



douzelage.org

European Town Twinning

ALTEA : BELLAGIO : BUNDORAN : CHOJNA : GRANVILLE : HOLSTEBRO

HOUFFALIZE : JUDENBURG : KARKKILA : KÖSZEG : KÖTZTING

MEERSSEN : NIEDERANVEN : OXELÖSUND

PREVEZA : SESIMBRA : SHERBORNE

SIGULDA : SUSICE : TÛRI

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ALTEA (E)
BELLAGIO (I)
BUNDORAN (IRL)
CHOJNA (PL)
GRANVILLE (F)
HOLSTEBRO (DK)
HOUFFALIZE (B)
JUDENBURG (A)
KARKKILA (FIN)
KÖSZEG (H)
KÖTZTING (D)
MEERSSEN (NL)
NIEDERANVEN (L)
OXELÖSUND (S)
PREVEZA (GR)
SESIMBRA (P)
SHERBORNE (GB)
SIGULDA (LV)
SUSICE (CZ)
TÛRI (EST)

28th Douzelage Conference

Bundoran

14th – 17th Apr 2005

Final Minutes



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ALTEA

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Felipe COELLO
Gumersindo HIDALGO

Esther ORTS
Pepa PERLES
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Maria Pepa ROSTOLL ZARAGOZI

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Carlo SANCASSANO

BUNDORAN

Tiernan BRADY

Joe MCNULTY

CHOJNA

Janusz Cezary SALAMOCZYK

GRANVILLE

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Agnes GLENN

Frédérique HEURGUIER
Edith POUILLAIN
Mathilde PROST

HOLSTEBRO

Mette Grith SØRENSEN
Dorte STORPER

Jacob STORPER

HOUFFALIZE

Lionel COLLA
Manuela DI PINTO
Marie DUBOIS

Alphonse HENRARD
Luc NOLLOMONT
Anne REDOTTE

JUDENBURG

Franz BACHMANN
Elisabeth CRESNAR
Michael LANGGNER
Wilhelm SCHNEDL

Maximilian SCHOETTL
Martin SIX
Andrea ZECHNER

KARKKILA

Eino HUOTARI
Minna KARHUNEN (MAYOR)

Tuire LEHTI-CHATTA

KÖSZEG

Marton BAKOS
Bela BASTHY
István MATRÁI

Andras RIGELER
Ilona TÁLOS-MÁTRÁI

KÖTZTING

Johannes KERSCHER
Wolfgang KERSCHER
Thomas LORITZ

Evi MAURER
Günther PECHER

Betsy GILLESSEN
 Peter GILLESSEN
 Martijn HOSMAN
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MEERSSEN

Joep MERTENS
 Irene RAEDTS
 Nico VAN DE VLIET
 Timo WINGBERMÜHLE

Stuart ATKINSON
 Claude BRAUN
 Monique BRAUN
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 Reine KOHNEN
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NIEDERANVEN

Liliane MOUTON
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OXELÖSUND

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 Kenneth RODRICK
 Benita VIKSTRÖM (MAYOR)
 Christer WARGERT
 Gunilla WARGERT
 Annie WESTLIN

Kisti IFIGENIA
 Konstantinos KALENTZIS

PREVEZA

Barbara ZANDRAVELI

Christina CONCEIÇÃO
 Felicia DA COSTA
 Maria DO CARMO SERROTE

SESIMBRA

Francisco FIRMINO
 Amadeu PENIM (MAYOR)

Alan ASHBY
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 Mike BALFOUR
 Jeremy BARKER
 Linda BYGRAVE
 Rob BYGRAVE
 Paul CARLING
 Grace HARVEY

SHERBORNE

Brian HEFFNER
 Stuart HUNTER
 Chris MACADIE
 Kim RAHRAJ
 Peter SOOLE
 Hugh TAYLOR
 Sarah WHITTICK
 Steve UNDERWOOD

Anezka NOVA
 Ivana SVOBODOVA

SUŠICE

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Kaia IVA (MAYOR)
 Triin KAASIKU
 Aet SARV

TÜRI

Katrin SOOMETS
 Triin TOOME

Patricia SALVATORE-MOES, secretary

PRESIDENCY

Ed WEBER, chairman

Comments to the different agenda points

I) General Meeting

1) Speech of welcome by the President.

Mr Ed Weber, acting as the president of the Douzelage, welcomed all delegates, especially the representative from Bellagio Dr Carlo Sancassano and the mayors attending this meeting, Mrs Minna Karhunen, mayor of Karkkila, Mrs Benita Vikström, mayor of Oxelösund, Mrs Kaia Iva, mayor of Türi, Mr Ger Kockelkorn, mayor of Meerssen and Mr Amadeu Penim, mayor of Sesimbra. He also welcomed the three young people from Judenburg, who did come to present the redesign of the Douzelage Website and all the people from the Education meeting, present again at this spring meeting, all together under the motto Mr Tiernan Brady had risen in Granville: "Let's grow and do more". Finally he gave special thanks to the town of Bundoran and the local Douzelage Committee for the warm welcome and the excellent work they have fulfilled in organising this conference.

B) Business Matters

1) Approval of the Granville GM Minutes [Annex A] 30th Sep – 3rd Oct 04

The Granville Meeting Minutes and the Workshop reports that had been published on the Douzelage Website prior to the meeting are unanimously accepted. Only one amendment had been made: A name of the Karkkila delegation had been corrected.

2) Approval of the accounts 2004 – 2005

Referring to the Bellagio GM [para B.1.b) of the Minutes] it was agreed that the Douzelage financial year should end on March 31st. According to the extra extension agreed in the Judenburg GM, the accounts presented cover the period from 01 May 2004 to 31 March 2005 [ANNEX B].

Mr Claude Braun, treasurer of the Douzelage presented the accounts and gave a detailed explanation of the income and expenses, which were unanimously approved.

The account actually shows a surplus of 2.015,85 €.

3) Annual Douzelage membership

It was unanimously agreed to keep the annual fee at 300 € according to the decision taken in Sesimbra [Sesimbra, para 2, 15/08/2003]. Granville confirmed again to pay the missing membership fees for the years 2003 and 2004.

The president remarked that for the payment exemption of the accession year of Oxelösund (1998) that had been agreed in Granville, the exemption amount is not as said then 300 € but only 100 € (fees of the year 1998). So Oxelösund has to pay 200 € as fee for 2005 only in order to be correct with the principle that says that in its year of accession a member town does not have to pay the membership fees. Oxelösund agreed and promised to pay the missing 200 € as soon as possible.

4) Simultaneous Translation accounts

It was unanimously agreed to keep the annual contribution for maintenance and transport of the translation equipment at 50 €, according to the decision taken in Oxelösund. [Oxelösund GM Minutes, para 2a and 2b., 16/05/2002] [Annex C].

