



douzelage.org

European Town Twinning

ALTEA : BAD KÖTZTING : BELLAGIO : BUNDORAN : CHOJNA : GRANVILLE
HOLSTEBRO : HOUFFALIZE : JUDENBURG : KARKKILA : KÖSZEG
MARSASKALA : MEERSSEN : NIEDERANVEN : OXELÖSUND
PRIENAI : PREVEZA : SESIMBRA : SHERBORNE
SIGULDA : SUŠICE : TÜRI : ZVOLEN

DOUZELAGE - EUROPEAN TOWN TWINNING
145, route de Trèves
L-6940 NIEDERANVEN
Phone: +352 26 34 07 42
Fax: +352 26 34 07 47 eMail: douzelaq@pt.lu



- ALTEA (E)
- BAD KÖTZTING (D)
- BELLAGIO (I)
- BUNDORAN (IRL)
- CHOJNA (PL)
- GRANVILLE (F)
- HOLSTEBRO (DK)
- HOUFFALIZE (B)
- JUDENBURG (A)
- KARKKILA (FIN)
- KÖSZEG (H)
- MARSASKALA (MT)
- MEERSSEN (NL)
- NIEDERANVEN (L)
- OXELÖSUND (S)
- PRIENAI (LT)
- PREVEZA (GR)
- SESIMBRA (P)
- SHERBORNE (GB)
- SIGULDA (LV)
- SUŠICE (CZ)
- TÜRI (EST)
- ZVOLEN (SK)

