



REPORT

for the nomination of the Municipality of
Montescudaio to the Flag of Honour

Mrs. Simona Fedeli
(Mayor of Montescudaio)

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background, reading "Simona Fedeli".

Montescudaio, December, 27, 2017



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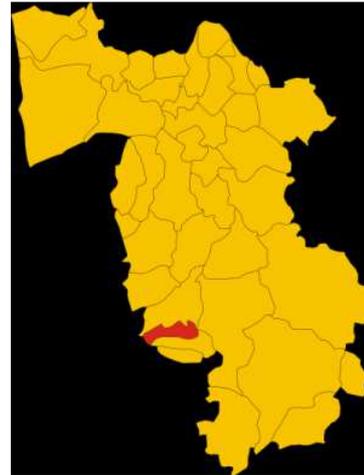
Provincia di Pisa

1 – Introduction

Montescudaio is located in Italy (province of Pisa in the Tuscany region). It is a medieval small town with approximately two thousands inhabitants. Although early historical documents testify the existence of Montescudaio in the eleventh century, the urban texture is much more ancient; archaeological findings allowed to ascertain human attendance since the villanovian period. It is located in the valley of Cecina river, approximately ten kilometers from the Thyrrhenian Sea.



Tuscany



the red spot of
Montescudaio, in Tuscany

2 – Twinning activities, relation with foreign municipalities, co-operation and partnerships

In the early '70s Montescudaio experienced an unexpected growing which allowed almost to duplicate its population. Growing was due not only to the period known in Italy as the “*economic boom*” but also for different reasons. Geographic and climatic features of the town (flat and green hills) together with proximity to the sea make Montescudaio a peaceful place which has been chosen by many people to spend their holidays, to become their own living place (mainly for artists) or, for elder people, the so-called spanish *buen retiro* (delightful retirement). People did not come from near town or cities only but also from other areas in Tuscany and foreign countries, mainly from Germany.

The flourishing of immigration from other countries has strongly contributed in the birth of the European spirit among inhabitants and the early attempts to activate links with different municipalities were successful.

2.1 – Twinship with Eberstadt

In 1984 Montescudaio twinned with the town of **Eberstadt**, located in Germany, in the Baden-Württemberg region. The towns share geographical similarities which allow the grape-vine to grow in both places, with an interesting wine production. As a curiosity it is worth mentioning they got the same animal as a symbol: the boar, which appears also in the emblem of the german town as represented in the twinning agreement (fig. 1). Deep attention has been put in keeping active and favourable this first linkage between the communities. During these years, groups of families together with administration representatives have exchanged either hospitality either participation to some local initiatives such as festivals for religious or folk recurrences, lodging mostly directly in the houses of the families, in a short-time and informal cohabitation which has strengthened relationships among persons and – above all – the youngsters.



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In both towns active committees for keeping and enforcing the twinship grew up immediately, thanks to far-seeing groups of people who trusted this kind of association and were able to catch the opportunity of creating a small but very useful “window on Europe” for the new generations. Both committees are still alive, being seasonally reinforced with young *new entries*, and they actively work for common initiatives already provided in 2018.

Visit of groups of citizens (15-30 people) are still organized by local committees almost every year.

