

May 16th 2021, sunny 26°



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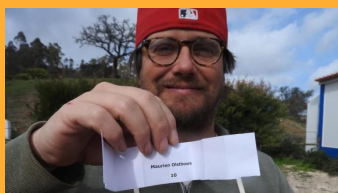
## Painting in October

Thursday 5 till Thursday 12 October



## New Year's lottery

Of course, we organised our annual New Year's lottery in the beginning of January. Maurien, Vibeke, Mats and Lars from Utrecht are the winners. Congratulations! And unless Corona throws a spanner in the works, we'll see you again this year.



## HEALTHCARE

The first jab is in. At the exact time we had arranged. Now, we'll just have to wait 12 weeks for the second. Astra Zeneca. Also known locally as the poor man's vaccine.



Portugal has an excellent healthcare system. It comes 12th on the global WHO list and 9th on the European list. Healthcare is free in Portugal. It has been laid down by law that everybody is entitled to healthcare. Only in some cases, you pay a small contribution to consultations, tests, and medication. Apart from this social healthcare system, Portugal boasts two other systems: the one is connected to specific professional fields, and the other is private care. The medics work in all three systems. There are far too few doctors, which means, especially in social healthcare, that the waiting lists are long.

A great good is that you get to take test results home with you. X-rays, CDs, conclusions: they are yours and you decide which doctor or institution you join forces with. Furthermore, Portuguese healthcare is working with a data system to which all doctors have access and in which your details are entered, as are the medication you use and your test results. It is all part of remote care. Thanks to its national strategic tele-healthcare plan PENTS, Portugal is taking the lead across the world. Just google it if you are interested.

## EUTHANASIA

Obviously, it is not all roses. On 29 January last, the leftist Portuguese parliament adopted the euthanasia legalisation bill. However, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, the conservative and deeply religious president, has submitted the case to the highest Portuguese court, asking to examine whether the law is constitutional. The constitutional tribunal found it was not and annulled the act retrospectively. One of the passages was that a doctor who refuses to practise euthanasia is obliged to name a doctor or institution willing to practise euthanasia. I do agree this does not seem acceptable. Now, the ball is back of the parliamentary court. They can revoke the bill or amend the relevant passages.

Back to the jab: I was vaccinated by a young Portuguese man who looked as if he could be a TV series. When he saw my name, he asked if I was German. When I said I came from the Netherlands, he told me he had worked at the Radboud university Medical Centre in Nijmegen. We got talking and when we said goodbye, he called, 'Doeeeeiii!' So funny!

## MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Portugal is going well. By the end of February, in the midst of the Corona crisis, the government decided to treat migrants and refugees who are waiting for their residence permit as permanent residents until 1 June. As a result, they are entitled to healthcare, among other things. Applicants only need to show their application for residence or asylum to gain access to the healthcare system and benefits; they are also allowed to open bank accounts and enter into rent contracts. 'In these exceptional times, the rights of migrants must be guaranteed', the Home Office stated. 'People should not have their rights to health and public services taken away because their applications have not yet been processed.'

The Committee on Human Rights of the Council of Europe applauds the humane Portuguese approach and considers it to be an example for the rest of Europe. Who is next?

## CERCA SANITÁRIA

Obviously, the whole world is still in the grasp of the Corona virus. We have finally had new guests, the first since November. All the children and grandchildren were there, as well as relatives of my daughter-in-law. In a few days, a French lady is due who will stay for some time. After that, things will start to get pleasantly busy again.

Early this month, there was an outbreak of Corona among the migrant workers in São Teotónio. There are many, especially Nepalese, all picking fruit. And just like anywhere else, their housing is meagre, and they are forced to live on top of each other. Distancing is no option and sufficient hygiene is hard to uphold. As a result, São Teotónio had to lock down.

The *cerca sanitária* came into force. You weren't allowed to enter or leave the municipality. Roads were barricaded and military police was checking the required documents at the few available crossroads. Only necessary travel was allowed.



On 11 May, all measures were relaxed. They have hardly bothered us at all. We could all do our thing. And we were wonderful to have our family with us.

Nel