Niederanven, 12 August 2009

34th Douzelage Conference

ALTEA

14th – 17th May 2009

Draft Minutes





PARTICIPANTS

1 = GENERAL MEETING, 2 = EDUCATION MEETING, 3 = IT WORKSHOP, 4 = VISITOR, 5 = INTERPRETER,

ALTEA

MR ANDRÉS RIPOLL¹, MAYOR
MRS PEPA PERLES¹
MRS ROSA M^a ROSELLÓ¹
MRS PEPA NARBÓ¹
MR GREGORIO CORTÉS¹

MR BALTASAR RIPOLL²
MRS GEMA CÓRCOLES²
MRS PATRICIA MORA³
MR JUAN BAUTISTA BORJA³

BAD KÖTZTING

MR GÜNTHER PECHER¹
MRS PETRA HOHAUS²
MRS EVELIN MAURER³

MR CORNELIUS ECK³
MRS MANUELA KAML¹

BELLAGIO

MRS DONATELLA GANDOLA¹

MR CARLO SANCASSANO¹

CHOJNA

MR JANUSZ SALAMOŃCZYK¹
MR ADAM FEDOROWICZ¹, MAYOR
MRS HANNA FEDOROWICZ¹

MRS ANNA RYDZEWSKA²
MRS MONIKA ŻEBROWSKA²

GRANVILLE

MR ANDRÉ GENDRE³
MRS PASCALE VALLÉE¹
MRS ANGÉLIQUE POJAGHI¹
MRS FRÉDÉRIQUE LABADIE²

MR MARCEL MICHEL¹
MRS ANNETTE MICHEL⁴
MRS FAY GUERRY⁵
MR JEAN-CLAUDE GUERRY⁵

HOLSTEBRO

MRS JETTE HINGEBJERG¹
MRS ANNE BRIGITTE KOCKS-BECK²

MR MOGENS BECK³

HOUFFALIZE

MR HENRARD ALPHONSE¹
MR LUC NOLLOMONT²
MR MATHIEU CLOSE

MRS ANNE REDOTTÉ¹
MRS MARIE DUBOIS¹

JUDENBURG

MR WILLI SCHNEDL²
MRS GRETE GRUBER, MAYOR¹
MRS ANDREA KOBER¹

MR MICHAEL LANGGNER²
MR MARTIN SIX³

KÖSZEG

MR ISTVÁN MÁTRAI¹
MRS ILONA TÁLOS-MÁTRAI²
MR MARCELL TÓTH³

MR ZOLTÁN BAKOS¹
MR GÁBOR TÓTH¹
MR DÁVID VARGA³



MARSASKALA

MR MARIO CALLEJA¹
MRS JOSETTE MARSH¹

MR JOSEPH CARUANA¹

MEERSSEN

MRS AUSSEMS, ILJA¹
MR OFFERMANN, RICARDO¹, MAYOR
MRS OFFERMANN, YVONNE⁴
MRS VAN GEMERT, LENY^{1;3}

MR HOSMAN, JOOP⁴
MRS HOSMAN, MARLIES⁴
MR BASIL LANGE²
MR JELLE PENDERS²

NIEDERANVEN

MR STUART ATKINSON²
MRS MONIQUE BRAUN⁴
MR PAUL GREIS¹
MRS ROMAIN GREIS⁴

MR JOS MOUTON¹
MRS CAROLE STOOS²
MRS MARIE-ANTOINETTE PAQUET-TONDT¹
MRS SYLVIE WEBER⁴

OXELÖSUND

MR MATS ERICSSON¹
MRS MARIA VEJDAL¹

MR JOHN PETTERSSON³
MRS MADELEINE PETTERSSON³

PREVEZA

MR VASILIOS SIORENTAS¹
MR GEORGIOS ALISSANDRATOS¹

MRS ELENI ARGIROU²
MRS. ZIKOU AIKATERINI⁴

PRIENAI

MR VYTAUTAS GRIAUSLYS³
MRS RENATA PAVLAVICIENE²

MRS INGRIDA RACICKIENE¹

SESIMBRA

MRS FELICIA COSTA¹
MRS CRISTINA CONCEIÇÃO¹
MRS CÉLIA RIBEIRO²

MR MÁRCIO CEMBRANELLI⁴
MR JOSÉ RIBEIRO⁴

SHERBORNE

MR JEREMY BARKER¹
MRS JANET PARSONS¹
MR PAUL CARLING²
MR MICHAEL MORRELL³
MRS PAT MORRELL⁴
MRS LIN BYGRAVE²
MR ROBERT BYGRAVE⁴
MR CHRIS MACADIE⁴
MRS BRIGITTE LE BOUILLE⁴

MR MICHAEL BALFOUR¹
MARGARET BALFOUR⁴
MRS SCILLA COPPER⁴
MR TONY COPPER⁴
MRS LIN ASHBY²
MR ALAN ASHBY⁴
MR KEVIN WATERFALL^{1;2}
MRS VALERIE WATERFALL⁴

SUŠICE

MRS VERA SVOBODOVÁ¹
MRS ANEZKA NOVA¹

MRS MIROSLAVA RYSAVA²
MR MILAN POJAR³



TÜRI

MRS KATRIN SOOMETS³
MRS TRIIN PÄRNA¹
MRS KERSTI VIILUP³
MRS ENE MÄGI¹

MR OTT VILUSAAR¹
MRS TRIIN TOOME-HOSMAN¹
MR MARTIJN HOSMAN³

ZVOLEN

MRS EVA ONDRISOVA²
MRS DANICA MIČIANIKOVÁ¹
MRS ALENA FERIANCOVÁ³

MRS ZUZANA LÁSZLOOVÁ¹
MR MIROSLAV MARCINKO²

PRESIDENCY

MR ED WEBER

MR CLAUDE BRAUN

GUESTS OF HONOUR

MR ANDRÉS RIPOLL, MAYOR OF ALTEA
MR. VICENTE GARCÉS MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT¹

MRS ANTONELLA VALMORBIDA¹, ALDA DIRECTOR
MRS ISABELLA VELAZQUEZ VALORIA¹, ARCHITECT AND
URBAN PLANNER OF THE NETWORK GEA21



I. General Meeting

A. Speech of welcome by the President.

The president Ed Weber welcomed all the delegations and expressed his pleasure for being for the first time in the beautiful town of ALTEA. He especially thanked the Altea Douzelage committee for all the preparation work they had done to make this meeting possible. Then he welcomed the official guests of this 34th General Meeting of the Douzelage association: Mr Andr s Ripoll, the Mayor of ALTEA, Mrs Isabella Velazquez Valoria, Town architect of the Networks and Mrs Antonella Valmorbidia, Director of the Associations of Local Democracy Agencies. He welcomed the delegation from MARSASKALA who had come to assist to the General Meeting with the view on a possible accession. He presented special thanks to the Mayors of the different towns attending this meeting (CHOJNA, JUDENBURG, and MEERSSEN). He underlined that it is particularly important for a good Douzelage cooperation to have the full support of the respective Mayors. He also welcomed Mr John Pettersson, the Douzelage webmaster, who had been invited to direct the It-Workshop of the meeting. Finally the president thanked CHOJNA once more for having hosted the 2008 Douzelage conference.

The president mentioned the absence of KARKKILA at this meeting and by explaining the difficult actual situation in that town for the moment. By the end of August 2009 a new Mayor will be elected and the president expressed his hope that the new Mayor will be in favour of the Douzelage. He underlined the very positive contact he had with the interim Mayor Mr. Jukka Anttila

He further read a mail received from Mrs Inga Barisa from SIGULDA, saying that due to the difficult financial situation SIGULDA was forced not to attend the Douzelage conference in Altea. They asked to accept their deepest apologies.