The non-identified payment for 2004 has finally been recognised as coming from Bellagio. Houffalize and Sesimbra promised to pay the outstanding fees as soon as they have arrived home after the meeting. Some towns used the facility to pay in cash to the treasurer. The payment of Altea (100 €) has been confirmed by a copy of the transaction; they could present. Nico van de Vliet insisted once more on the fact that every payment should be done with a transaction information, allowing to identify the pertaining invoice and the originator. The president informed the delegates that from now on the translation

equipment account will be held by the Douzelage treasurer and that Meerssen will no longer have to deal with those financial questions. He thanked once more Timo Wingbermhühle for the efforts he did in managing this account. Nico informed the delegates that he will leave Meerssen in the next future and that this is also an argument of why it is better to keep the translation equipment account in Niederanven. That is why someone else will have to be found to take care of the equipment. The president said he hopes that Nico will stay with the Douzelage and that maybe Martijn Hosman, as an informatics' specialist, could take over the job of handling the translation equipment.

5) Programme for further meetings

Autumn	2005	MEERSSEN	22-25 September 2005
Spring	2006	BELLAGIO	to be confirmed (cancelled by Bellagio letter dtd 25 May 05)
Autumn	2006	SHERBORNE	12-15 October 2006
	2007	KÖSZEG	20-23 April 2007
	2008	TÜRI	dates will be confirmed later
	2009	ALTEA	dates to be confirmed

You find annexed to this Agenda the list of the Douzelage Meetings. [\[ANNEX D\]](#).

Sherborne confirmed that the date for their General Meeting in 2006 will be from 12th - 15th October.

As it was foreseen that the spring meeting 2006 should be in Bellagio, the president asked the delegate of Bellagio, Dr Carlo Sancassano if they could confirm this. He said that as they had important changes in their town council and local politics and as he is assisting this meeting as a kind of "observer", he is unable to confirm if a meeting in Bellagio can be possible as soon. The president asked the delegates if any other town would be interested in holding the meeting if Bellagio could not afford it. No other town could give a binding answer on this matter.

KÖSZEG confirmed their meeting in spring 2007 and the dates will be from the 20th to the 23rd of April. MEERSSEN said that they could probably hold the project meeting in autumn 2007 in their town. TÜRI also confirmed their meeting for 2008. ALTEA announced that they could organize the spring meeting in 2009. The president thanked them for their spontaneous decision and their commitment to fill the schedule of the meetings.

PREVEZA promised to talk to their local authorities in order to discuss when they will be able to host a meeting. Mr Pecher from KÖTZTING said that they can only be able to host a project meeting in autumn, as they have not the possibility to accommodate 120 delegates in or around their town. The president reminded that for being subsidised the towns have to choose whether it is a meeting and then the minimum required is 5 delegates per town or whether it is a conference where the minimum is 3 delegates per town only and the grants can be much higher. SUSICE said that they will elect a new mayor in 2 years and that only after these elections they can be able to decide on organising a meeting. CHOJNA promised to inform about their possibilities in Meerssen, depending on whether they will get the reimbursement of the subsidy back from the EU for the former meetings. The president informed that, some days ago, Judenburg and Sesimbra have informed that they got the confirmation of the reimbursement of the EU subsidy for their General Meetings. Mr Pecher thought that it could eventually be easier for the new east EU towns to get subsidised, as the EU authorities might encourage the new partners to participate at EU actions. MEERSSEN said that this might be right and it is a pity we do not have a town from Slovakia as Mr Ján Figel' is originated from this country. KÖSZEG gave some more hints how to reduce the expenses and said they will host the delegates in private houses or in youth hostels.

SHERBORNE raised again the question of whether only one General Meeting in spring and a second meeting being only a project meeting would be a good idea. The president reminded that this decision had already been taken and approved in Sesimbra and that this is not a point of discussion at this moment. MEERSSEN asked if the EU subsidising could be influenced on this fact.

6) Action points

The presidency was asked to try to have a meeting with the new EU Commissioner, Mr Ján Figel', who has taken on his new duty the 1st of November 2004. In addition the towns had been asked to get in contact with their national EU-representatives in order to explain to them what Douzelage means and what it needs to survive in the future. [\[ANNEX E\]](#)

The president informed that the presidency had sent a letter to Mr Ján Figel' and that only two days ago the Douzelage has got a positive answer from his EU office. Mr Kockelkorn underlined that this is a very positive sign for the Douzelage and that it is very important to stay in close contact with the EU commissioner.

The meeting is previewed to take place in Brussels in the next future, together with Mr Pierre Mairesse, Acting Director of the Directorate for Youth, Sport and Relationships with the Citizen. Meerssen as well as Houffalize will be invited to participate to this meeting in order to discuss the subsidising and the future of the Douzelage.

Also the fact that Sesimbra had Mr Vale de Almeida, the Head of Cabinet of M. Juan Manuel Barroso as a guest speaker in their General Meeting, could be helpful for the Douzelage. SESIMBRA announced that for the moment they are unable to do more on that level.

MEERSEN remarked that having Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene, the former Belgian Prime Minister and Vice-President of the European Convention as a guest speaker can also have a positive impact on the Douzelage image. Mr Alphonse Henrard, the vice-president, announced that he has a good personal contact to Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene and that he could make the contact to Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene to make sure that its presence is ensured for the Meerssen meeting.

Mr Sancassano from BELLAGIO informed that a few weeks ago, by chance, they had the occasion to meet the head of cabinet of Mr Fratini, the Italian representative in the Commission, who was asking Mr. Sancassano if Bellagio had something going on with Europe and the Commission. Mr. Sancassano took the opportunity to shortly present the Douzelage and explain what it means. He will try to stay in touch with Mr. Fratini and he will write a small relation about what the Douzelage is and what it does. The President emphasized that for all the delegations it is very important to contact the national MEPs in order to make them conscious of the Douzelage's role.

KÖTZTING said that because the commission has taken notice of the Douzelage right now, it is a very important moment for all the delegations to send some letters to their national MEP's. Delegations should do this in the very near future and should not see that as a project for next year. It's right now that this should be done because the Commission is now working out the financial aspect for the next five, six years. If they have taken their decision, for the medium term, they will not be able to change it later on, even if they are willing to do so. We should therefore act now and attract their attention right now. Kötzing further informed that they have sent out three letters to MEP's of the cultural committee and that they got back two friendly and favourable answers.

The president confirmed the statement of Kötzing and asked once more all delegations to make this contact as soon as possible.

NIEDERANVEN remarked that in the case a delegation undertakes steps in this matter, they should inform the presidency office, in order to give them the possibility to follow the development of the official steps taken.