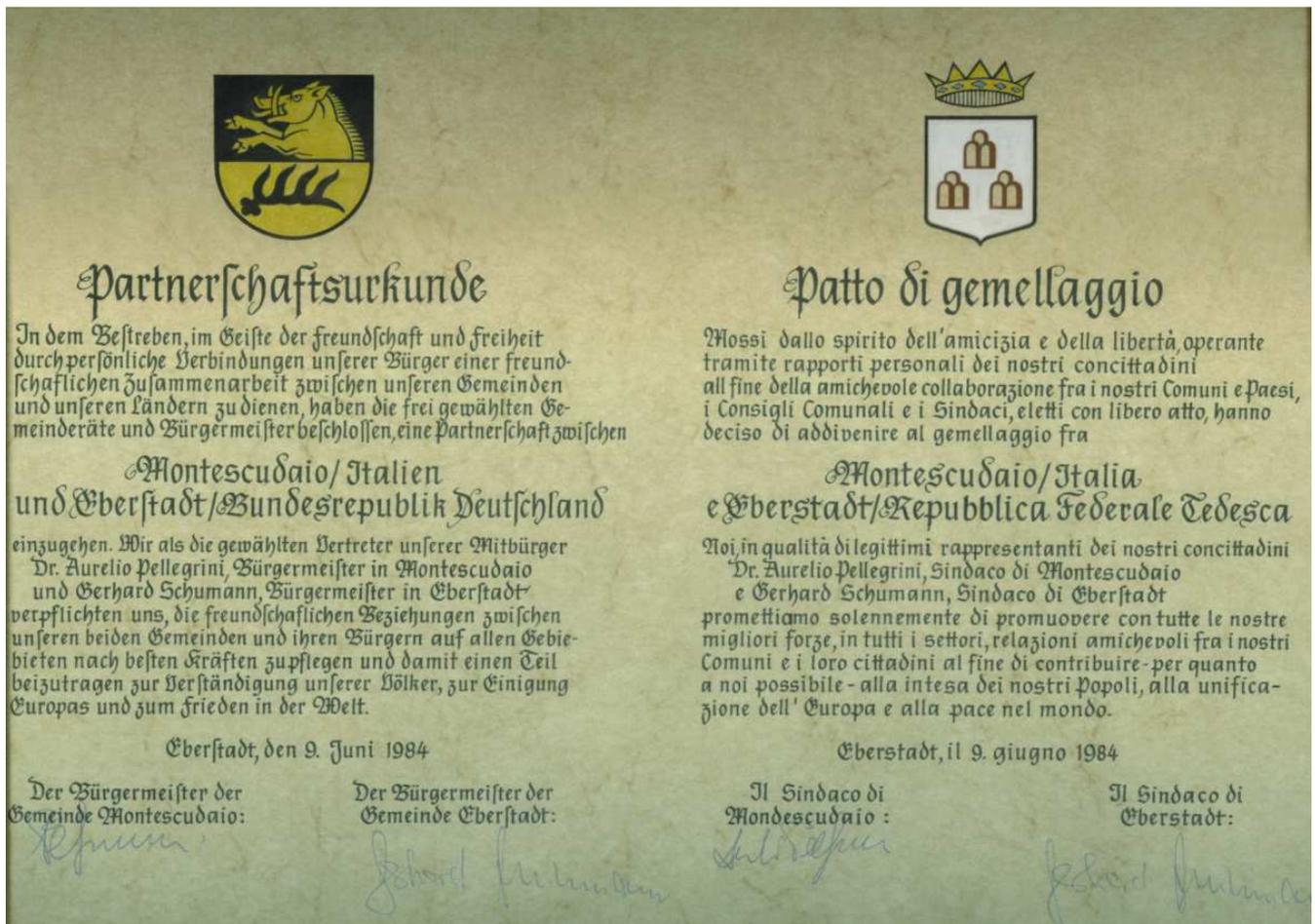


Fig. 1 – The twinning agreement.

In 2014 the 30th anniversary of the twinship has been celebrated between the two communities with two distinct ceremonies held in both town in July (Eberstadt, fig. 2) and in October (Montescudaio). In the Italian ceremony, which happened during the annual *Festa del Vino* (Wine Festival) – whose first edition started in 1968! – the so-called *founder fathers* of the twinning from both sides were invited to participate in a public, open-air event, attended by the whole citizenship and awarded with proper certificates (diplomas) as a durable memory of their commitment in joining the two communities and keeping them tied during the years.



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The mayor of Montescudaio Mrs. S. Fedeli with those of Eberstadt in charge in 2014 (Mr. T. Frey) and at the moment of the twinning agreement (Mr. G. Schumann)

Exchange of presents between the Italian delegation (deputy mayor of Montescudaio Mr. F. Landi) and the municipality of Eberstadt (Mr. G. Schumann)

Fig. 2 – Eberstadt: 2014, July. Moments of the meeting of the two delegations for the 30 years anniversary of the twinning between Eberstadt and Montescudaio

2.2 – Twinship with Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav

Historical themes led the Municipality of Montescudaio in finding contacts with the one of **Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav**, in central Bohemia, Czech Republic. Brandýs nad Labem indeed hosted the members of Habsburg-Lorraine family after their leaving from Tuscany in 1859 (Leopold 2nd was the last Grand Duke of Tuscany), as a consequence of the independence movements which would have led Italy to the second independence war against Austria.

