



# "Live differently" pole: guideline

Three documents define the guidelines of the "living differently" pole:

- **The general charter:** it is the document guaranteeing the fundamental values and ethics of Ermitaj.
- **The "Internal Rules" :** it contains the "fixed" rules, created by the founders / owners, and describes the fundamental rights and duties of residents.
- **The "Daily Life Guide" (DLG)** concerns the organization of everyday life. It is decided and amended by the residents themselves, and must be in accordance with the charter and the Internal Rules (residents could also decide, by mutual agreement, not to have a DLG). It can govern, for example, common agreements on the management of meals, dishes, cleaning, distribution of tasks ...

# Internal Rules

## *Respect for community agreements*

- All residents must have read and be in agreement with the founding documents (charter, vision, operation, guidelines and methods of governance / decision-making) of Ermitaj.
- They are required to comply at all times with the general charter, these Internal Rules, and the DLG if there is one.
- In case of non-compliance with community agreements, consequences will be considered

## *Inclusion of new residents*

1) If someone wishes to become a resident at Ermitaj, he is first asked to carefully read all the founding documents (presentation, operation, charter and guidelines), and to ensure that his expectations and ours are compatible.

2) He then contacts us in writing to tell us about his profile, his motivations and aspirations. If the proposal interests us, we will organize a first meeting to get to know each other (ideally at least a few days).

3) After this first meeting, if the candidate-resident and the Ermitaj stakeholders wish to continue, a trial period will be decided. The candidate-resident then becomes "resident-trainee".

During this trial period, the trainee resident is subject to the same rights and duties as other residents, with the difference that he has limited decision-making power: he can issue requests for opinions, actively participate in meetings, but he cannot object.

4) The trial period will last a minimum of 6 months. Feedback meetings will take place after month 1, month 3, and month 6. If it is considered that the past 6 months have not been sufficient to make the decision (few interactions, or too many periods of absence,

for example), it is possible to extend the trial period by 6 additional months (the advantage being that the resident-trainee will have lived all seasons at the Ermitaj. Life in summer and in winter being very different).

5) At the end of the trial period, all stakeholders meet. If they consider that the test was conclusive, and that no one objects, the resident-trainee is accepted as resident for a period of one year: we then speak of "medium-term resident".

6) After this year of living at Ermitaj, all the stakeholders meet again to validate the inclusion of the new resident (the decision is taken on consent by all the stakeholders, but in case of litigation, the owners have the right to last word).

If the inclusion is validated, the resident becomes a "long-term resident" for an indefinite period.

## *Rent and compensation*

- For the use of a private space belonging to Ermitaj and / or common infrastructures, each resident will be asked for a financial contribution (rent).
- This participation will go into the working capital, which will be used to cover the costs of maintaining and improving the infrastructures and the land of Ermitaj. This working capital is supplied by all the stakeholders of Ermitaj: residents (rent), project leaders ("hosting costs") and owners. Its use will be transparent, and priorities will be defined in consultation with all stakeholders. It is the owners' responsibility to manage this working capital, and to make the final decision on the use of the funds, after consultation.
- The amount of the rent will be defined by a fixed sum (C), per resident, corresponding to the use of the common infrastructures of Ermitaj.
- To this fixed sum will be added, if necessary, a variable sum corresponding to the enjoyment of a housing unit belonging to Ermitaj (P), and determined by the size, the type of housing, and the costs of maintenance.
- Unlike (C), (P) corresponds to the amount to be paid per housing unit, not per person living there (if x people live in the same unit, (P) will be divided by x (= P / x) to know the amount payable per person)

- Minimum 25% of this rent (C + P / x) must be paid in money (which we inevitably need to meet certain costs).
- Beyond this minimum percentage, each resident has the choice: either he pays the whole (or a chosen percentage > 25% ) of his rent in money, or he contributes, in kind (working hours for Ermitaj), to the equivalent of the amount due. To this end, a "time / energy bank" will be set up, as well as a list of possible tasks, their recurrence, and an estimate of the number of working hours corresponding thereto.
- If, in the future, financial investments are made in the infrastructures (common or private) of Ermitaj with the aim of improving the quality of life of residents (electricity, heating, insulation, hot water, etc.) , the amount of the rent can be revised upwards in order to reflect the increase in maintenance costs and, if necessary, to amortize the investments. Transparent communication and consultation with the relevant stakeholders will take place beforehand.

## *Maintenance of common spaces*

- The spaces considered as common are: the hall and the cellar of the big house, the area of the bread oven, the "kitchen" building and its terrace, the sanitary unit, the dry toilets and outdoor showers, as well as the surroundings of these infrastructures. But also: the area of the "octagon", the space between the kitchen and the entrance to Ermitaj, the space "under the hornbeam", and the paths connecting each of these infrastructures, as well as the workshop.
- Residents (like all stakeholders using common areas) are responsible for ensuring that these areas are clean and tidy.
- Residents can organize themselves for the distribution of tasks via the DLG if they wish.
- Residents are asked not to take over common spaces, nor to leave their personal belongings there, except in the spaces (boxes, shelves) provided for this purpose.
- Residents are required to replace consumables (batteries, bulbs) and any items that have been broken (unless it is due to normal and prolonged wear and tear).

- If objects or infrastructure are broken / damaged, or if a problem in the common areas is found, residents are required to inform the owners.

## *Private spaces*

- Residents are required to ensure that the condition of their private accommodation does not deteriorate, at least if it belongs to Ermitaj: it is a matter of notifying / repairing / replacing what must be, like in the common areas. An inventory will be carried out before and after the occupation period.
- When a resident has his own accommodation on the land of Ermitaj (the full details will be discussed beforehand with the owners), he is required to ensure that the exterior aspect of the accommodation and its surroundings are maintained to a certain extent, in order to maintain the overall aesthetic of the place.

