Why has Campdevànol become the European Iron Capital 2017?

Campdevànol was the first city in Spain to become a member of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works

The Gala in Brussels

Last April 100 Campdevànol residents traveled to Brussels to enjoy the first time ever the Gala of Campdevànol will be danced abroad. The trip included a reception of the entire group at the Government Delegation of la Generalitat in Brussels as well as two performances of la Gala, the first one at the representation and the second one in the Gran Place of Brussels with the "copla" La Principal of Amsterdam.

A subsidy to promote the tourism cross-border

The Town Council of Campdevànol will be able to go for a subsidy of 368,741 euros within the framework of the Pirineu de Ferro project: network of Iron Work towns for a sustainable and shared tourism strategy (PYRFER). This will be possible because on the last municipality meeting session of the corporation unanimously approved the project to be presented at the second meeting. In this way Campdevànol will go for the subsidies from the European Poctefa program. Then the Spanish and French Governments, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the French Departments concerned will have to evaluate and dictate a definitive resolution in Autumn (October-November). If everything goes well, this cross-border development project will be able to begin next December.
In October, Campdevànol will welcome the 17th General Assembly of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works 2017. An unprecedented event for our region which will serve as the focal point of the conclusion to the European Iron Capital.

Welcome from the Mayor of Campdevànol
Joan Manso

Dear fellow citizens,

In October, Campdevànol will welcome the 17th General Assembly of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works 2017. An unprecedented event for our region which will serve as the focal point of the conclusion to the European Iron Capital.

You have in your hands the Ring of Iron, a newspaper edited by the Town Council which will take you closer to all the activities performed this year regarding the so mentioned Iron Capital, as well as the extensive program schedule in our town on 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th October.

All member cities of the Ring have confirmed the attendance of one delegation, meaning an unprecedented success for the Ring since it was founded in 2000. More than 100 delegates will meet in Campdevànol over 4 days; and for this reason the Town Council and the Iron Commission have been actively working for more than 12 months for the Campdevànol General Assembly to be one of the best in recent years.

I therefore wish to encourage you to get out of the house, to enjoy the multiple choice of activities programmed for the Iron Capital, the majority of which are open to all residents, to get involved in this Assembly and not to hesitate in showing our town to visitors and delegates with pride. Campdevànol will have a strong global impact, in which our town will see itself immersed in an Assembly that will become a huge Iron Party. I would like to extend my thanks to the hundreds of volunteers from our town who have answered our call and give support to the multiple coordinating and organizing tasks scheduled for this unique date for the region and our town. Thanks to all of them for helping us to make it possible to do the best in coordinated all the activities and all the delegations.

Over the 4 days the town will be filled with European delegations, attractions, shows, expositions, tapa tasting and activities of all kinds. We’re waiting for you! These days will be very proud days for all the Campdevànol and Catalonia residents and they will give a very strong impact!

Welcome to the European Iron Assembly 2017!

Joan Manso
Mayor of Campdevànol
In October, Campdevànol will welcome the 17th Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works. An unprecedented date for our region which will serve as the focal point of the conclusion of the European Iron Capital.

Welcome by the President of the Ring and the Mayor of Kolbermoor, Peter Kloo

The European Union disappoints currently many people. Disappoints them, because they think the EU-politicians are not in the position to find the right answers to the urgent questions.

Despite all this lamentation, something important should be not forgotten:

The friendship of many people across national borders.
The opportunity to hearing and even share the joys and worries of citizens in other countries.

To experience similarities and differences. To understand what can be a “Europe of the Regions”. To see how diverse our continent is.

In the last 15 years we all have been able to experience in „The Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works”, how to live and celebrate, work or enjoy leisure elsewhere.

The friendship of the blacksmith in Europe has opened doors and gates to us.

We, the mayors and the municipal-councillors could learn something. We have learned that there are many ways to improve the world »in the small«.