Thanks to the past Mayor of Montescudaio, Dr A. Pellegrini who was strongly interested in studies about the history of Italy – and particularly Tuscany – early contacts with the Bohemian town were established since 2005; in 2007 a collaboration agreement was signed and finally in 2011 the twinning agreement successfully followed (fig. 3).

After signing the agreement, some contacts have been established mainly through the local educational institutions. Cultural and recreational exchanges have taken place almost every year until 2013, owing to the mild mediterranean climate in Italy and the undoubtedly historical beauties in both towns.

In 2013 with 45 pupils from the local school visited Brandýs nad Labem and the capital Praha (at a distance about 60 kilometers). This experience resulted very interesting and fascinating. The *mittel-European* atmosphere of Bohemia deeply committed the delegation of Montescudaio and stimulated the administration to work for further cooperation and development of common projects. However, because of the political changes in town representatives in 2014-15, partnership activities slowed, but after short time, both sides noticed that a new impulse needed to be supplied and the real exigency of hardening this linkage between these two different communities was perceived in its whole intensity.



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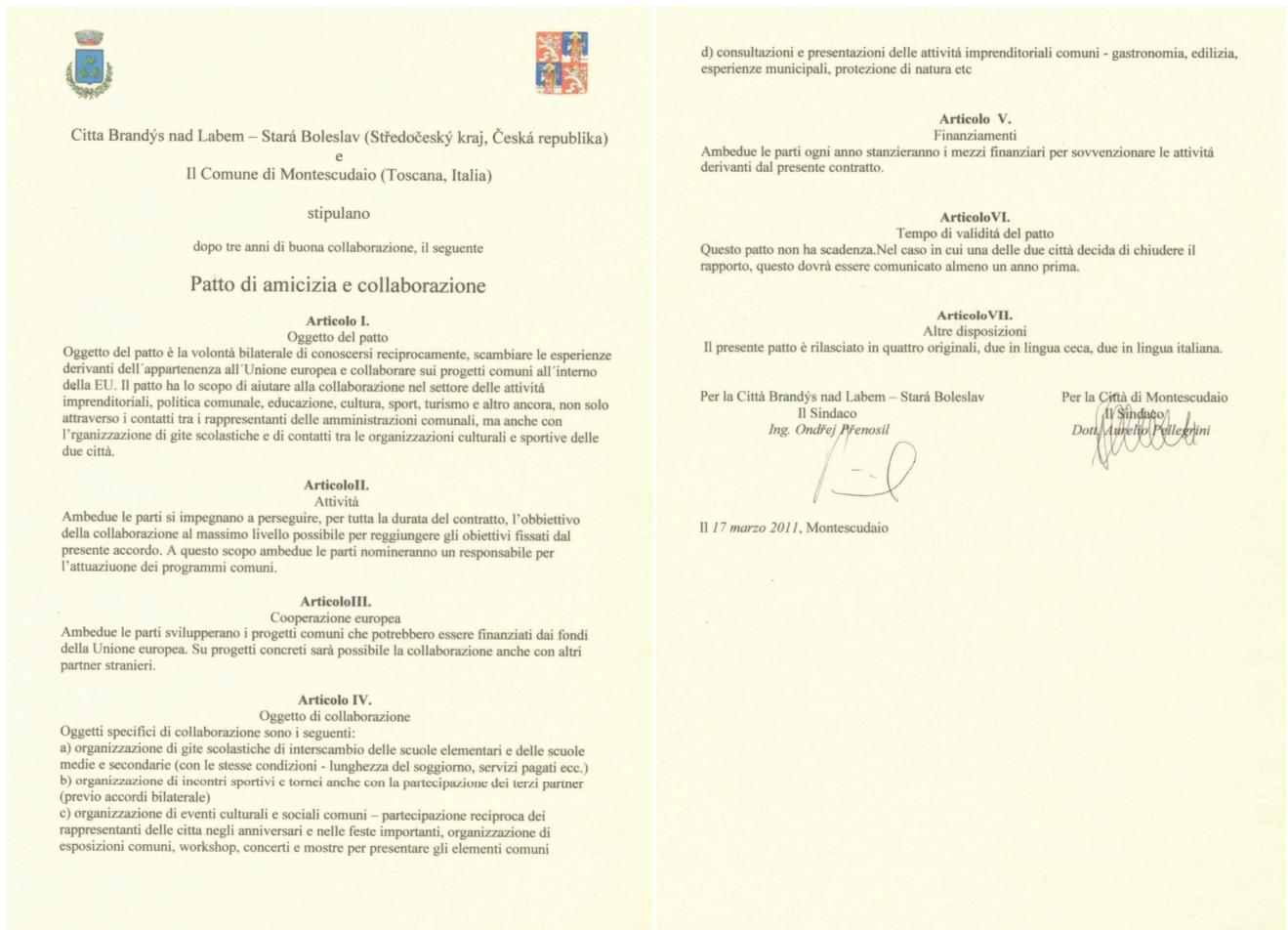


