

## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL USING LETS

- workshop at 2015 National LETS Conference

Tim explained that for international trade, there is an exchange rate set in CES which is more realistic than the official rates.

Alison reported on her experience travelling to Europe, as follows:

Some individual countries have their own exchange network we can join, eg SEL in France, also a bicycle group in Holland.

In France SEL is equivalent to LETS and stands for something like Society for Exchange Local. There is a branch of SEL which is specifically for travel, called Route des SEL (translates to Salt Road). Here is the web site

<http://route-des-sel.org/>

Australians can join Route des SEL by filling in the application on the web site. It's all in French so use Google translate.

To contact the team at Route des SEL for help, use the contact form on the site here:

<http://route-des-sel.org/contact>

Messages are automatically redirected to the volunteers involved and they write back in English with helpful hints.

It is free (in terms of Euros) for international applications to join Route des SEL on one condition, that you offer accommodation too. There is an admin fee of 2 units per year. A unit is 1 night which is converted into LETS units at the rate of 1 night = 60 units.

Try searching the Route des SEL web site for actual hosts/rooms using Google Translate or ask the volunteer team how to circulate your want to French members.

To see exchanges in overseas countries go to this page on CES

<http://www.community-exchange.org/>

and look at the list of exchanges world-wide. For example if you click on France, a page opens showing just the French groups. Some of them have their own web site listed.

In the first column if you click on the name of the group it will open a registration form and you can find a contact email there. It's a good idea to write to the group contact/coordinator and ask if they have an offerings list published elsewhere, or a newsletter which promotes their local trading events. You can also write to ask for what you want. Tell them a little about yourself and whoever else is travelling with you, when you want to visit and for how long. Ask if they have anyone willing to offer accommodation through CES. People sometimes don't want to actually post an offering for accommodation but would rather respond to a request so they have some control over who they host. I found they were all very helpful.

You can search the offerings of remote international groups on CES.

Log in to CES and click on Offerings

Scroll to the bottom of the page and under Remote Servers click on Select

and choose Global

Then all the "latest" international offerings come up

type your search terms in the box at the top, eg accommodation, then try room, etc, also maybe use the relevant foreign words for these. Click Search.

You can post a Want in any of the remote groups -

Log into CES

Hover mouse over Wants and click on Add Want

Add to Server – choose Global

Select Exchange – choose from the drop-down menu.

## Other currencies

There followed a little discussion of local currencies: Totnes Pound, Bristol Pound, Brixton Pound etc, which are established by the local chamber of commerce to promote local shopping in traditional family-owned businesses and avoid the influx of multinational chainstores.

<http://communityforge.net/>

It's another community exchange network