We have shown how other municipalities solve their problems: for example, the construction and operation of kindergartens and schools, the maintenance of sports facilities, the regulation of building projects, etc.

This treasure trove of experience has opened “The Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works”. For this, we are grateful and in this sense we are looking forward to an interesting meeting in Campdevànol.

Peter Kloo
President of the Ring and the Mayor of Kolbermoor

80 Campdevànol residents visit Andorra to get to know by first hand their history regarding iron works

80 Campdevànol residents travel to the Principality of Andorra within the framework of the European Iron Capital to get to know by first hand its history as a country and its direct relationship with iron, forging and the Catalan forge. During this visit organized by the Council for the Elderly the residents were able to visit the General Council of les Valls (Andoran Parliament) and the Farga Rosell. Likewise the Mayor Joan Manso and the Deputy Mayor Dolors Costa met with the Upper and Lower Council of Ordino and la Massana as well as the General Syndic of the General Council of les Valls in order to discuss possible cooperative projects regarding iron works.
President Carme Forcadell opens the European Iron Capital 2017 within the framework of the 2017 Metal Biennial

Last October Campdevànol was named European Iron Capital 2017 in the German city of Olbernhau. Since the year 2000 the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works has organized a General Assembly of the Ring in a different town or city chosen as the capital. This is a good opportunity to encourage iron culture, the local economy and to spread European values among the citizens.

The Iron Capital began last October with a new edition of the Metal Biennial in which the live forge space, the conference with President Forcadell and the inauguration of the new museum space at Molí Gros were all highlights. A whole host of activities over the weekend to open this Iron Capital.

President Forcadell specifically highlighted the importance of the Biennial as an exhibition space for our historical and artistic traditions in metal and forging. The forgers present at the live forging space coordinated by ANUNC forged a sculpture that will soon be placed into position, and a bouquet of roses that was handed to the President of the Parliament Carme Forcadell.

Throughout the year the Town Council of Campdevànol, through the Institutional Commission of the European Iron Capital, has been coordinating a whole series of activities aimed at all audiences with an aim to move the residents of Campdevànol and villagers towards iron culture. Campdevànol is going through a year filled with activities for all audiences and tastes, with iron and Europe as the main themes. Several of the activities that you can see and get to know are in the Diari de la Capita-litat that you have in your hands.

In 2012, Campdevànol was the first city in Spain to become a member of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works, http://www.ironcities.net. This association is a collection of nineteen municipalities over fourteen European states with two well consolidated aims: on the one hand, to encourage different political actions regarding iron from public administrations, and on the other, to always respect the values of peace and prosperity that inspire the European dream.

In August 2016, the delegation of the Town Council of Campdevànol attended an Assembly in Olbernhau (Saxony, Germany), in which it took the title of European Iron Capital for this year, 2017. The Iron Capital project started last October within the framework of the Metal Biennial, and it will end this October 2017 with the celebration of the 17th General Assembly of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works.

Throughout 2017 Campdevànol has organized different cultural activities, with the collaboration of different European institutions and together with many local associations which wish to actively participate in the spreading of the economic and traditional legacy of the town. The Highlighted activities that have been carried out are:

- The trip to Brussels of the Gala dancers to perform the Dansa de Campdevànol in April 2017
- The visit to the Farga Rossell in Andorra and the Reception at the Parliament of Andorra in May 2017
- A youth exchange between Campdevànol and Ovre Eiker (Norway), which are both member towns of the European association of the Ring of the European Cities of Iron Works, via an Erasmus program in June and July 2017
- Metal School week at the public school Pirineu in Campdevànol. Cultural and artistic activities in June 2017

And as a closing act for this year’s Metal Capital, Campdevànol has become the host to the General Assembly of “The Ring of European Iron Cities” from 5th to the 8th, which will help us encouraging iron culture, the local economy and to spread European values among the citizens. Similarly, one of the main aims of the assembly will be to interact and encourage actions for the survival of the iron sector.
Campdevànol celebrates Metal School Week with pride and actively involves all students in the European Iron Capital

Within the framework of the European Iron Capital which we are hosting this year, the 9th of June saw the start of Metal School Week.