## *Welcoming visitors*

- If residents invite friends or family to stay at Ermitaj, they bear full responsibility.
- The inviting resident(s) is (are) required to explain to visitors how Ermitaj works, to show them the place and tell them the basic safety and behavioral standards. Visitors are of course bound to respect the founding documents of Ermitaj (charter and guidelines).
- The "inviting" resident must communicate his intentions to all those potentially concerned: he will indicate the date of arrival and the duration of the stay of his visitors, and will ensure that no one objects.
- If a resident wishes to accommodate visitors elsewhere than in his private accommodation, he must find out about the available spaces (dormitory, unoccupied room, etc.) and seek the agreement of potentially concerned stakeholders. Before their departure, visitors (or failing that, the resident responsible for visitors) are required to restore and clean the room / space they have occupied.

- If visitors do not help with common tasks during their stay, a financial contribution for the use of common infrastructure will be expected (free and conscious price with a recommended daily amount, paid by the visitor or by the inviting resident).
- In the event of prolonged and recurring stays of a visitor (partner or relative of a resident, for example), an arrangement regarding his/her participation (in tasks and / or costs) will be discussed between the visitor and all relevant stakeholders.

## Behaviour

Keep in mind that we are in a small village where rumors circulate quickly, and that our behavior and our words will impact, despite ourselves, directly the image and reputation of Ermitaj.

The general charter of Ermitaj evokes the values and attitudes to be valued in our relationships with others and our environment. We expect residents to keep these expectations in mind and strive to apply them on a daily basis.

Additionally, here are some basic rules regarding behavior:

### *Use of drugs:*

- The use of illegal drugs (according to the laws in force in Romania) is officially prohibited at Ermitaj
- We ask residents not to abuse alcohol in common areas. Drunkenness should be the exception, not the norm.
- Regarding tobacco, it is requested not to smoke in the interior common areas, and special attention must be paid to not inconveniencing non-smokers, even outdoors.

### *Noise:*

- It happens that we have to use noisy tools and machines at the Ermitaj, some animals are too.



Some noises are inevitable, others are part of the joys of community life (music, songs, party, games, children's cry, ...).

The moments of calm, conducive to rest and relaxation, being very precious in our eyes, we ask that particular attention be paid to these moments, at least at night (from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.), Sunday and public holidays. There will of course sometimes be exceptions (festivities, celebrations, events, ...)!

In general, we ask everyone to try to respect each other's needs, with common sense and kindness.

## *Pets:*

- If a resident wishes to bring or acquire a pet (dog, cat, or other), a discussion will take place beforehand with all the stakeholders concerned, and certain conditions may be set, depending on the number of animals already present at Ermitaj. Refusal is a possibility.
- Residents assume full responsibility for their pets, as well as any damage / incidents they may cause.

## *Use of water and electricity resource*

- Due to our "off-grid" condition, you will have noticed that our water and electricity supply is limited. Residents (like all stakeholders) are therefore asked to use them sparingly and with common sense, to ensure that others can also enjoy them.
- Certain energy-intensive electrical appliances such as hair dryers, toasters, etc. should therefore be banned.

## Use of firewood

- Residents, like all stakeholders at Ermitaj, have the option of using wood from Ermitaj, for heating or cooking.
- A counterpart will be expected (financial or in kind, via the time bank), in proportion to the quantity of wood consumed.
- The exploitation of firewood at Ermitaj has no commercial objective.

The counterpart requested for the use of wood will be used to finance the maintenance of forest areas and the costs of implementing and maintaining a 'coppice system'. The counterpart can also be used for the creation / improvement of infrastructure or equipment related to wood management. In addition, it encourages people to act responsibly regarding use of this resource.

- (A working group will be set up to study the relevance of a coppice system, its integration into the overall design of the Ermitaj and to determine the technical details related to its implementation and management, as well as the costs afferent.)
- It is forbidden to burn green wood (that is to say that is not dry), for reasons of safety, ecology and efficiency.
- Ideally, residents are supposed to split and dry their wood themselves. If a resident takes, for his consumption (or that of his guests), wood that has already been dried and split , he is required to replenish the wood supply: he will split wood and put it to dry as soon as possible. As the wood takes up to 2 years to dry, it is important to provide sufficient wood reserves to have a constant availability of dry wood.
- When a tree is felled and cut on a path, pasture or mowing area, the area must be cleaned and all residue of branches must be removed
- The owners will indicate the trees / coppices that can be harvested on the land.



## Use of the workshop

The workshop is a collective space: owners, residents, and some project holders can have access to it.

- Each user will have the possibility of having a storage space for his tools / personal items. The rest of the tools and infrastructures are common.
- Like the other common areas, users are requested to keep the workshop clean and tidy so that it can be used by others.
- Tools should be returned to their assigned place after each use.
- If someone is working on a project for several consecutive days, they can leave their workspace unchanged overnight, after making sure it doesn't bother other users.
- If any tool, furniture or infrastructure is damaged / broken, this should be communicated to all concerned. We will then try to assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether the damage is due to normal wear and tear, or if it is due to improper use.
- In the event of proven misuse (inappropriate use, carelessness or drunkenness), the person who caused the damage (or the stakeholder (s) responsible for this person) will have to repair, replace or reimburse the object / infrastructure.
- A stock of "consumables" (hardware, blades, abrasives, etc.) will be available for projects related to the overall management and maintenance of Ermitaj, and replenished by working capital. If you notice a shortage (or imminent depletion) in the stock, notify the person (s) in charge of supply.
- Regarding personal projects, project holders and residents are requested to provide themselves with consumables.