Fig. 3 – The twinning agreement.

Hence, in 2016 contacts between communities were intensified and in 2017 a delegation from Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav has come to Montescudaio for planning some initiatives to be carried on by both sides and make the sodality harder. A two-days meeting has been performed with two distinct workshops; during the first, both delegations have recollected their reasons for getting along in their partnership and put the basis for starting a collaboration in different fields



Fig. 4 – The two delegations in the *Castello* (fortress) and the gifts exchange between Mayors at the 2017 meeting.



(economic, educational, sportive, etc...).

The second workshop concerned the possible involvement of the bohemian town in some educational projects to which the administration of Montescudaio was intended to apply to the European Union for adequate financing. However this attempt rapidly appeared as not adequate to the spirit of the meeting – which was only oriented to find common points of view and subjects for future developments – and the parts decided to deepen such proposals in future discussions planned for the 2017-2018 period.

2.3 – Twinship with Castril de la Peña and the Virgin Islands

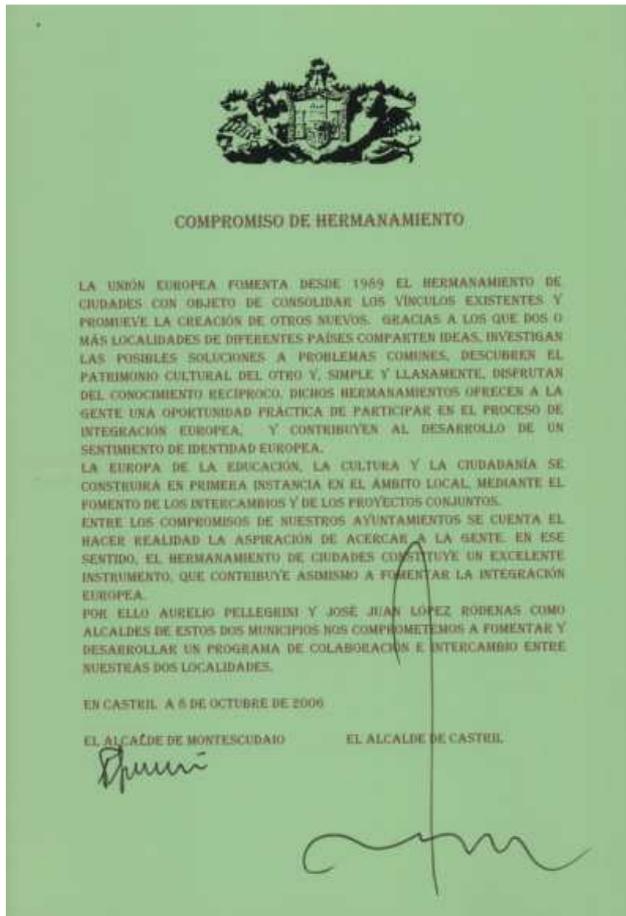


Fig. 5 – The *compromiso de hermanamiento* (twinning agreement) signed in October 2006 in Castril de la Peña

In 2006 Montescudaio twinned with the town of **Castril de la Peña**, a municipality located in Spain, in the province of Granada. The signature of the agreement (fig.5) happened in ceremonies held in the two town in June (Italy) and October (Spain), at the end of two visits during which delegations of about 40 people exchanged not only formal/institutional conversation but also moments of life, where families shared some days putting in common habits and behaviours.