JUDENBURG said that as the EU Commissioner Mr. Ján Figel' from Slovakia is such an important person for the Douzelage, they are asking why the two ladies from Zvolen in Slovakia who were taking part in the meeting of Granville, were not invited to this meeting. Meanwhile they have improved their English as during Granville they didn't speak a word of English.

GRANVILLE replied that they had a link to the secondary school of ZVOLEN and that they still have a contact. Granville had invited the delegates of Zvolen to see if a twinning between Granville and Zvolen would be possible. Unfortunately the mayor of Zvolen couldn't come to Granville due to an election of European MP. Actually a delegation of Granville is in Zvolen because they have a Comenius project running.

The president underlined that the ladies from Zvolen had been in Granville because of another meeting and other contacts they had. If Zvolen would have been invited, also Prienai and any other interested town would have to be invited. It is up to the organizing town to invite whoever they want, but the Douzelage has no engagement towards any new town for the moment. Whoever wants to assist to a meeting will be welcome, but then at his own expense. Until the Douzelage has not taken a decision to proceed to a next step of enlargement, the Douzelage cannot invite interested people as guests to the meetings. As soon as the Douzelage has officially asked for applications and has agreed on eventual candidate towns, they can be invited and will then also be included in the application sent to Brussels.

On the question from KARKKILA how delegations can get basic material on the Douzelage, on its aim and what it does, the president replied that most of this information is already now available on Internet. The documents to download are available on the web and will also be made available on the new site as soon as it will be taken in service.

Granville advised that the Minister delegate for European Affairs Mrs Claudie Haigneré, on promotion tour for Europe, will visit Granville and Avranches, a town not far from Granville. In order to discover the Douzelage, Mrs Haigneré has been invited to speak in Granville about Europe and the Douzelage. By this the Douzelage will be known better and hopefully get a stronger support from the French institutions dealing European affairs.

Business link: A business link has been set up as an example for the town of Houffalize. Member towns are free to develop similar economical presentations. On the new website this possibility will also be given. Interested towns who have no IT-people able to do this, can ask for assistance at the secretary's office.

A new forum "Project ideas and partner search" had been installed but cancelled later on because the project presented by Mr Christer Wargert had to be cancelled due to financial reasons.

Mr Cezary Salamonczyk, the delegate from CHOJNA, read a letter of their mayor, Mr Konarski, who expressed his regrets of not being able to assist to the meeting because of a 60 years war end celebration. On behalf of all the member towns, the president thanked Mr. Konarski for his statement and thanked for his commitment in the Douzelage.

7) CEMR document on Twinning

The CEMR had informed the Douzelage on its publication [Twinning / Jumelages \[ANNEX F\]](#). The version of the letter is printable and available on the website. The president confirmed that this is a very interesting document that is worth to be consulted. As the CEMR works closely together with the EU Commission, delegations are urged to get in contact with the national representatives of the CEMR, in case they prepare projects or have questions on twinning matters.

8) Douzelage enlargement

[a] New towns interested in Douzelage

[SLIEMA](#) in Malta – Mr. Chris MacAdie reported on that beautiful town. [\[ANNEX G\]](#). He explained that Sliema is a very internationally oriented prosperous town with 12183 inhabitants that has tourism as an important source of income. Mr. Chris MacAdie informed that this first contact had been made on the basis of a postcard.

Mr. Jeremy Barker had asked by mail to report on a new town in Lithuania recommended by Mr Mike Peart formerly Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Lithuania. [\[ANNEX H\]](#) As Mr. Peart knows the country very well, he knows other towns which, he thinks, could be absolutely suitable and interested in the Douzelage. Unfortunately M. Barker had not yet received the documentation as well as the name of the town as actually promised to be available for this conference, so that this point will be put on the agenda again for the Meerssen meeting.

The president repeated what had been said so often before. The Douzelage is not ready to enlarge before any changes on a financial basis will have been made possible. He said that the Douzelage cannot go and ask the Commissioner Mr Ján Figel' to get better subsidised because it has financial problems, when it goes on enlarging the association regardless to the then upcoming costs.

The president said that for the moment he will keep the addresses of SLIEMA on the address list without any promise from the Douzelage side. He repeated that the conditions of the enlargement should be made very clear. A kind of questionnaire should be worked out and there should also be an official application form. All decisions and discussions that had been done on a former stage have to be put in one document and only on the basis of this document; decisions for accepting new towns should be taken. If a town corresponds to the defined conditions, the application forms will be presented for decision by the Douzelage Presidency in a General Meeting.

KÖSZEG said that, as they will organize in the near future a general meeting, they wanted to know (in Meerssen for example) at least one year before their meeting who they should invite.

The president confirmed that new candidates can only be invited up from that moment that they will be accepted. Their invitation will then also be supported by Brussels. Until that moment eventual invited towns can only be the guest of the inviting town and cannot be financially supported by the Douzelage.

CHOJNA underlined that, based on the experience gained in the "Köszeg case", a kind of rule of how new towns can be invited to become an eventual candidate are absolutely necessary.

CHOJNA and NIEDERANVEN confirmed that there have to be rules of the enlargement procedure and that absolutely no private interference can be made on that level. A new contact has to be made officially and only by following the official rules of procedure.

MEERSSEN underlined that based on former decisions it is the task of the president to search for new candidates after a clear mandate of the General Meeting.

9) Douzelage in the World Wide Web

[a] Douzelage Website

The president introduces and welcomes Mr John Pettersson, the Douzelage Webmaster for joining this meeting. The president informed that he had personally invited John Pettersson as he was not a member of the Oxelösund delegation. The redesign of the Douzelage Website being one of the most important features for the future, presenting the new site is worth enough to have the webmaster in the meeting. The travel costs of Mr. Pettersson will be supported by the Douzelage account. This is also applicable for half of the travel costs of the students from Judenburg. The travel costs of these three youngsters will be supported half by Judenburg and half by the Douzelage account.

The new designed Website has been presented by the three students from Austria, Mike Langgner, Martin Six and Max Schoettl as well as the Douzelage Web manager John Pettersson. [ANNEX I]

After a first test and update period in the next few months, an IT-Workshop is foreseen for the next meeting in Meerssen. The president thanked Mr Pettersson for his excellent work and encouraged the three students to continue working on this professional project they have achieved together with Mr John Pettersson. He said that it is very important that the idea of having two levels on the Website, one public and one private (only available for Douzelage members) is an urgent matter that has to be realized as soon as possible.

[b] Douzelage Contact addresses

In order to maintain a complete and up to date contact list, all present delegates were kindly requested to check the list of contact addresses [ANNEX J] and inform about the amendments that have to be made. It is also important and much easier that every town uses only one major contact address.