The Pirineu school together with the Town Council of Campdevànol and with the collaboration of other cultural and educational entities planned a week full of educational and artistic activities so that all students could learn and immerse themselves into the world of artistic forging and into our history in iron works.

From the hand of the Escola d’Art i Superior de Disseny de Vic, from the Alter center for environmental education and other artistic collaborators in this project, like artist and Campdevànol native Evelí Adam, the students will see the world of metal and its application over the course of the week.

Throughout the week of the 9th to the 16th of June all students of the Pirineu school learned about our history in metalwork through different visits, the force of the water as a motor for new industrial techniques, about the different highlighted contemporary sculptors that have worked with metal like Eduardo Chillida or Jorge Oteiza among others, and they also experienced a creative process of an artistic sculpture that later became a joint spectacle where all pieces were shown within structures with different shapes.

We must point out the creation of a musical space built with metal parts that forms a permanent part of the two free open spaces in the schools, as well as the demonstration of artistic forging that was performed by the forger Eulogio Villalobos.

On Friday the 16th of June at 15:00 on the school playground, the institutional closure of the Metal School week took place along with the presentation of the joint artistic sculpture show, to which all the parents were invited.

The Mayor Joan Manso wished to highlight the importance for the European Iron Capital to “reach all audiences and to thank the active involvement of the Pirineu school for making it possible for the students of Campdevànol to find out first hand about our history in metalwork and immerse themselves in artistic knowledge in the artistic forge at the school center”.

The Metal School Week was also strongly experienced in the Kindergarten, where the youngest students actively worked with an educational project regarding metal and iron. Many of them have been active in approaching these materials that have taken place.
Last April 100 Campdevànol residents traveled to Brussels to enjoy the first time ever the Gala of Campdevànol will be danced abroad.

On 28th, 29th and 30th April, Brussels saw a weekend dedicated to the European Iron Capital and to Campdevànol. A trip organized by the Town Council of Campdevànol and the European Iron Capital Commission sent 100 people to celebrate the Gala in this European capital.

Among the highlighted activities that took place in Brussels were the Gala danced at the Delegation of the Government of the Generalitat in front of the European Union and at the Grand Place with the musical "Cobla"Principal d’Amsterdam, the only professional musical "Cobla" of this type of dance of Catalonia. Over the weekend the city was also presented with the capdanser costume worn by the Manneken Pis as well as the inauguration of the exposition dedicated to the Gala at the Permanent Delegation of the European Union in Brussels.

All Campdevànol residents who wanted to take part in this trip were able to register. The first Deputy Mayor Dolors Costa wished to highlight that it was a "unique trip and a historical event for Campdevànol" and added that "To bring Campdevànol to Brussels is an honor that we all enjoyed together".

The Mayor Joan Manso for his part wished to “thank all the institutions and people who have helped make this
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Without a shadow of a doubt the trip to Brussels was an unforgettable moment in this Iron Capital and will be a great moment that we will all remember forever.

On Saturday 7th, in the framework of the activities of the Iron Capital, we will inaugurate the frames dedicated to this historic milestone in Plaça de Dansa.

Transcription of the message from Mr Amadeu Altafaj, Representative of the Government to the EU following the visit of the Gala Dancers to the heart of Europe

Dear Montse,
Dear Joan and Dolors,

Many thanks from the bottom of our hearts to everyone for the efforts and enthusiasm that you gave in the Gala visit to Brussels.

At the Delegation we are very happy and proud to have been able to welcome such a big delegation from Campdevànol and, what’s more, the luxury of having been able to enjoy the Gala dance. We could not have ended our Catalan Week in Brussels in better fashion! And seeing the happy faces of all the visitors and the images of the Grand Place on the Sunday, I think it was an unforgettable experience! On behalf of the Government of the Generalitat de Catalunya we offer our sincerest congratulations for what you have achieved. I ask you to extend our sincerest thanks to the entire town of Campdevànol for the support shown over these days.