Finally he explained that BUNDORAN could not attend the meeting because the Douzelage-coordinator in BUNDORAN Jo McNulty had had severe health problems in the last few months and was unable to work for a longer time. The president was happy to report that Jo is working again since a few days now and he expressed his best wishes for a fast recovery.

B. The ALDA (Association of local democracy and agencies)

At the CHOJNA meeting the president informed that he and the vice-president Alphonse Henrard had been in contact with Mrs Antonella Valmorbidia, the director of the Association of Local Democracy and Agencies (ALDA) of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. After very productive discussions between the ALDA representatives and the Douzelage, a proposal of a possible cooperation can now be presented in ALTEA and a decision on a permanent cooperation with ALDA should be taken in this meeting.

Subsequent to the president's welcome speech Mrs Antonella Valmorbidia, Director of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies, as a guest speaker, gave a detailed overview about their agency's actions and the importance of cooperating within the European Community.

The president explained that cooperation with the ALDA association could in fact be a fruitful aid in the view of the future of the Douzelage. It could also be a way to considerably facilitate the task of the new president, who will be elected next year and whose challenge will be to develop future projects in the frame of the new multiannual programme of the European Commission.

Alphonse Henrard, in his function of the vice-president underlined the necessity to become a member of the ALDA association as for practical reasons, all by being able to handle the new programme and guarantee a fruitful continuation of the Douzelage's work.

After a short discussion about the annual fees (300 ) for the services offered by ALDA, a unanimous vote was taken to join the ALDA.



II. Business Matters

Before starting with the agenda, the president informed the delegates about the very bad news from Houffalize, saying that on 26.11.2008, Paul Georges passed away (13/03/1924 - 26/11/2008). On behalf of all Douzelage towns the president had expressed the condolences to Pauls widow Marcelle Georges-Duchesne.

Paul had been one of the pioneers of the Douzelage. His foresight and commitment in his ideas strongly helped to lead the Douzelage to where it is standing today. Paul was known as very devoted man, who was loved in the Douzelage up from its early beginning for his exemplary commitment and his warm-hearted friendliness. Paul managed over and over again to fascinate young people by his positive spirit and managed to raise their enthusiasm for the ideals of the Douzelage and Europe. The last activity where President Ed Weber met Paul was during the Adeps sports stay in Houffalize in summer last year. The Douzelage will not forget Paul and keep him in good memories. A minute's silence in memory of Paul Georges was observed.

Further the president informed that the last few months had been very busy from his side and he apologized, in case some delegates wondered if he was still alive. Sometimes it took a little bit longer to answer all the mails. He expressed his strong hope that it will be better in the future. He also explained that Patricia, the Douzelage secretary was missing because her health problems did not allow her to attend this meeting. She apologizes for that and Claude Braun was so kind to replace the secretary during this meeting.

The president noted with a certain satisfaction the very long list of activities and congratulated all those who were so involved and active during the last months. As major activities of the presidency up from the Chojna meeting, he specially mentioned the contact with Brussels and the many mails concerning the Douzelage enlargement.

13 Oct 08 - ALDA Brussels

Alphonse Henrard and Ed Weber, in their presidency functions had a first contact in Brussels with the ALDA representative, in order to get further details about this association. They came back persuaded that a cooperation with ALDA could be a very intelligent step to do in the way of guaranteeing a further successful future for the Douzelage. Other appointments took place among those where the Douzelage was represented at the Conference on a decentralized cooperation in the Balkans and Caucasus, happening on 27th October 2008. At this conference Ed Weber could meet Mr. Per Vinther, the President of the Association of the Local Democracy Agencies, and Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, Director of the organization as well as Dr. Jim Dratwa, his contact person at the ALDA and Mr. Risto Raivio, the Head of Unit of the DG4 of the European Commission.

13 and 14 Nov 08 - European Citizen's Forum in Brussels

Alphonse Henrard and Ed Weber, followed the invitation of the European Commission to attend the European Citizens Forum in Brussels. During this Forum they had the opportunity to meet Mr. Jan Figel', Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Mrs. Odile Quintin, Director-General, Education and Culture DG, Mr. Pierre Mairesse, Director, DG Education and Culture, Mr. Risto Raivio, the Head of Unit, well known by the Douzelage partner towns.

01-04 Dec 08 - Marsaskala visit

Alphonse Henrard and Ed Weber, in their presidency functions visited the town of Marsaskala in view of the extension of the Douzelage. They could meet the Mayor, Mr Mario Calleja, his Deputy Mayor Mr Charlot Mifsud, the Executive Secretary Mr. Joseph Caruana and Mrs Josette Marsh, the Town Councillor and the person in charge of building the excellent contact and prepare the accession of Marsaskala, as well as answer all questions related to the future membership of Marsaskala. The president thanked the delegation of Marsaskala for the warm welcome, for having showed them their infrastructures and brought them together with the school headmaster and other important people.