Partecipation at local usages/habits in these first contact and – successively – at annual initiatives hardened friendship between the communities. Tourism and discovery of the different – although Mediterranean – way of life were the real engines which allowed the twinning machine to proceed rapidly and without any trouble.

Contacts between communities prosecuted until 2014 and are at present still active but only at institutional level without any other activity planned in the near future.

of an economic purview (the crossing of the wine road and the rum road, the most popular products of the areas was chosen as a symbol of this seemingly inconsistent future twinning) and the will of the Senator of the Virgin Islands Mr. Wayne James to promote his Caribbean archipelago as a touristic destination – after Danmark Italy was indeed the second european country for number of tourists visiting the Virgin Islands. Sport was chosen as the booster for approaching such a goal. Local football team played the matches of its league carrying the Virgin Islands logos on their shirts for the entire season! Montescudaio became the ambassador in Tuscany of an 18th century Danish dependency looking for a touristic and economic expansion in one of the elected touristic areas in



Italy. At present contacts are still active despite the change of the institutional representative of the Virgin Island.

2.4 – Activation of partnership with Orebić, Fleurieu, Bac

In 2016-2017, owing to the efforts put into action by the administration of Montescudaio (see chapter 3) contacts with the municipalities of Orebić (Croatia), Fleurieu sur Saône (France) and Bač (Serbia) were established. These three communities shared some interests with Montescudaio, mainly entrepreneurial activities (wine production is one of the peak activities in Orebić), local policies, education, history (Bač is a historical centre in the Vojvodina region with significant medieval relics just as Montescudaio in Tuscany) but the actual aim is to find a way for our community to interface with different histories and habits, making it ready to understand the crucial change of mind that is required to all European citizens to build Europe as a really united country.



Fig. 6 – Letter from the Mayor of Orebic

seem to be a very interesting opportunity of growing for our community because Bač has a multinational structure, characterized by the presence of four religions: Orthodox, Catholic Evangelical and Islamic, where people live all together in a relative small space but still maintaining their customs. This make the municipality of Bač a rich and diverse cultural area. It is a very different situation from the ones experienced in Italy and we think that it may constitute a new point of view for our youth on the Europe of People

While contacts established with Orebić and Bač achieved an initial but institutional level, the ones with **Fleurieu sur Saône** have solely concerned contacts between local twinning committees. Exchange of informative materials revealed similarities between the two towns: both

First contacts were established with **Orebić** and the local Mayor Tomislav Ančić answered to us confirming the intention to embody his willing “*through the exchange of experiences coming from mutual membership in European Union and to collaborate on common projects into Europe*” (fig.6). The two sides deem that such goals could be accomplished not only through conventional contacts among representatives but especially patronizing “*informal meetings among local organization and social categories of the two towns*”. Meeting of delegations are planned to be held in the next spring probably in april-may 2018.

The contacts with the Serbian municipality of and **Bač** are very recent (2017), they have interested the municipal offices, the mayor Borislav Antonić and the deputy mayor - Zdenko Kolar. Satisfaction and “interest to establish cooperation” has been expressed by the administration and suggestions about possible topics of interest have been proposed: culture, tourism, economy (agro-economy), etc. An invitation in order to define “*concrete models of cooperation*” has been proposed to the mayor of Montescudaio together with a delegation. This



developed as rural towns, they have a population about 1500-2000 people and an active social texture which makes life better owing to local associations which enhance participation of citizens to the life of the town. As a supplementary, common feature, Fleurieu is also twinned with an other german town – Lichtenwald, in Baden Wurttemberg region – at a distance from Eberstadt (our twinned town) of only 66 Km. The French twinning committee reputed “*interesting*” the proposal of Montescudaio to activate this kind of partnerships and the exploration of further, common point of view is in progress.

3 – European events, Europe Day, promotion of the European Ideal

In 2014 a conference concerning the promotion of local wine production in Northern Europe was held in Montescudaio (fig.7); the topic was *Montescudaio incontra la Danimarca* (Montescudaio meets Denmark). This was also the title of a project aimed to enhance a commercial traffic between these two sides of Europe. The Italian side aimed to improve its capacity to produce a long-term economic policy in order to drive local enterprises to join and develop a fructuous synergic behaviour in their own production compartment (touristic, enologic/gastronomic).

