "The demographic development in Germany and Poland; their significance for the future living conditions of seniors" in pictures and words by Dr. Harald Michel, director of the Institute for Applied Demography in Berlin. Ms. Barbara Richstein, MdL (CDU) spoke about "Senior policy in Brandenburg – expectations and realities" and Dr. Christian Ehler (Member of the European Parliament, CDU) illuminated

the EU's activities in an effort to equalize the living conditions of senior citizens in the member states. The statements by the mayor of Wolsztyn, Mr. Rogozinski, and his deputy about the living conditions of senior citizens in the host city were also very interesting.

The continuation took place in numerous individual discussions, and there was an intensive exchange of opinions, especially with the members of the "University of the Third Life" association from Wolsztyn. On the sidelines of the event there were also contacts with the newly founded company

Senior Citizens' Union of Poland, which is based in Oswiecim (Auschwitz). That's exactly where the SU Cottbus is planning to go together with the Junge Union this fall to deliver stones for the "Hill of Reconciliation" to the local mayor, Marszalek. Armin Ehrlichmann also presented the hosts with a book about Cottbus and the Spreewald and invited them to return. Thanks go to Mr. Eckhard Ruminski from the educational organization of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation for the good preparation of the event and in particular to Mr. Marek Pluto-Pradzynski from Poznan for his translation work. As soon as we got home, we went on to Freckenhorst in North Rhine-Westphalia. Under the heading "Creating Partnership – Strengthening Community", the Catholic Rural Adult Education Center "Schorlemer Alst" invited people in collaboration with the Partnerships Working Group of the Seniors' Union. Four participants came from Cottbus, OSL and LOS. Thematically, the program was as follows: "Partnerships promote community," which was discussed by our state board member Manfred Wuschech, among others. "20 years after unity – is there a new debate about communism?" by qualified economist Johannes K. Rücker. Speaker B. Hante spoke about "Christian values in our society". On Tuesday there was an excursion to Münster, among other things we visited the Peace Hall (Peace of Westphalia) in the town hall. In the evening discussions, topics such as energy policy, the loss of Christian values, differences in membership development in North Rhine-Westphalia and Brandenburg, and PI diagnostics were not left out.

At the end of this seminar, the participants agreed that the CDU Senior Citizens' Union must continue to speak out - and more strongly - in day-to-day politics. Through active partnership connections, common positions can be developed, which would have greater impact. A continuation of these seminars is considered necessary and a broader response would be welcomed. Shorter intervals were considered and there are plans to hold this in Cottbus for the next partnership seminar. A special thank you goes to Heinz Kopot, the coordinator of the SU and Mr. Rücker, the director of the LVHS for the good organization and preparation as well as for the good accommodation and food.

A.-D. Ehrlichmann, Cottbus im April 2011