1. Approval of the Minutes of the TÜRI GM and the CHOJNA Conference 2008

The following documents were unanimously approved:

Minutes of the TÜRI General Meeting [ANNEX A]
Report of the Education Meeting in TÜRI [ANNEX B]
Verbatim on the Youth Workshop in TÜRI [ANNEX C]
Minutes of the CHOJNA Conference [ANNEX D]
CHOJNA - Youth Workshop report [ANNEX E]

2. Approval of the accounts 2008 – 2009

Due the fact that Chris MacAdie from SHERBORNE, one the former Honorary Auditors, has left SHERBORNE and the Douzelage, a new Auditor had to be nominated. Dr Carlos Sancassano from Bellagio agreed to assume this charge.

After the accounts reflecting the actual financial situation of the Douzelage had been checked by the two Honorary Auditors, Marcel Michel from GRANVILLE and Carlo Sancassano from BELLAGIO, they were unanimously agreed. Actually the Douzelage has 9156.77 € on its account. 3020.36 € are on the translation account and 6136.41 € on the presidency's account.

The president mentioned that the closing date (the date when the last statement from the bank had been received) was the 31st of March 2009. All transfers executed after this date will be booked on the new exercise 2009-2010. Towns were kindly asked to check their situation concerning the payments of the annual contribution and the translation equipment.

Holstebro explained their financial problems due to the refusal of their town hall to pay the annual fees for several years now. They decided to go back and ask the town hall for support after their elections. Just one day before coming to the Altea meeting, they had a new very promising contact which hopefully will be positive.

The president thanked Holstebro for the strong efforts they did to get the necessary money in order to allow their youngsters and members to participate in the Douzelage activities. With reference to the recent mail exchanges, the president suggested that if they have the money, they should pay for 2006-2008 and use the fee for 2009 to make a new start. This could be paid in 2010 if the situation has improved.

3. Annual Douzelage membership

It was proposed to remain at 300 € for the annual fee, according to the decision taken in SESIMBRA [SESIMBRA, para 2, 15/08/2003]

4. Simultaneous Translation accounts

It also was unanimously agreed to remain at the 50 € as the annual contribution for maintenance and transport of the translation equipment according to the decision taken in OXELÖSUND. [OXELÖSUND GM Minutes, para 2a and 2b., 16/05/2002] and [SHERBORNE minutes, October 2006, para 5]

Towns were reminded that, according to the decision taken in TÜRI [TÜRI GM May 2008, para 4], the contribution to the purchasing of a translation unit for the new towns will be 800€. Delayed payment of 200 €/year is possible.

The president expressed his special thanks to KÖSZEG for taking care and transporting the equipment to so many meetings now. Especially the long way (2700 Km) to this meeting was very difficult for Köszeg. This has been very profitable for the Douzelage. The president also thanked Zoltán for taking care of the recordings and the technical installation of the equipment. He finally mentioned that as he had been asked as for an insurance of the equipment in Luxembourg, the asked amount (\pm 800 €/year), calculated on its value as new, was too important and economically not justifiable. The audience thanked Köszeg with a big applause.



As a general remark Mr Sancassano from BELLAGIO explained that both accounts had been cross-checked and that everything is perfect and clear and absolutely transparent. No objections in any way were to be remarked. He noted that the expenses are in fact very low for a perfectly working association. He added that the secretarial work represents a big part of the work in the association and that it should be paid higher. The president confirmed that the secretary is the only person in the Douzelage that is paid (1.654€ per year), a decision that had been taken in 2001 already (based on 5 hours work a week). He said that he as the president works tightly together with the actual secretary and that he is more available than people, who usually work in a half time job. The next president perhaps will not have so much time, so that it could be that the new secretary will have more work to do. Mr Sancassano answered that this job had been started with a 5 hours a week job but that in his view it needs more presence and time and therefore the remuneration for this job needs to be adjusted in the future.

The president replied that as long as the secretary is in NIEDERANVEN, this will be left unchanged because the secretary is an employee of the municipality and has especially been appointed for this job.

5. Programme for further meetings

The Schedule of the Douzelage Meetings had been published as [ANNEX J] prior to the meeting and a call for candidates had been launched to host the upcoming meetings.

PREVEZA gave some details about their meeting which is planned from 04-09th November 2009 (Project Meeting) which finally turned to be a Youth in Action activity. This information has been published on the Douzelage webpage already. The topic will be *“The youngsters control the climate change. The EU shows the way”*. The Municipality of Preveza wants to make well known to the youngsters the EU policy on the environmental field. Further details will be published quite soon.