HOLSTEBRO reminded that their post address has changed and that every town should use the new one.

The Mayor of KARKKILA informed that they didn't know that the agenda and its annexes were to be found on the www.douzelage.org website. As their committee had changed completely the new people in charge were not aware of this feature. The president invited Karkkila to get in contact with the secretary in case they encounter problems or need information in the future.

10) Presenting the Douzelage

[a] Douzelage - Who we are!

The revised document "Douzelage - Who we are" circulated prior to the meeting. [ANNEX K] was meant to serve for official purpose. Everybody should be able to consult at any moment the document and be informed about what the Douzelage is. This document, downloadable on the Website can and should be updated at any time it becomes necessary.

[b] Douzelage - What we do!

The draft document "Douzelage – What we do" also circulated prior to the meeting. [ANNEX L] resumes all the important activities the Douzelage has ever realized. It is very important to get a complete view of the association and above all to show to the public and officials what the Douzelage is able to. That is why every town was asked to send in as much as possible documentation about their actions (photos and explanations). All the work shops (the names of the invited celebrities) and education activities should be

documented in the best way, so that the Douzelage can leave in the readers mind a picture of its quality and commitment on the European level. The president underlined that all this information and especially the names of the important people involved are a good publicity for the Douzelage and should absolutely be continued in the best way.

The president pointed up as an example the article of Mr Jeremy Barker, published in 2002 in the local newspaper "Dorset Life" telling about the Douzelage as being a special twinning association, gives a very good example of how the Douzelage can be presented in a written document.

The summary document of all discussion points on the web is also being updated and the president asked all the delegates to check their files in order to have all missing minutes available.

OXELÖSUND asked if these documents could not be presented in a more abbreviated version, becoming more easily printable. The president proposed that for that reason a kind of information folder of the Douzelage should be prepared. A first draft could be presented and discussed in Meerssen. Sherborne proposed their help for revising the English text. As for the realisation on the financial basis, solutions could also be found on a sponsoring level. Susice proposed to put this folder on the Website later on.

11) Preveza letter & Mayors Meeting

Preveza proposed to bring concrete proposals that will lead to actions that will be useful for the citizens and for the local economy (tourism f. ex.). [ANNEX M] + [ANNEX N].

The president informed that the presidency office did reply on behalf of the Douzelage to the Mayor of Preveza Mr Miltiadis-Ilias Klapas saying that all were very pleased at his interest in the Douzelage. All the items (economy and tourism) he wanted to have discussed in a meeting are, in the eyes of the Douzelage association, very important matters that should be developed in the future, parallel to the main subjects that had been mostly education and culture exchanges until now.

[a] Mayors Meeting

After a former discussion in Granville about where this meeting should take place, Preveza now proposed that the meeting will be in Preveza from the 20th until the 21st of October 2005. As the organization costs are very high, they can only do it if they get subsidised. Therefore Preveza has chosen an environmental theme "Environment-thermalism-curative springs", interesting for the participants and putting the meeting within the frame of an EU proposed theme.

NIEDERANVEN remarked that the EU Commission will probably not subsidise only "Touristic" theme lead meetings, where only officials meet.

PREVEZA answered that this is the main reason why they chose to treat the thermalism theme at the same time as the mayor's meeting. The president thanked Preveza for their commitment and asked the delegates to inform their mayors about this meeting in time. He suggested Preveza to contact Mrs Manuela di Pinto from Houffalize in case they need any help for the subsidising procedure. As the documents have to be in Brussels at the 1st of June 2005, Preveza insisted on the fact that the latest enrolment date for participating is the 8th of May 2005.

The President proposed them to invite an official specialist on twinning affairs from Brussels as this could eventually have a positive effect on the subsidising acceptance. Preveza answered that they have foreseen to invite from each town the mayor and one representative of the local Douzelage committee.

KÖTZTING said that they got the information too late and that they could not inform their mayor. They will do this and give a reaction very soon.

SHERBORNE had not yet seen the e-mail, but as soon as they will be home again, they will have a contact and inform Preveza as soon as possible.

HOLSTEBRO asked if, as they are not supported by their mayor and as they do not have a specialist on thermalism, they can nevertheless participate at the meeting. Preveza confirmed that they are welcome in any case.

CHOJNA asked information about the enrolment papers and the financial identification documents. The President informed that the documents had been put on the Website.

Köszeg informed that for their mayor English is not the first language and that he may have problems to follow the discussion. Preveza answered that this might not be a major problem.

HOUFFALIZE supported the project of Preveza. Though they are expecting the nomination of a new mayor within a few weeks and even if the new mayor would not attend the meeting, there would be two representatives from Houffalize. The vice-president M. Alphonse Henrard stressed on the importance of the preparation of this meeting. It would be interesting to have all the items that are planned to be discussed, so that the attendees can prepare the conference. He proposed their help for preparing the application documents and reminded Preveza of the importance of preparing the meeting description in the due way for Brussels.

NIEDERANVEN remarked that the elections of a new mayor will take place in October and that until then it will be unclear who may definitely come as a Mayor of Niederanven.

MEERSSEN was a little bit puzzled about the going together of the two different matters. For Meerssen the aim of the meeting was not quite clear. In their opinion it would be a good opportunity to discuss, as initially announced, the question "What could be the significance of Douzelage and the future from the standpoint of the municipalities". Later on the theme changed to Thermalism, a theme that is of no interest for the municipality of Meerssen. If thermalism will be the main point of discussion, they will probably not attend, on the other hand if the first subject would be treated, their mayor would be present.

PREVEZA answered that they need both and need the one for the coverage of the other because funding only for the mayors meeting was not possible. Preveza would like every mayor to be present.

The Mayor of KARKKILA Mrs Minna Karhunen informed that she will not be able to come to the meeting.

SHERBORNE informed that they will have elections in May and that they will have a new mayor. They will try their best to find someone to come to the meeting along with the mayor.

TURI will have elections at that time and will not attend this meeting.

CHOJNA will be participating but would like to have at least half of the Douzelage towns represented.

After having received all these information, the GRANVILLE delegates will once again discuss with their mayor about his participation to the mayors meeting.

SESIMBRA said that they will have local elections at that time but that they will do their best to participate.

The president resumed and suggested to discuss the Mayor's meeting once more during the General meeting in Meerssen.

[b] Tourism

The president raised the question if the towns are interested in creating once more a "tourism working group", as it has already been set up several times before, but unfortunately never with a great success. Jeremy Barker and Alessandro Nettuno tried in the past to get more interest on this theme but without too much response. As this is however an important element of the EU economy and also for many of the Douzelage towns, the theme needs to be re-discussed again and again.