A big hug and greetings to all our friends in Campdevànol!

The trip included a reception of the entire group at the Government Delegation of la Generalitat in Brussels as well as two performances of la Gala, the first one at the representation and the second one in the Gran Place of Brussels with the "copla" La Principal of Amsterdam. The trip allowed the Friends of the Manneken Pis to be presented with a capdanser outfit, in a reception at the Town Hall of the European Capital.

The Campdevànol residents thank Montse Barrera for her task in leading the organization of the Gala trip to Brussels

On 30th July, the Campdevànol residents prepared a surprise meeting to Montse Barrera to thank her for the job she had done with the Town Council of Campdevànol in Brussels who organized and coordinated the trip that took our Dance. It was a very well-organized event that everyone will always remember. Everyone who was on that trip wanted to show how they appreciated Montse’s efforts in making this fantastic trip and the evening was accompanied by videos and pictures of the trip as well as different presents and tributes.
Young Norwegians and Catalan youth participate in the first Erasmus + exchange promoted within the framework of the Ring of the European Cities

Willing to contribute to the education of the young people of the community and to provide them with enlightening experiences, Campdevànol town council has promoted an Erasmus + exchange program among young people.
It has been organized with the Town Council of Øvre Eiker, in Norway, a community that is also part of the Ring of the European cities of Iron Work. The youth exchange became a reality this summer and has also allowed to spread and promote the values of European citizenship. The success achieved has allowed the Town Council of Campdevànol to extend this experience to other European Cities in the ring.

The exchange as well as the preparatory meetings are entirely financed by European funds up to a sum of 26,000 euros. This has been the first exchange between Catalan youth and Norwegian youth within this program.

According to Joan Manso, this exchange aim is to “spread and promote the idea of European citizenship and the values of Europe”. He explained that this will be done by addressing current themes with the background of debate and the exercising of democratic actions. These activities are accompanied by others in order to get to know Catalan and Norwegian cultures respectively in a recreational manner.

What's more he considers that this “is a highly beneficial and very interesting agreement for both town councils”.

The exchange took place over the summer months. Firstly, the fourteen young people selected from Ripollès were in Øvre Eiker from the 27th of June until the 2nd of July. Those from Øvre Eiker returned the visit to Campdevànol in the second week of August.

Each group was accompanied by two leaders from their country of origin. The exchange was done at the Campsite Les Coromines in Campdevànol and the final day there was a dinner attended by the young people, all leaders of the two delegations and the parents from Campdevànol.

Over the weeks in Norway and Catalonia all kinds of joint activities took place to promote European citizenship and to get to know both host countries. The exchange was received positively by both member communities.

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**Interview**

Interview with Roger Esteras young Campdevànol resident who has participated in Erasmus +

What feelings and experiences are you taking away from this exchange with Øvre Eiker (Norway)?

Firstly a lot of gratitude, I had never heard of subsidized European exchanges, and I must be grateful. Fullness and happiness to have had first hand experience of cultures and people from so far away.

What European values have you worked on during your Erasmus experience?

The need for a good democracy for a good country, is crucial. Also a different point of view to what the media portrays regarding the refugee situation.

Why would you recommend doing this kind of exchange to other young people?

Because you need to push for these activities and very seldom do they arise so easily. I would bet my life that they would not regret it

How do you imagine Europe in the future?

I imagine it, I hope it stays the same, constantly evolving. Less divided and with more and better values. With an energetic, voluntary minded and active youth

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**Interview**

Interview with Natàlia Fuertes Pérez young Campdevànol resident who has participated in Erasmus +

What feelings and experiences are you taking away from this exchange with Øvre Eiker (Norway)?