It was agreed that this Project meeting which is definitely not a general meeting, will be taken off from the list of the general meetings.

Spring 2010 SUŠICE 29th April to 2nd of May

Spring 2011 GRANVILLE 20th Anniversary of the Douzelage and signing of the Codicil to the Douzelage Charta

Spring 2012 ZVOLEN (date to be defined)

6. Douzelage enlargement

The president reported on the actual situation of the enlargement process:

- CELJE (Slovenia) - Decision expected.
- GEROSKIPOU (Cyprus) The president informed that a letter had been addressed to the mayor on 16 April 2009 informing that their answer is expected until 10th of May 2009 latest, otherwise GEROSKIPOU will no longer be considered as a candidate. No answer has been received. Preveza announced that they will ask their mayor to assist the Douzelage in finding a partner in Cyprus. **ACTION: PREVEZA**
- The delegation of MARSASKALA (Malta), the Deputy Mayor Mr Charlot Mifsud, the Executive Secretary Mr. Joseph Caruana and Mrs Josette Marsh, showed a very interesting video about MARSASKALA (Malta) and gave additional touristic and historic information about their nice town. Vice-president Alphonse Henrard confirmed what president Ed Weber had explained in the opening of this meeting and reported on the visit of MARSASKALA that he and the president had. He confirmed the strong commitment of the Mayor and the town officials and as a conclusion he strongly recommended to accept this town as a new member town. Then the delegations unanimously decided to accept MARSASKALA (Malta) as new member town of the Douzelage. The president congratulated the delegation and welcomed Marsaskala in the Douzelage family.
- The president reported on the very positive contact he had with a new candidate town: Siret in Romania. The application as well as all accession documents and the information concerning the mail exchanges



had all been forwarded to all the delegations prior to this meeting so that the following votes could be unanimously taken:

1. to enlarge the accession process for Romania and Bulgaria
2. to take Siret as new Romanian partner of the Douzelage
3. to take the official vote on Siret's accession in presence of their delegation during the next Douzelage General meeting in Sušice (Czech Republic) in spring 2010, in order to give the Siret delegates the opportunity to present their town verbally and to be present at the meeting when the official vote will be taken.
4. Meanwhile Siret can participate at all activities just as a full member would be able to do.

The president thanked all delegates for this unanimous decision. Siret will be informed accordingly.

As a new Codicil to the Douzelage Charter will only be signed at the 20th Anniversary Ceremony of the Douzelage in Granville in 2011 and because the Douzelage has no official document certifying to the new member towns that they are member of this Twinning association, it has been unanimously decided to hand out a kind of certificate proving that they are full members of the Douzelage meanwhile. The delegations of Marsaskala, Prienai and Zvolen signed this document together with the Vice-presidents and the President of the Douzelage.

Flyers, posters, banner etc.

It was generally admitted that new documentation, flyers, banners etc. must be produced in the next future but because of the extension process, which is still in process; these reprints will have to wait until the process will be closed. Meanwhile the flyer, the posters etc. will be updated and put in a perfect resolution on the website in the Download area, so that the members can download and print them if necessary. **ACTION: PRESIDENCY**

7. Elections

a) Douzelage presidential elections

The paragraph 4 c) of the Douzelage Constitution says: "The Presidents and the Vice-Presidents shall be elected for a term of three years. They are eligible for re-election but each must be a citizen of a different town. They will be elected by an absolute majority at a general meeting of the Douzelage, nominations having been received by the Returning Officer and circulated by him at least four weeks before the meeting at which the elections are to be held. The Returning Officer will be appointed at the previous meeting of The Douzelage."

The president's proposal to nominate Mrs Vera Svobodová as returning officer for the 2010 elections was unanimously agreed.

As the mandate of the president and the vice-presidents will end in spring 2010 and as the actual president and the vice-presidents are not candidate for an additional term, new elections will take place in SUŠICE and their successors have to be found.

KÖSZEG asked why the actual president and vice-presidents could not be nominated for an additional term. The president explained that already in Türi and also in Chojna, some opinions showed that a unanimous decision on an eventual third mandate would not be possible. As this unanimous decision was the condition for the actual presidency to eventually consider a further mandate, it becomes necessary now to find new candidates. There are also some changes in the organisation in Niederanven as the Douzelage secretary Patricia Salvatore-Moes will definitely leave the Douzelage office and have a new office in the municipality of Niederanven in the next weeks.



