

**European Citizens` Initiative by the
*European Alliance of Initiatives for Applied Anthroposophy / ELIANT***



“In the reality of the European context,
the right to individual development for every citizen
requires not only freedom of choice
but also the availability of choices. “

from the ELIANT Charter

**Campaign to strengthen cultural diversity in Europe, based on the example of the
ELIANT campaign**

This article is the summary of a presentation held on the 2007 European Citizens` Initiative Summit invited by the Initiative & Referendum Institute Europe (IRI) in Brussels on Monday, April 23, 2007. Not all points are explained in detail. Please feel free to contact the writer for further information or the outcome of this initiative. More information, the Charter of the Alliance and Online Voting under www.eliant.eu

*** Why did you choose to launch a European Citizens' Initiative?**

Introduction

Our daily life is increasingly determined by European laws and guidelines. Anyone who wants to ensure that EU decisions take account of their concerns needs to assert their own interests in Brussels and demonstrate considerable popular support.

Anthroposophic products and services are used by a great many people, and include: cosmetics, medicines, therapies, Waldorf schools, special needs education, biodynamic agriculture, banks, anthroposophic training courses/colleges, book publishers and periodicals and other initiatives or companies.

These initiatives of applied anthroposophy are largely unknown at an official EU level, and no account is taken of them when decisions are made. Thus regulations are passed that make it harder or impossible to offer anthroposophic services and products.

For this reason, European anthroposophic umbrella organisations have amalgamated to form the **European Alliance of Initiatives for Applied Anthroposophy / ELIANT**, to help increase the effectiveness of the lobbying work which individual bodies have for years been pursuing in Brussels. The EU-wide petition project currently in circulation aims to gain added support for this.

The 10 Core members of the ELIANT alliance

AEFMUTA, “Association Européenne des Fabricants de Médicaments Utilisés en Thérapeutique Anthroposophique” (European association of anthroposophic medicines producers) is a manufacturers’ association that was founded in April 1989.

Demeter International e.V. - a worldwide network

Demeter is the only ecological products association that has built up a network of individual certification organisations world-wide. Demeter International was founded in 1997 to promote closer co-operation between legal, economic and cultural spheres. Currently it has 18 member organisations in Europe, America, Africa and New Zealand. Thus Demeter International represents more than 3,500 Demeter producers in around 40 countries.

www.demeter.net

ECCE (“European Co-operation in Anthroposophical Curative Education and Social Therapy”). This association, based on the anthroposophic approach to curative education, was established in Holland in 1992 with the aim of representing people with special needs and promoting their interests at a European level. Since then, parents and professional organisations throughout Europe have joined the association.

www.ecce.eu

The **European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE)** comprises 22 national Waldorf associations, representing 630 schools in Europe. There are around 900 schools in 60 countries worldwide and more than 1600 kindergartens.

Our purpose is to strengthen and develop Steiner education in our member countries by cultivating active interest and mutual sharing of experience.

www.ecswe.org

The **European Federation of Patients’ Associations for Anthroposophic Medicine (EFPAM)** was founded in Dornach (Switzerland) on 3rd of October 2000, and registered under Alsatian law at the Tribunal d’ Instance in Strasbourg (France) on 27 November 2001.

EFPAM is co-signatory to the Joint Resolution and cooperates with other organisations in the field of anthroposophic medicine.

www.efpam.org

The **Foundation for Anthroposophic Medicine (FAM)** was founded in August 2003 with the aim of promoting projects that support the further development of anthroposophic medicine. The foundation's headquarters are in Dornach, Switzerland, and it is entered in the companies' register. Since 3 February 2006 a sister foundation has existed in Germany, based in Lörrach. Like the Swiss foundation, this has tax-exempt, charitable status.

www.fanthromed.eu

gesundheit aktiv. anthroposophische heilkunst e.V. based in Bad Liebenzell-Unterlengenhardt (northern Black Forest), Germany, was founded in 1952 with the aim of promoting future-oriented medicine based on anthroposophy.

www.gesundheitaktiv-heilkunst.de

IBDA, International Association for Biodynamic Agriculture in Arlesheim, CH: the association promotes biodynamic agriculture at an international level.

International Coordination of Anthroposophic Medicine (IKAM)

IKAM is an internationally active affiliation of coordinators and representatives of the anthroposophic medical movement.

www.medsektion-goetheanum.org/lang/en/?nav=2

IVAA, International Federation of Anthroposophic Medical Associations

The IVAA's main sphere of activities is international representation of anthroposophic medicine in relation to medical legislation.