The experience I am taking away with me is very good and really nice, because I have learned a lot of new things on this exchange. I have been able to visit places that probably as a tourist you would not visit, like the parliament and the town hall. I have also made new friends. One of the most important things for me has been losing the fear I had of speaking English with other people.

What European values have you worked on during your Erasmus experience?

The values that we have worked on have been human dignity, freedom and solidarity based on the theme of the refugees that we have been working on during the stay at Campdevànol. We have also worked on democracy with the different visits and talks we did in Øvre Eiker.

Why would you recommend doing this kind of exchange to other young people?

I would recommend doing this exchange because it is a unique experience that not everybody has had the opportunity of living.

How do you imagine Europe in the future?

I imagine a more united Europe, more supportive where there are no wars or conflict, where there is peace.
Campdevànol goes for a 370,000 euro subsidy to promote Iron Tourism

If it goes ahead, the Pirineus de Ferro project will be able to distribute 2,355,249 euros coming mostly from European funds among the ten Catalan and French member municipalities.

The PYRFER project will cost 2,355,249 euro

The main aim of the Poctefa PYRFER project is to value all heritage linked to iron works. The Town Council of Campdevànol, above all with the collaboration of the Town Council of Arles, is leading this ambitious project which has already passed through the first round of meetings with a high result, 83.25 points out of a total of 100. It has been decided by the municipality meeting of the entire Baix Ripollès.

Firstly, because Campdevànol is heading the PYRFER project and, secondly, because the Town Council will contribute with 73,748.85 euros over the three years, this cross-border development project will be able to begin next December.

The PYRFER project has been running for a year and has a total of ten entities spread equally across Catalonia and France. Five towns make up the Catalan representation -two from Ripollès- Campdevànol, Ripoll, Besalú, Alpens and Alins. On the French side there are also five members, three of which are from Northern Catalonia: The Town Council of Arles del Tec, the Mixt Syndicate of Canigó, the Community of the Towns of Alt Vallespir and Alt Ariège and the Community of Towns of the Pays de Foix-Varilhes. Apart from the ten members who make up the project, we must also consider the District Councils of Girona, Barcelona and Lleida and the French Departments to which these towns belong. It must be noted that at the last minute, the Communal Council of Ordino in Andorra also showed interest in joining in, but even though it was able to join in, it could not benefit from European funding.

For the town it would mean the establishment of a technical office with three workers and improving the Ruta de l’Aigua, while the Farga Palau would be refurbished in Ripoll.

Campdevànol is a town linked to iron works and the PYRFER project that will help to strengthen this link. The Town Council of Campdevànol will be able to go for a subsidy of 368,741 euros within the framework of the Pirineus de Ferro project: network of Iron Work towns for a sustainable and shared tourism strategy (PYRFER). This will be possible because on the last municipality meeting session of the corporation unanimously approved the project to be presented at the second meeting. In this way Campdevànol will go for the subsidies from the European Poctefa program. Then the Spanish and French Governments, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the French Departments concerned will have to evaluate and dictate a definitive resolution in Autumn (October-November). If everything goes well, the PYRFER project will cost 2,355,249 euros distributed over the course of the project (a project director, a communications technician and an administrative position). These workers will also be able to move to the nine other towns according to their needs. There will also be new visitor centers and Iron interpretation centers, which in the case of Ripoll it will help to improve the entire Farga Palau. What’s more, in each one of the ten towns there will be a tourist route and the different councils will work together to promote shared tourism. For example, in Campdevànol the Water Route will be improved.

The opposition has given its approval and the spokesman for the MES, Luis Lopez, has expressed that this project “brings the town its own identity based on the ironwork that invigorates the entire Baix Ripollès”.

Lopez also congratulated the Mayor for the future creations of three work positions and agreed to contribute to Town Council funds “because we are in a good financial situation”. Nevertheless he claimed that this does not mean that other projects should be put to one side. From the ERC, Toni Riera asked for the subsidy to be used properly; while the CUP, Mariona Baraldés, asked that this project could be driven so that other areas such as youth can end up benefiting from it and that not everything goes to tourism.