By this opportunity the president expressed his special thanks to the municipality of Niederaanven for the extraordinary support he had during his mandate:

- a magnificent office with all infrastructures needed,
- a half time secretary,
- free communications; phone, fax, ADSL, Internet, etc.
- free office supplies; paper, writing material, etc.
- a color copier/scanner
- personal computers with color printer, plain paper fax, and all other needed equipment,
- a new laptop for the president for the 3 first years of his mandate,
- a second new laptop for the president for the next 3 years of his mandate,
- all needed software and updates to make the it-part running during the 6 last years,
- and many other advantages, which have often been considered as being “normal”.

This closed the Friday morning meeting.

Before continuing with the agenda on the Friday afternoon, the president announced to the delegations that the Mayor of ALTEA had just got a letter from a consulting company called Eco Tech Research and Consulting, which was actually doing a survey of this citizen’s meeting. Every delegate had got a paper to fill out, in order to make a little personal report on their opinion of that meeting.

The president reminded the delegates that as for the upcoming presidential elections, the nominations should be sent to the returning officer Vera Svobodová in SUŠICE by the 1st of March 2010 latest. The correct postal and mail address will be forwarded to the direct delegation. **ACTION: ALL**

KÖSZEG mentioned that they could not find in the HOUFFALIZE 2002 Pre-election Workshop Report any statement saying that the president can only be re-elected once.

The president confirmed this and explained that this was only a recommendation that had been made on this matter. The official statutes indicate that a president can be re-elected but they do not say how often. In HOUFFALIZE it had also been said that the nomination should come from the town, the candidate has to be accredited and that he should have the support of the town. The question of the languages had also been mentioned in this report. It had been stated that the candidate should be multilingual, which means that he/she should be fluent in French and English. The official languages in Brussels being English and French, experience showed during the last few years that being a vice-president with only French and/or English worked perfectly.

SHERBORNE remarked that in addition to what had been said before; they understood that the descriptions of responsibility of the vice-presidency in practice are not as written. They proposed to revise the actual responsibilities of the vice-presidents, so that people know what is awaiting them.

The president replied that these texts had never been binding and that they were just recommendations about what could be the best way to function. Of course not all recommendations could work as it had been foreseen initially, but however they had been followed as much as possible.

Vice-president Günther Pecher suggested finding a vice-president who could work as a kind of adviser or even to create a new task within the frame work of this new multi annual project program. The president agreed with this idea, but recommended to leave this decision to the new presidency. Maybe the new team will have another opinion or new ideas. At the time when these recommendations were written in HOUFFALIZE, the candidates were already chosen, but in this case it is impossible to fix rules if there are not even candidates. Initially it had been proposed that one of the vice-presidents should take care of the projects, help in developing ideas and find subjects or issues to put on the agendas. The other vice-president was meant to look after financial and administrative procedures. This had easily been possible until now, because the president and the vice-president Alphonse Henrard are living very close to Brussels. This had always been of a great advantage until now because many meetings in Brussels could be arranged and many issues became possible. This proximity and this close contact to Brussels gave the Douzelage the opportunity to gain in experience. The new team may have another strategy and they should decide themselves and no rules should be set up before. The importance of multi annual projects had only become important these last times and the rules of acting need to get refined at the same time.



KÖSZEG suggested changing this text in the way that there might be no equivoque any longer and that it should clearly say that re-election is possible without stating how many times. The president answered that already now the existing statutes clearly mean “a”, saying that a re-election can be done - as often as the delegates and the candidates decide to.

On the little misunderstanding by Jeremy Barker, who remarked that if the rules require that a president speaks French, this would be undemocratic, because it would immediately exclude most of the towns, the president answered that of course no such rule would exist. It should only say that a person who only knows French cannot be excluded to be a candidate for vice-president. He repeated that the experience of the last six years showed that Vice-president Alphonse Henrard is the best example of the fact that you can be a perfect vice-president without speaking English fluently. The document that once had been written stated that the vice-presidents should speak English and French. Then the president went through the HOUFFALIZE document once more, all by giving explanations to the different points.

8. The "Europe for Citizens" and the "Youth in Action" Programmes 2007-2013

Experiences and recommendations

There had been several projects in the Douzelage running in the frame of the “Youth in Action”. The president had asked the towns involved in these projects to present their recommendations, suggestions or experiences. He told the delegations that as far as he had heard from Luxembourgish associations using this program, that they were very satisfied with the new regulations. One negative experience, for example, had been that fact that the program is not so well adaptable for disabled people (especially on the level of time schedule, which are too tight for persons with special needs).

It was remarked that very often the information from Brussels about whether the subsidy is given or not is given much too late. This is one major thing that really needs to be changed because as an organizer of a project you should know about the financial support at least 4 months in advance, as it is very difficult to handle a project if you only know about the support a few weeks before its start. The president agreed on this point and gave the example of HOUFFALIZE, who had not yet got an answer from Brussels for the Adepts 2009 (and this is a citizen’s meeting). He added that the DG4 direction for culture and education should be more efficient on that level and look for solutions and improvements very soon.