Jeremy Barker congratulates Preveza for the excellent document they have presented and reported on the efforts made some years ago: "We did at one point give each different town a particular responsibility and tourism is one of them but they all, except education, at the end just faded out and all, actually, were valuated up with gourmet markets, excellent in their way. Tourism actually failed at nearly every town simply because it not proved to be possible to get the local tourist authorities in the local councils to support it. It needs money and commitment and that's where the whole thing actually collapsed. I hope that people go back home and emphasize just what actually we could achieve in terms of tourism. If it's going to be, it needs and it could be in the Douzelage context "Tourism with a difference". It is not just going to a town and stay in a hotel or going on package tours but you will have to ingeniously organise it in such a way that there is actually a meeting with the people of the town. This is what is usually missing in the average tourism package. That the mayor or somebody does give a little reception, that they do get introduced to the people. That's something special about it. I think it would be important to create something special and imaginative to usual tourist things.

Commercially I think it might be difficult. We did try one time to produce trade directives but it collapsed. We did spend a lot of time and it was on the agenda again and again, organising a discount card and again there was no local impact. We still have these little stickers at the shops in Sherborne where people of the Douzelage can go and get a discount, but nobody ever went. It is a wonderful idea and I think it is worth to give it another try. I just want to repeat, "Congratulations to Preveza", it is a wonderful initiative."

NIEDERANVEN pointed out that attention must be paid to the application for that kind of activity because only tourism oriented activities are normally not refunded. The president confirmed but explained that if there is a kind of workshop on tourism, organised within the frame of a meeting it is no longer a "Touristic" activity like sightseeing but a study on i.e. an economic factor of Tourism in European towns. The president asked every delegated town if they were interested in such a Touristic working group and if they think this item is important enough to be discussed, in order to reactivate this idea.

KÖTZTING said that they have no interest as they did that in the early years of the Douzelage already and it didn't work. Kötzing further remarked if we try to reactivate this idea about tourism, towns should know up from the beginning that tourism may be organised in very different ways in the various partner towns. As far as they can see, the mayor of Kötzing first has no power over the tourism industry in Kötzing and second, the only two travel agencies they have simply sell what they have in their catalogues. So if one partner town is interested, because they have good tourist facilities to offer something, the best way would be to contact the other Douzelage towns asking to hand this to tour operators who are really interested in packing a coach full of people and bring them to your town. They are afraid the mayors in general will not be able to do anything about that. This is the case for Kötzing at least.

TÜRI said that they are very novice on the Touristic subject and can only but learn out of such a group.

SHERBORNE thinks that this is an item that at least should be kept on the agenda but at present time they do not think the Douzelage is ready to do another committee or working group. But the idea should not be given up.

SESIMBRA did not know yet but the idea to prepare it for a discussion seemed interesting for them.

OXELÖSUND had no interest but thought the idea worth of being kept up.

NIEDERANVEN agrees in the idea and asks why Preveza doesn't take the initiative to create and chair such a tourism group.

MEERSSEN said it was a good idea to reactivate this tourism working group again and perhaps this item could be discussed at the mayors meeting in Preveza as it is an item that fits exactly the position of municipalities.

SUSICE said that the idea sounds good but that they have a lack of information for the moment.

KÖSZEG said that tourism is very important for them and finds it very important to restart the tourism group and that they will definitely join this group.

KARKKILA is not interested as Karkkila is not a Touristic town.

JUDENBURG thought it would be a pity if the idea of such a working group would vanish. There are some chances left and Judenburg would be interested in taking part in this working group. But before confirming definitely the other members have to be asked, especially Margit Ergert.

HOLSTEBRO is very keen to this project. In fact Tourism for the first time now is mentioned in the new treat, as a point the EU will examine and as the economic aspect of tourism is increasing drastically in Denmark, they are very interested to take part in this project.

GRANVILLE mainly depends on tourism so they said they were very happy to follow the idea of reactivating the tourism board.

CHOJNA is interested to exchange experiences with more experienced towns and therefore would take part in that group.

BELLAGIO was very curious to know why the tourism group didn't work. Bellagio mostly depends on tourism and therefore confirmed their participation in this group and maybe putting some aims on it because they have got ideas, especially on showing new ways of looking at tourism, not only on an economical level but also as an intercultural exchange and moving around in Europe.

ALTEA promised to send an e-mail to give their answer only after having spoken with their officials.

HOUFFALIZE had until now not been able to activate this project in Houffalize.

HOLSTEBRO said as they do not have a mayor supporting the Douzelage, they do not think it is a mayor business thing. Dorte Storper is responsible for tourism in Holstebro and he thought that a sort of projects should be launched, like for example a Golf tour to different Douzelage towns or a project where you could go and admire art in churches as a kind of cultural tourism.

JUDENBURG further said that tourism mainly depends on private initiative. The tourist group from Kötzing visiting Judenburg was cited as an example. They go from Douzelage to Douzelage town and spend in each town a fortnight's holiday. These initiatives are organised on absolutely private initiative and it hasn't got anything to do with the municipality or the mayor. That should be the point you can rely on.

SHERBORNE informed that the initiatives as golf exchanges and visits i.e. to Meerssen are organised as part of the main duties of their Douzelage committee. Their concern is that this can create just another meeting and that there will be no time to go through. So they include all these things as part of what they are doing anyway in their main meeting. Maybe the Douzelage should be very careful to have another group and to set out objectives so that something can be achieved.

Barbara Zandraveli from PREVEZA said that she had worked together with that direction before they had put down the exact proposals on what they intended or would like to do on that. They have got an offer of a travel agency that organises tours and sailing projects. There is a discount for all the Douzelage member towns or citizens who want to travel and use this offer of travelling to Preveza. You only have to inform your towns and citizens to make use of this offer as a first step.

[c] Official speeches

At that time of the meeting Mr John Hume, co-recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize, and Mr Pat the Cope Gallagher, Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, gave a conference about the "Active European Citizenship". Mrs Elisabeth McIntyre, Mayor of Bundoran thanked them for their gracious step to have come and performed such words of highest importance within the frame of a European Twinning Association like the Douzelage. The president also thanked the two guest speakers for their commitment and the very interesting words they addressed to the delegates of the Douzelage towns. [See para F]

12) Questionnaire on town facilities

In order to summarize the information on the different towns and especially to identify the expectations the different towns put in the Douzelage, it had been proposed during the last meeting in Granville [ANNEX O] that towns should fill in the questionnaire on town facilities (see Granville GM minutes page 8) (the document can be filled in on computer, printed out and then brought along as a printed copy or faxed).

Further every town had been asked to bring documentation to the Bundoran Education Meeting (structure, holidays, projects...) pertaining to their different educational structures if available [Granville Minutes para 5 [a] 1, page 9].