The creation of a technical office and improvements on the Water Route

This subsidy will be invested into the constitution of a PYRFER technical office in Campdevànol, which in practice will provide three new full time work positions over the course of the project (a project director, a communications technician and an administrative position). These workers will also be able to move to the nine other towns according to their needs. There will also be new visitor centers and Iron interpretation centers, which in the case of Ripoll it will help to improve the entire Farga Palau. What’s more, in each one of the ten towns there will be a tourist route and the different councils will work together to promote shared tourism. For example, in Campdevànol the Water Route will be improved.

The PYRFER project will be able to distribute 2,355,249 euros coming mostly from European funds among the ten Catalan and French member municipalities.
Arrival of participants during the day. Transfer to the hotel from Gerona- or Barcelona Airport. Campdevànol will arrange the shuttle service.

21.00 Welcoming dinner at the Hotel Sant Antoni of Ribes de Freser and presentation of the hosts to the different accredited delegations. Mr. Marc Prat i Arrey, mayor of Ribes de Freser, Mr. Peter Kloo, president of the Ring and mayor of Kolbermoor and Mr. Joan Manso i Bosoms, the mayor of Campdevànol will be present at the dinner. The presentation of the hosts to the different delegations will be carried out during the dinner. Clothes: Casual

08:30 Transfer from Hotel Sant Antoni Ribes de Freser to Campdevànol by bus. Travel time: 10 minutes.

09:00 Start of the meeting for all participants including accompanying partners. Welcome by mayor Joan Manso and president Peter Kloo. After that the members will present what has happened in their municipalities during the last year.

12:30 Lunch in Church Square for all those attending the assembly.

13:30 The communal council (mayors and councillors) and competent council will split their activities. The communal council will visit organisations and talk together about political topics. Like the Educational and Health model of Catalonia: an English guided tour for guests in Sequia Molinar

18:00 Life recording program of the Local Television Network, Catalonia KM0 from the center of the municipality about the topic European Iron Capital and the general assembly. Interviews in English with the President of the Ring, with present mayors of the member cities, with the blackssmiths and to different Campdevànol citizens about the work of the Ring and the influence of the iron in Campdevànol.

19:00 Live recording of the Municipal Radio Campdevànol program, “The Assembly” from the center of the municipality of the European Iron Capital and the General Assembly. Interviews with present Ring authorities.

19:00 English guided visit to the historic centre of Campdevànol and at the headquarters of the Industrial and Mechanisation Forging, Comercial de la Forja SA (Comforsa).

20:00 Dance of the Gala de Campdevànol, Festive Heritage Element of National Interest with Cobla Ripollès in Plaça la Dansa accompanied by the present authorities. An official photograph of the different authorities will be taken at the end.

21:30 Gala Dinner in the Diagonal Hall with the presence of different national and international authorities. During the dinner, parliaments of the different authorities and visualization of the documentaries prepared for the occasion on all the activities that have characterized the European Capital of the Iron 2017. When finished, in the same hall, Classical Music Concert “Opera 14 countries” with pieces from the member countries of the Ring by tenor Jordi Galan and the soprano Laura Gil. Clothes: Elegant /Smart dressing. The gala dinner is an important issue during this day. It is important for Campdevànol to organise some social activities because that is mentioned in their EU-application Europe for Citizens. So dinner is not only eating and drinking. Maybe the president of Catalonia or their member of parliament will be present. Also the jubilee book 15 years Ring will be presented during this gala dinner. It is a good opportunity for president Peter Kloo to present the members of the Ring in a short period of time.

Departure of participants. Transfer from the hotel to Gerona- or Barcelona Airport. Campdevànol will arrange the shuttle service. Any adjustments in the program are possible. We would like to welcome you in Campdevànol, European Iron Capital 2017.