CHOJNA remarked that with the “Youth in Action” program you have the opportunity to choose every 3 months a new period of when the project can happen, so that you can have the possibility to plan the start of the project more in advance, all by knowing if you get support or not. They also remarked that for some countries it is a bit more difficult to get subsidised (for example for Poland) because of the competition effect. This year CHOJNA prepared a project with PRIENAI and there had been all in all 145 other applications for subsidies and only 45 got money.

The president agreed and said that also the application form slightly changes from country to country and that on that level there might also be some problems. This had already been noted and Brussels should find a common application, the same for every country.

BAD KÖTZTING said that they had been preparing the Wilderness Camp for 2009 and they agreed that you should present your application early enough, in order to get the green light early enough. But then you are confronted with some general problems that make a normal handling impossible (you cannot get the German version of the application, or even not the right application you need, or the translation from English is so bad that you do not know what to fill in...). Günther Pecher however added that a very positive point has been that the National Office had been very helpful and patient in giving advice how to properly fill out the application form.

The president repeated once more that it is very important to get in contact with the national agencies. They are a very helpful contact and should be included as early as possible in the project process.

PREVEZA agreed with BAD KÖTZTING in saying that the national agency could help very much as for filling out the application (a task that is almost impossible to do it on one’s own).



The president said that the town twinning applications will also probably be managed on a national basis (i.e. the Ministry of Culture) in the next future, so that a good contact to the national agencies is of a vital importance. In that case you no longer need to send your application to Brussels but to any office defined in your country, what would be much easier of course. However it may also be a disadvantage, as for example not every Ministry of Culture works efficiently. But all these changes are still in preparation.

István Mátrai from KÖSZEG remarked that he would not be happy with such a change as then there will be no way to compare the different applications within Europe. He would prefer that the town twinning applications would stay on the international level.

As for the Youth in Action projects, he said that they had been involved in such projects since 2000 and that they had several bilateral and multilateral exchanges until now. He remarked that the main goal of these projects is to allow to youngsters to meet, find friends and at the same time learn something. His opinion is: whatever application you present, if the theme is interesting enough, you will get the support and the youngsters will have a great time together. He thought that the new program is not so different to the old one (2002-2006). The principles and goals are the same: you have to fill in **what you want, why you want it, where you want to do it** and especially **why it is absolutely necessary that you get the support**. He recommended to always follow the suggested themes on the national or international level in order to get the support more easily. By considering all these details, KÖSZEG had always been able until then to be successful in getting the needed financial support. István insisted on the fact that **the filling out of the Part III of the application is very important** and has to be done very meticulously. He suggested to first check by email the written Part III of every town, before sending it definitely to Brussels. He also said that the **estimated travel costs have to be filled in properly** (always estimate them higher than expected!) in order to get enough support. The **preparatory visits** are also very important, especially when there are groups who had never been to the organizing city yet. In some countries the rules on that point are different (f.ex. in France there have to be 2 group leaders if there are more than 10 youngsters). As for the **deadlines** for example KÖSZEG gave in the application on Nov 1 2008 for the summer project starting July 3 2009. They also could have done the application for February 1 2009, but then they would have got the decision only 1.5 month later and that would not have been enough to prepare all other linked steps. As the number of applications is increasing, the asked budget should be quite low, in order to stay decent and get a positive answer without regrets from the Brussels side. **Multilateral projects are also preferred to bilateral ones** (to underline the multicultural character). Then he explained that one of the **worst problems** might be to have the necessary 4 different countries participating, that the support is given but that then for any reason one of the countries quits after that costs had already been paid. At this moment the whole project risks to fail, as the conditions are no longer valid.

The president thanked István for his precious details and underlined once more that for all Youth projects it is important to have at least 4 different town partners to participate, in order to be able to send in just one (1) application for all the participating towns. As for the applications written in English, he asked the town delegates to send a copy to the Presidency office, in order that they can be checked and compared to the others, just to get the best results and experience (they will then also be put on the Website for information).

ALTEA said that during the last general meeting in CHOJNA, they had got all needed information of the “Europe for Citizens” program. They thanked TÜRI and CHOJNA and especially Ed Weber for their precious help in the administrative process of the meeting preparations. They had found all the needed documents on the Douzelage Web site (member area) and they declared that this had been very useful. They had got around 20.000€ support from Brussels and this would not have been possible without all the help they had got.