During the meeting the secretary received some paper copies from several towns. For the missing documents, the president asked the delegates to fill them out and send them by fax or mail to the secretary's office as soon as possible. The president précised that this document gives the possibility to see the importance the towns attach to the different objectives.

13) Proposed purchasing

[a] Mobile microphone

As decided in the last meeting in Granville, [Granville Minutes para 5 [b], page 9], every town expressed their opinion about the purchase of a mobile microphone. Nobody thought it might be interesting to buy it. If such a microphone will ever be needed a rent fee of about 60 € will make it.

[b] Douzelage-sign, stickers and posters

A decision has been taken on the purchasing of the signs, stickers and posters. The president had asked the delegations to ask for prices and proposals in their towns and send it to the Douzelage office. Every offer had been studied and finally the offer from Türi was the most interesting one. The production of 5000 stickers and 250 posters will cost about 1.022 € and will be of the best available quality.

14) Douzelage Codicil

Some stamps that were still missing were applied to the Codicil signed in Judenburg on 13th of May 2004 (Altea and Sigulda are still missing). The final version of the Codicil will be put on the Website.

C) Activities reports

All towns were requested to bring their copies of a brief description of their Douzelage activities, both internal and external, since the meeting in Granville, together with their plans for the future.

1) Comenius project "My Home-Our Europe" - children from Sušice in Granville

From the 5th until the 9th of March 2005, pupils of the local Lerch School participated in the last pupils' meeting of this Comenius Project in Granville. They took part in music lessons, sailing, swimming, a bowling tournament and in many other activities the Granville group had prepared. They also visited the "St. Michel" monument.

During the same period the president and his wife visited Sušice. The president thanked Sušice for their kind hospitality and reported on the very beautiful town. A meeting with the mayor and some of the town councillors, as well a visit of the gymnasium of Sušice and a meeting with the headmaster had been arranged.

2) Comenius project "Be Different, Be Tolerant"

Coordinator is Chojna, participants were Sherborne and Meerssen. Different workshops had been organised in Sherborne.

3) Comenius project meeting "Improve mind and body by movement in nature" in Kőszeg

From 19th - 23rd of January 2005 a Kindergarten project had been organized in Kőszeg. 16 Teachers from Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Luxembourg, Romania and Sweden attended. This special event had been coordinated by Preveza. The main coordinator could unfortunately not be present but she sent her husband to come, who did a lot of communication between the participants.

The president was present at this meeting and expressed once more his gratitude to the town of Kőszeg and the Douzelage responsible for their wonderful hosting and organisation. An official meeting with the town council and with the headmaster of the Academic Grammar School, being the oldest school in the county had been coordinated. Another visit had been arranged to see the dormitory and meet the headmaster.

By the same occasion Kőszeg thanked every member town to have voted last November by internet for their town, which became with this help "City of the Year".

4) Lingua project "Language and Culture through Community Networks" in Karkkila

In this project Karkkila was in cooperation with Sherborne, Chojna and Türi. Two meetings took place, one in Karkkila in January and one in Cherbourg in France.

5) English Song Festival in Chojna

The festival took place shortly after the General Meeting but until this moment we did not yet get an echo from the event.

6) Oxelösund music school visit Houffalize and Niederanven

Niederanven and Houffalize reported that the group from Oxelösund did perform absolutely wonderful concerts. The primary school pupils from Niederanven assisted to the event and were very pleased about the colourful diversion on a weekday morning. The students from Oxelösund were offered a sightseeing tour through Luxembourg-city, a visit of the National Conservatory and a welcome reception of the Niederanven town authorities.

7) Benelux meeting in Houffalize

The Benelux meeting 2005 is foreseen to take place in Houffalize but only after the election of a new Mayor. The dates will be communicated later on.

8) Visit of the Kötzing Chamber quire to Judenburg from 9-10 October 2004

Since several years an active exchange takes place between sports clubs and choirs etc. from Kötzing and Judenburg because the language barrier is not present and the distance is not too far. They have established a kind of "south-eastern" exchange within the Douzelage, just like the Benelux countries have. One of the Kötzing students did a detailed report about the Douzelage as a kind of "scientific research project".

9) President's visits of Kőszeg and Susice

First of all the president thanked the two towns for their warm welcome and hospitality. He underlined that those visits represent an important tool to set up expedient contacts with the local authorities. (See para 1 and 3 before)

D) Projects

1) Projects not yet finished or in preparation

[a] Douzelage Miniparliament [ANNEX P]

For the year 2005 the project had unfortunately to be cancelled, as the political situation of Bellagio did change. In fact the new town authorities need more time to "repair" a certain difficult financial and political situation on place and then only, surely in 2006, they will be ready to host the Miniparliament again. The president repeated that the Miniparliament is in fact one of the "flag activities" of the Douzelage and that it is a pity that the situation of Bellagio is like this for the moment. Kötzing proposed to hold the Miniparliament eventually at the same time as the General meeting (April 2006). This could lower the general costs of transportation etc. and could also be a kind of encouragement to the youngsters to participate, together with the adults, in an important Douzelage event. Dr Sancassano was very confident about this possibility and explained that April is the best time to organise the event as then the accommodation will be easier for them. The president also thought this might be a good idea as long as it will not be during the eastern holidays.

[b] Oxelösund / Nyköping Project "Learning by doing"

Unfortunately this project had to be cancelled due to financial problems, but the president confirmed that the idea was however an excellent and constructive one.

[c] Language school project in Judenburg

This project also failed because the company "Redbull", who wanted the Grammar school to participate in their race they had planned to organise, did finally not get the authorization of the Austrian Environment Authorities to hold this event.

[d] Douzelage Play

Sherborne reported that until that moment they did not get any reaction from a member town. They encouraged once more the delegates to incite their local administration to think about an eventual hosting of this play.

[e] Adeps sports week event from 5-11 June 2005

The theme of the 2005 Adeps sports week will be "Environnement et sécurité". There will be several specialists in these matters, speaking about purification and supply of drinking water and a visit of a forest site in order to discuss the security of the workers on the site. Until now Granville and Niederanven confirmed to participate with a group of students. Bellagio and Kőszeg will see later if they enrol or not.

[f] Sherborne Festival 2005 [ANNEX Q]

Unfortunately Sherborne will not get the awaited EU funding for this project. They were sorry not being able to accommodate everybody; however for those who did already enrol, they will do their best to find a way of accommodation. Sherborne absolutely wants to bring this event to a big success and therefore leaflets and programs will be distributed soon. The Mayor of Sherborne promised his support for this festival to the local Douzelage committee. By this occasion it was reminded that every town, willing to

participate in the art exhibition, should give their works to Jeremy Barker or just post them to the attention of the Sherborne Douzelage. Holstebro asked if there will be the international gourmet market and Sherborne confirmed and encouraged everybody to come, see and taste.