The president of the Danish chamber of commerce Henning Holmen Møller was the invited speaker; he gave a brief but deep insight in the danish and scandinavian market to our local wine producers in the aim of finding an adequate outfall to the possible introduction of products dignified with the “Montescudaio D.O.C.” brand in the whole world. The interest raised by such a presentation rapidly grown and contacts between Danish commerce organizations and local manufacturer houses were activated. They are still active and the exploration for an exhibition in Copenhagen and Aarhus is at present in progress.



Fig. 7 – Excerpt from the bulletin “Il Montescudaio” sept. 2014, announcing the conference “Montescudaio incontra la Danimarca”.

In 2016 local administration decided to constitute a specific office in the aim of enhancing the awareness of being Citizens of Europe and approaching people to the European Institutions among the inhabitants of Montescudaio. To achieve such a goal the administration got the active and powerful collaboration of a professional who spent his last-twenty-years career in being active in these specific fields.¹ Thanks to his contribution, some educational pathways concerning the various steps for the constitution of the European Union and its operating rules were undertaken.

In 2017 the Municipality Council in conjunction with the local Twinning Committee has organized two educational activities mainly oriented to the people at least graduated in the secondary school; courses deal with **a)** the preparation of projects to be presented to the European Union offices for accessing to the european funds (*Corso in Europrogettazione*) and **b)** the role of (and the chances for) young people in the European Union

¹ Constitution of a local Office for Europe with the collaboration of Dr. Roberto Ciompi



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(Percorso Formativo: I giovani nell'Unione Europea).

The *Corso in Europrogettazione* has been planned as a way to begin reading of the next future with and European perspective. It intends to show young people the possible opportunities to find a way for studying or working in the European Union and, at the same time, it will make possible, for local administration or trade officers to face with accessing the European funds, the way these are bestowed, how to set contacts between European Union and local authorities, how to work with, present and manage a transnational project involving one or more countries in the 27 states of Europe.

In 2017 the Administration of Montescudaio has presented the application form to adhere to the EU project EUROPE FOR CITIZENS (Subprogramme Strand 2: Democratic engagement and civic participation), through the project “SHARE: Sacred Hospitality Ancient Research”.

In the list of partner organization the twinned communities of Eberstadt and Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav and that of Orebić have been added as partner communities.

The aim of the project is to research the attitudes of the semantic area of hospitality (how is hospitality welcomed? how was it welcomed in different cultural contexts?). Through the historic sources which the project aims to collect, a picture of differences and equalities in hospitality and sharing will be characterized. Among the expected final products of this work are: **a)** the realization of a documentary film resulting from the experiences gained and the evidences collected during the twinning trips; **b)** the creation of a proper website and **c)** the sharing of a projection, either public either at the same time, in the main squares of the municipalities involved as a useful contribution to a new circulation of the “*xenia*”.

Consistency with the general objectives of the action and the programme will be reliably reached in the following items: a) contribute to the understanding of the European Union by citizens, its history and diversity; b) foster European citizenship and improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level.

4 – European and International solidarity

The municipality of Montescudaio has often been regardful to persons who came in contact with the life and the people of its mild and green territory. From 1947 to 2011 honorary citizenship has been given to 6 Italian and European personalities who shared periods of their life among the hills of Montescudaio. Among the European there were Mr Jean Pierre Dardin (motion pictures director, 2006), Mrs Carla Del Ponte (Attorney of the International Penal Court, 2007) and Mr Gerhard Schumann (Mayor of Eberstadt, 2008).

In december 2017 the administration of Montescudaio decided to adhere to the “**Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy**”. In doing so, Montescudaio joins to the thousands of local and regional authorities voluntarily committed to implementing EU climate and energy objectives on their territory.

The Administration of Montescudaio adheres to the Italian **DAPHNE program** (fig. 8). DAPHNE is carried on by the Italian Ministry of Justice and contemplates support to national/transnational projects, aimed to provide protection and support to the women and children, victims of violence.



