

## Tzu Chi Opens First Representative Office in Europe, in Paris

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Tuesday, 28 May 2013 16:42

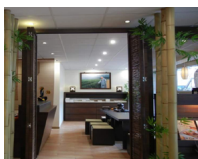
---



On April 21, the Tzu Chi Foundation opened its first representative office in Europe, in the 13th arrondissement of Paris. A total of 80 people attended this historic event, including volunteers from eight countries in Europe as well as from Taiwan, Jordan and Australia.

Leading the delegation from Taiwan was Stephen Huang, the foundation's global coordinator of Tzu Chi volunteers. "Before, we had no spiritual home in Europe," he told those present. "Study groups or retreats were held in volunteers' houses. Now we have a home. It is a place where we can settle down; it has a great significance for this era. Everyone can easily come together in this place."

The office is close to the city center of Paris, in the 13th arrondissement, which is a district popular with new Chinese immigrants. It will serve many roles -- a place to attract more Bodhisattvas, a center of cultivation, a place to express goodness and a provide support and guidance for the volunteers. On the opening day, the office brought joy and hope in the hearts of everyone, as they walked below the red ribbons. It aroused in them many emotions and the hope that a dream will become a reality.



The opening was a very happy event which mobilized volunteers from all over Europe for several weeks of preparation. From April 19, they started to arrive in Paris, from London, Hamburg and Munich, Italy, Rotterdam and Amsterdam, Austria and Sweden. The members in Paris made preparations to welcome them well in advance. They made ready not only for the opening but also for the future of the office as a place of spiritual cultivation. In total, 80 volunteers came, with a single wish to celebrate their new home that will be a path of wisdom.

The opening of the office was a milestone in the foundation's history. So members from the other parts of the world came to celebrate this happy event. Stephen Huang led the delegation from Taiwan, which included an interview team from Da Ai Television, faculty and students from Tzu Chi College of Technology, Ci Yin, a volunteer from Jordan, and Lin Yu-kwan, a volunteer from Australia. While it was a happy event for everyone, they saw its deep significance, in looking back on the past and preparing the future through sharing their experiences and planting the Jing Si philosophy deeply in a new continent.



The new office is close to L'Avenue d'Italie, which is 1,300 meters long and 30 meters wide. It

## Tzu Chi Opens First Representative Office in Europe, in Paris

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Tuesday, 28 May 2013 16:42

---

has several metro exits close to the office. The avenue is broad and lined with trees and elegant buildings in the French style; many pigeons fly overhead. Walk along the avenue for five minutes and you come to the new office.

On the window is the logo. Above this is written in large Chinese characters 'Taiwan Tzu Chi Foundation French Liaison Office', the first house of the foundation in Europe. What is hard for people to imagine is that outside is the romantic atmosphere of France; but, after you enter the door of the office, what you see is something completely different – a statue of the Buddha, rows of bamboo banks, Chinese tables and chairs and a wooden floor. The refined Chinese style makes the place quiet and warm; the ambience of Tzu Chi remains the same, abroad as at home.