[g] **Project "Politeens" in Kőszeg 30 June – 07 July 2005 [ANNEX R]**

The president thanked Kőszeg for having realised this interesting project. István Mátrai informed that the application form for this event had been put on the Web in order to show how to fill it out correctly. They have already got the money from the EU Commission, however they need at least 3 partner towns to participate for being able to reimburse 100€ per person (including 70% of travel costs). Mr Mátrai underlined that this is a very serious project and that they are willing to repeat it in a sort of summer camp with new partners every year (as Granville i.e.).

The president underlined that all these youth projects, consultable on the Web site under "Youth for Europe" are very interesting and are all worth to be studied. (i.e. Sailing project) He encouraged every town to try to realise new ideas in this domain. Niederanven informed that the age of the participants for these projects goes normally from 15 to 25 years.

[h] **European Youth Week in Waldmünchen 25 Jul - 05 Aug 2005**

Mr Pecher said that an e-mail with the necessary application information had been sent out. He was sorry to inform all the delegates that for this year already no more attendance is available.

[i] **Sailing in Granville 19 - 27 Aug 2005**

This event has become an almost traditional one. The participants will not only have 4 sessions of sailing but also discover the coastal fauna and flora, they will discuss about the European citizenship and environment. This project is a really multi-purpose and the participants (youngsters between 15 and 17 years old) will have a lot of fun. The towns of Altea, Houffalize, Judenburg, Kőszeg and Oxelösund are participating. The students will be accommodated in host families. Mr Schnedl thanked Granville once more for this wonderful project and told that several French students from Granville came to Judenburg to snowboard. He informed the delegates that Judenburg is interested to organize a similar event in their town and asked Granville to help them in the funding procedure. The president assured Judenburg all help they need, if they stick to the official EU program and promised to stay in contact to proceed at the time given.

[j] **Youth exchange from 1 to 6 July 2006**

This exchange should probably take place from 30 June – 8 July together with Chojna, Granville, Holstebro, Judenburg and Karkkila. Granville had already applied for this activity. Mr Mátrai said that the exact dates for 2006 will be confirmed later on (it will probably be the 1st week of July). The president insisted on the fact that a good coordination between the different towns (in order to liaise the dates of the events etc.) is very important.

[k] **Study-project for all of Douzelage towns in preparation by Türi**

The aim of this project is to promote the Douzelage idea among the young people from 13 to 15 and invite youngster to a summer camp in Estonia next summer. The time will be about September 2005 until August 2006.

The president informed that the pertaining information will be put on the Web in order to keep everybody informed. He encouraged once more the delegated towns to send all information they want to be seen to the secretary and then all documentation and pictures to an event can get published.

On CHOJNA's question how this project will be financed Türi replied that they expect participants to cover transport expenses by themselves and that they are going to finance the activity with the help of the EU programs.

[l] **Centenary Scout Camp: Sherborne 2007**

SHERBORNE is afraid that Mr Weaver who was organising this camp and jamboree had a monumental rough with the whole scout's organisation and has disappeared into distance so that this event will not take place.

Sherborne informed about a school project in Sherborne School where 13 year old pupils were divided in groups and where to each group was given a Douzelage town to research, using the Website and all

other sources available. At the end of the week each group had to make a half an hour presentation on that town. The Douzelage committee, using the Douzelage student travel fund, offered them 500 £ to travel to whichever town it was that won the competition. The town that won was Türi. So Sherborne has now a group of students going off to Türi as their prize. If in the future Sherborne will ask a town to welcome such a group of students and towns are kindly invited to say yes. Of course this would be on a reciprocal basis; Sherborne will then welcome an equal number of students in Sherborne.

[m] Other activities

ALTEA will be participating in the Granville sailing project by sending 5 boys to this event. They will also participate in the Miniparliament 2006. As for new projects they are especially concentrated on the educational level.

BUNDORAN said that most of their efforts had gone these last months in preparing the GM. They will unfortunately not be able to participate in the Sherborne Festival. The president said that everybody understands that and he thanked them for their work.

Dr Sancassano from BELLAGIO explained their new political situation once more and promised to give an answer about the Miniparliament and GM 2006 within 30 days, a time necessary to discuss the Douzelage matter together with the authorities of their City Hall. As for the dates they will probably be from the 6th to the 9th of April 2006. There had been elections last year and after they had won them, fights did come up of whether they could stay or not and an important negative balance had to be accepted. He promised to bring the Douzelage idea back to their program and try to calculate the eventual costs of a GM in order to inform the delegates as soon as possible about the development. The president thanked Dr Sancassano for his commitment and hopes that the good cooperation with Bellagio will stay just as it has always been.

HOLSTEBRO explained once more that due to their financial and supporting problems they could not plan many actions. But in order to raise money to participate to the GMs and Youth exchange programs, they had made a lottery and organised, together with a local bakery, an action to raise money for the Douzelage by selling special European bread. There will also be a fashion show in autumn. As visitors from Oxelösund came to Holstebro, a reciprocal visit is foreseen. They have also planned to participate in the Sherborne Festival and the young people's program. The president thanked them for their commitment.

KÖSZEG informed that among other actions they will start, that there will be a 3 years school development project called "SCI-CIS" which means "Scientific Cities" Köszeg would really need one school from any level from each Douzelage town. The "Politeens project" is going to be continued. A natural project similar to the Niederaanven project is planned as a Youth project called "HUNGATURE". It is foreseen to write a booklet about the nature in Köszeg where they will describe the fauna and flora and the environment around Köszeg. This booklet will be published in different languages. Further Köszeg wanted to have the music project initially initiated by Altea restarted, as their Brass Band formulated another proposal called "Borderless Music" starting maybe in 2006.

KÖTZTING proposed on the initial proposal of Mr Wolfgang Kerscher, a participation in an official program of the Bavarian Ministry of Justice. It is especially interesting for judges and prosecutors from Poland, the Baltic States, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The Bavarian Ministry proposes a two-week works scheduling in Bavaria for colleagues from these countries. The condition is to have a German colleague accepting to accommodate the visiting colleague and in that case it would be Wolfgang Kerscher himself who proposes to invite someone to his court of justice for two weeks. So if a town has a judge or a prosecutor who might be interested in that, please get in contact with Mr Kerscher.
E-mail WKerscher@t-online.de.