The IVAA functions as umbrella organisation for national anthroposophic medical associations throughout the world.

www.ivaa.info

Background to this campaign:

For many years, individual ELIANT core members have been providing scientific work of high quality to the European Community (e.g. Health Technology Assessment [HTA] report; Anthroposophic Medicine: Effectiveness, Utility, Costs Safety - Gunver Kienle MD, Helmut Kiene MD, Hans Ulrich Albonico MD [©2006 Schattauer Verlag, Stuttgart-New York, Schattauer GmbH, Hölderlinstrasse 3, DE-70174, Stuttgart, Germany. ISBN-10: 3-7945-2495-0; ISBN-13: 978-3-7945-2495-2]).

Each of the core members represents the various interests of those who use anthroposophic services or products. Their common goal is to secure legal safeguards for the continuity of anthroposophical initiatives and their developmental potential.

In recent years, laws and regulations have been approved that result in restrictions and disadvantages for the continuity and development of anthroposophic initiatives. All core members are aware of the need to establish new framework conditions for such initiatives. Current EU politics and new cultural developments in Europe require new forms of networking, and the forming of associations with political weight. One of the more successful ways to do this is via the creation of mutually supporting "umbrella organisations".

In summary one can say that EU regulatory powers cause problems for the diversity of cultural initiatives such as ours, if the majority is unaware of them. Our work aims to raise the profile of such initiatives.

*** What does your European Citizens' Initiative seek to achieve?**

For over 80 years anthroposophic initiatives have made an important contribution to European culture, founding institutions of high quality whose work has met with international acknowledgement and acclaim..

To help preserve human dignity and individual freedom, ELIANT is now pursuing the following goals:

Aims of the Alliance:

Public awareness

Supporting the ELIANT Charter, to give it democratic backing and political weight.

Partnership

Serving as contact for other organisations and initiatives with similar goals.

Positive feedback

Strengthening anthroposophic initiatives through recognition in the form of 1 million signatures from people who acknowledge this work.

Campaign goals

1 million signatures will help:

- to create the basic conditions needed to ensure diversity of anthroposophic initiatives (availability of choices).
- to assure that fundamental and human rights in Europe do not counteract and limit these alternative approaches.
- to secure the right of European citizens to access anthroposophic Institutions, and to ensure that such institutions can continue to develop.

How are you promoting your project, and how are you collecting signatures?

With signature of the Charter, ELIANT was founded in Brussels on 29 June 2006.

The Charter was subsequently ratified on 29 September 2006.

The pilot phase for collection of signatures for the ELIANT campaign began on 1 November 2006; this phase ended on 4 February 2007 with the start of the full-scale ELIANT campaign.

Promoting the project:

- Translation of the Charter and the petition form into 10 languages (others are in preparation).
- Background information from core members in relation to specific themes/areas.
- Press articles
- Publication of campaign-related interviews with core members
- Dissemination of specific information to different campaign peer groups
- Homepage with full information, news, press releases and downloads in three languages, German, English and French.
- Publication of monthly newsletter
- Country-specific recording of signature numbers so that we can demonstrate the extent to which anthroposophic initiatives and institutions are known and recognised in different European countries.
- Logo for download
- Building up a network of people in several countries to support local activities.
- Information sent to members of partner organisations
- Information sent via institutions' email address lists to members, partners and friends.

Collecting signatures

- Collecting signatures on paper in various countries and languages at lectures, conferences and other events organised by core members.
- Posting petition forms in anthroposophical institutions, organic produce outlets, health food stores, GP practices, farms, companies and in private institutions, and talking to people about the campaign.
- Online voting site in 10 languages from March 2007 at the website www.eliant.eu.
- Avoiding more than one vote per person through the following voting procedure: voting with email confirmation and reply plus verification and registration of email address.
- Option to allow recommending of website to friends

What obstacles have you encountered in relation to your initiative's transnational character?

Practical problems:

- Maintaining high levels of motivation for a long-distance campaign amongst all persons and organisations involved.
- Finding helping hands in as many countries as possible to publicise and spread the campaign.
- A succinct, easily comprehensible message, to reach millions of people.
- Translation of documents into 21 languages.
- Taking account of the different mentalities/approaches in 27 countries.
- Differing experiences with popular democracy in the different countries.
- Funding the campaign.

Overcoming these problems will in future allow successful use of this form of democratic co-determination.

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