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AL SINDACO
DEL COMUNE DI VITTORIA
CAPOFILIA DEL PROGETTO TEAM

DA: SIMONA FENEU.....
RAPPRESENTANTE DEL COMUNE DI
MONTESCUDAIO.....
IN QUALITÀ DI
SINDACO.....

Oggetto: Lettera di supporto sostanziale al progetto TEAM (Testare E Approfondire la Multidisciplinarietà), programma DAPHNE, DG Giustizia

Il sottoscritto SIMONA FENEU..... rappresentante del Comune di MONTESCUDAIO..... formalizza il **supporto sostanziale** del Comune al progetto TEAM (Testare E Approfondire la Multidisciplinarietà), programma DAPHNE, DG Giustizia – Priorità: Protezione e sostegno alle donne e ai bambini vittime della violenza. Argomento specifico: Potenziamento del lavoro multidisciplinare tra i professionisti competenti nel contrasto alla violenza di genere.

Luogo e data,

TIMBRE E FIRMA

Fig. 8 – Letter of adhesion of Comune di Montescudaio to the DAPHNE program

The Administration of Montescudaio particularly support the action “*Strengthening of multidisciplinary work among professionals in contrasting the gender violence*” (TEAM project). This program is coordinated by the township of Vittoria (Sicily, Italy) and the action meet two of the major problems of this topic: guaranteeing access to justice for women and children and denouncing of violence (the European Agency on Fundamental Rights reputes only one third of the cases of violence are effectively denounced).

The project deals with education and is devoted to strengthen the ability of the single professional to work within multidisciplinary groups in the aim of enhancing output quality and final results of their activity in supporting victims of violence. It assumes that goals may be achieved through the formation of a homogeneous network of different professionals who share their feeling of being a unique and active group, and the will to disseminate knowledge among professionals working in different cities or countries.

Owing to the role that non-governmental organizations (NGO) may strongly play in supporting victims of violence the Administration of Montescudaio has chosen to collaborate with national partners belonging to civilian organizations who work in different Italian areas in fighting gender violence in order to improve coordination among regional structures still working with different standards.

Moreover the Administration of Montescudaio has signed *The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life*, a document drawn up and promoted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and its partners, making a formal public commitment to the principle of equality of women and men.

5 – Membership of local Authority Associations

Montescudaio is part of the *Unione dei Colli Marittimi Pisani* (Union² of the Maritime Hills of Pisa), the grouping of three close town who share functions of the local authorities as urban police, tribute management, social welfare, technician offices, public housing and other. The Union – originally formed by five neighbours townships (Castellina Marittima, Riparbella, Montescudaio, Guardistallo and Casale Marittimo) and now composed only by the first three ones – is an experimental form of local governance, adopted from Italian regional authorities in order to achieve

² The **Union** is an experimental form for governance of small regional areas, realized by Regione Toscana (Administration of Tuscany Region) and implemented in the last decade, which allows close towns to choose filliped sharing of administrative functions or even fusion and the formation of a new single community.



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a better management of public funds. The Mayor of Montescudaio Mrs Simona Fedeli held the presidency of the Union during 2016-2017.

Montescudaio adheres to two important Italian authority associations: the first is A.N.C.I. (*Associazione Nazionale dei Comuni Italiani*, National Association of Italian Townships). ANCI represents and protect the interests of Townships in facing-off with Parliament, Government, UE and Regional Institutions and any other institution exerting public functions in local interests. It is the recognized dialogist of the Italian Government to represent local authorities.

Moreover Montescudaio adheres to A.I.C.C.R.E. (*Associazione Italiana per il Consiglio dei Comuni e delle Regioni d'Europa*). It is the Italian section of CEMR and the only national association which collects as a unitary grouping the whole levels of local authorities. It was established since 1952 by local administrators and representatives of civilian associations after the second world war, in that particular age during which the idea of Europe gathered with a strong afflatus of peace, democracy and freedom and took inspiration from the principles of the *Manifesto di Ventotene*, written by Altiero Spinelli, Ernesto Rossi and Eugenio Colorni

AICCRE deals with education of local authorities for the development of European projects, organizes help-desk on EU programmes mainly concerning “Europe for Citizens” (together with the *Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo* - Italian Minister of Cultural Activities and Tourism), supports italian associates in research and funds retrieval.

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