NIEDERANVEN presented a new youth project called "Follow the birds through Europe and discover new environments". A group of about 16 students (aged between 15 and 26) interested in nature and ornithology will have the opportunity to study the local natural reserves with its fauna and flora, to study the birds' migration by helping to ring and register them. The group will discover the regional bird stations and wetlands and be framed by a team of specialists. The accommodation will be offered by the town of Niederaanven and the participating fees of approximately 150 € per person can be reimbursed in the frame of the European program "Youth for Europe". This project will take place in Niederaanven for approximately one week in the time between the 15th of July and the 15th of August and it could be followed in another Douzelage town afterwards. This could be an interesting way to discover the natural environments of the member towns. The president, as the president of the local Douzelage Committee in

Niederanven, asked the delegates to look for people or associations of their towns interested in this project and inform the delegations about their participation during the Meerssen meeting. Niederanven further informed that the regional fire fighter commander from Niederanven will visit Türi and would like to meet the fire fighter commander if possible.

PREVEZA reported on their participation to Bellagio's Miniparliament. In October 04 the first Gymnasium in Preveza hosted 10 teachers and 16 pupils as part of the 1st coordinating meeting of the school development Comenius project "Imagine expression through art" for the second year of work. Teachers and pupils from Stella Maris College from Meerssen/Valkenburg came to Preveza. In January Preveza was represented with a part of the pedagogical team of the national school at the Comenius project "Improve your mind and body by movement in nature" in Köszeg. In March the primary school participated in another project meeting of the Comenius project "My home our Europe" in Granville. In May a group is taking part to another Comenius project evaluating meeting in Italy. As part of this they are visiting Bellagio and they are discovering this Douzelage town. A group of national school teachers are expecting in Preveza the final evaluating meeting of the first year of the project "Improve mind and body by movement in nature" in May. Participants will be Niederanven, Oxelösund, Köszeg, Sigulda and two other schools from outside the Douzelage. Another group of teachers and pupils are expecting at the primary school of Preveza to take part at the presentation of the 3 year project work of "My home our Europe". Participants will be Granville, Sušice and 3 other schools outside the Douzelage. A new Comenius project will be presented by Barbara Zandraveli at the parallel Education Meeting.

SHERBORNE informed that there have been several student exchanges i.e. between Kötzing and Sherborne as well as Granville and Sherborne. Also a group of golfers from Granville will come to Sherborne.

Mr. Jeremy Barker thanked Karkkila for their Lingua project, which was in deed absolutely terrific and extremely well organised. Further he informed that next year Sherborne wants to organize as one of their fund raising events a "Wine tasting" ("poison tasting" as Jeremy Barker said. He asked every town to bring a bottle or maybe two of their local drinks to Meerssen, so that they can use these goods for their action.

SESIMBRA has been interested in the Scouts camping site in Sherborne and has already made some contacts in this matter. They are also preparing cultural projects in their school as in one of their schools they have a Renaissance Dance group. They are also preparing a new Comenius idea to make an exchange with another partner town of the Douzelage.

The president asked again every town to send their projects and activities or any document distributed during the meeting to the secretary so that they can be put on the Web site.

E) Provisional Agenda for the Meerssen GM

Meerssen welcomes all delegations to their town from the 22nd until the 25th of September for the next General Meeting. Based on a PowerPoint presentation, the meeting details were explained.

Mr Kockelkorn, Mayor of Meerssen, told the delegates that the president of the United States, Mr George W. Bush will visit Meerssen in the next future.

The theme of the General Meeting will be "The new European constitution related to active European citizenship and communication through cultures and languages". Of course the referendum will have an important impact on the chosen discussion points. Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene, vice-president of the Convent under Mr Giscard d'Estaing, will be the invited guest-speaker. The youth section of the Douzelage will have a forum and a workshop on Communication and European Citizenship. Another interesting activity will be the publication of a book for kids and young people called "At home in Europe". Funds of 10.000€ for this project had already been paid.

A parallel ICT workshop is foreseen where the features of the new website will be explained. All the towns are kindly asked to send one it specialist to attend this workshop.

Meerssen also presented their information brochure "Association Meerssen in Europe", showing the role of the Douzelage within their town and resuming in a very attractive way with pictures and reports all activities their local Douzelage committee did participate at and above all presenting the Douzelage within the frame of the European Community.

F) Guest speakers' speeches

[John Hume, co-recipient of the 1998 Nobel Prize for Peace](#) - "European Citizenship"

The world is getting smaller, all countries are coming closer together as the technical and political evolution is growing. The best examples are of course the United States of America but also the European Union. The conflict resolution tool that has to be used is laying in three important principles: respect of the difference, creation of institutions respecting it and go through a certain "healing process", meaning to work together on common ground. Mr Hume, an active Irish citizen, gives the example of Ireland, where strength only came from the efforts of laying aside the differences and tried to work "together on common ground". He used the sentence "spilling sweat and not blood", which expresses all the necessary force to proceed to a world in peace. A European dialog should be promoted by the creation of a special department for peace and reconciliation. This European philosophy should be an international example and be spread all over the nations. He cited "no one chooses to be born", a sentence that incites every man to leave behind all conflicts of differences and start to understand and accept that every member of the European Union or all other nationwide unions should begin to build a strong and effective union together on common ground.

[Pat the Cope Gallagher](#) T.D., former Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and EU parliament member.

Mr Pat the Cope Gallagher said that it is a pride for Bundoran to be a member of the Douzelage and have the opportunity to host the General Meeting of the association. He designed Mr John Hume as the living example for a perfect "European Citizen" on the local, national and international level. The first anniversaries of the European Enlargement can only but confirm the success of the Union, no longer divided by political frontiers. Being a European Citizen means being at the heart of the European Union with its institutions, receiving and exercising political rights for every member country. These rights strengthen the relationship between the citizens, becoming more aware of the others, by communication and respect. An important step in the realisation of these rights is not only to preach but to act, by publishing reports and bringing more transparency into the political actions. But also history and culture, so different they may be at the beginning, are a source of strength in their experience and should be put together as a tool of learning and improvement. All EU funds are supporting these steps by promoting the communication between the member states (youth exchanges, education projects, public health). They offer a common protection, necessary to "feel good" within the frame of the EU. Therefore the referendum for the European Constitution it is very important for Mr Gallagher. It will inform the citizens and give them the necessary encouragement and guidelines for a right European acting with all its implications. He hopes that continuity in business; transparency in politics and the abolishment of differences can only but contribute to a better world.

II) Education Meeting Report

In the name of all the delegations the president thanked Mrs Barbara Zandraveli (Preveza) who has withdrawn as chairman of the education group for the high level of professionalism, devotion and success she has executed this task since 2002. Mrs Zandraveli has been honoured in due form at the final diner. At the same occasion Mr. Paul Carling from Sherborne, who had been elected new chairman of the education group, was introduced and welcomed by the president.

Education meeting minutes will be communicated in a separate document.

Hostert, 1st July 2005