Then ALTEA announced the news that the town of ALTEA is nominated for the Golden Stars Awards 2009 in Brussels. This is a great opportunity for ALTEA and the Douzelage to get rewarded for the work that had been done in these last years. The president said that this might be one of the highest recognitions of the Douzelage and shows how much the European Commission appreciates its work. He said that this general meeting will be documented in its due form and DVD will be made and joined to the application report in order to illustrate the efforts that had been made by all people involved. He took the opportunity to thank all Douzelage towns for their commitment and efforts.



9. Management of Multi-annual projects

At the CHOJNA Conference the management of multi-annual projects had already been discussed. It was mentioned that stepping over to multi-annual project system would automatically entail additional administrative work. One of the options for this new management could be to put in place a permanent Project leader team.

Another option that had been discussed was to find adequate partners who could accompany the Douzelage in the organisation of multi-annual projects. Among the few examples that had been presented, the ALDA was one of the most promising.

As for this matter the decision had been taken to join the ALDA and the president said that he was very happy that this had been made. He hoped that the Douzelage might find the best way to a perfect cooperation for the future. He reminded that he will go to a meeting of ALDA in Brussels the 26th and 27th of May and that he will inform everybody as soon as possible about the news from this side.

10. The ALDA (Association of local democracy and agencies)

See paragraphe I. B. at page 5

11. Douzelage in the World Wide Web

a) Douzelage Website update

The assembly had been informed in CHOJNA that the Douzelage webmaster, John Pettersson is no longer working for the OXELÖSUND Town hall and opened his own business named Mediabiz. As John (Mediabiz) is willing to take over the responsibility to keep running the Douzelage website, a decision on the hosting and maintenance (technical support) costs of 80 €/month in favour of Mediabiz had been taken by unanimous vote. (Extra support is 61€/hour). The president thanked OXELÖSUND for all the years of free hosting and services of the Douzelage website. The president announced that he is very happy about the fact that a parallel IT-workshop could have been made possible for this general meeting and that one of the messages of the this workshop is to find a new person to update and manage the contents of the Douzelage website. [ANNEX O]

After the suggestions made by Michael Morrell (SHERBORNE) in CHOJNA concerning a more consistent approach to the Douzelage website updates and according to the conclusion that an IT-workshop, lead by Mr John Pettersson, it had become necessary to refresh the knowledge of the local webmasters, all by finding new issues and improvement suggestions. [ANNEX P] The president was a little bit disappointed to see that from the 162 logged-in members of the Douzelage website, only a few returned regularly to the member part area. He reminded all delegates to visit this part more often, especially to be able to get improvement suggestions or comments, so much needed to proceed.

ACTION: ALL

b) Douzelage Contact addresses

In order to maintain a complete and update Town contact list / Education contact list, towns had been kindly asked to check the attached lists and to inform the Secretary of any amendments. The president reminded the delegates that the best would be to have only one single contact address per town. This town contact address is supposed to forward all information to the members of the local committees. [ANNEX Q] and [ANNEX R]. He further informed the delegates that a new list with only school contacts is being made and will also be sent to the Education group in the next few weeks.

ACTION: ALL

c) Download menu

The president informed that for those who are organizing projects, there is a Download menu in the member area of the website. He explained that if towns have to apply in Brussels, it is very useful to find all the documents that are needed for the application, together with all the necessary information in this menu. There is also an updated version of the Douzelage distance table available to help when travel costs have to be calculated in the applications.



All towns were reminded to put a regular (better a 10-20% higher) travel price in the application, in order to be sure that all travel expenses will be covered later on. A Douzelage account has been created as an interim measure on www.scribd.com where users can be invited to login and to upload their presentations. Afterwards other Douzelage users having the login and the password can enter the member area and download the presentations they need.

12. The Douzelage Youth Committee project

The president explained that there had been a slight misunderstanding about what the functioning of the Douzelage Youth Committee is. The initial idea had been that this committee should work in the frame of the Youth in Action program independently from the Douzelage group of adults. They should launch and manage their own projects (if help of adults is needed, they will get it of course). There were some young persons who had been disappointed that they had not been involved in the General Meetings actions. The president insisted on the fact that the idea of this committee was that it should be made possible to the youngsters to plan and organize on their own and independently from all other Douzelage actions their activities. The activities of the Douzelage cannot only be oriented on the youth, as elderly people for example also need to be involved in Douzelage activities. Therefore there cannot be every time a youth meeting parallel to the general meeting. Another important detail is that youth meetings and activities organised in the Youth in Action program are better subsidized and the question of insurance and responsibility is easier to handle in the frame of this program.

Then Mrs Janet Parsons made a short report (slide show) about the SHERBORNE Youth Study Visit in October 2008. She said that this event had been a full success, as young people from 14 different towns (21 participants) participated. She conveyed all her thanks to all the delegates of the Douzelage towns that had been coming to SHERBORNE for this occasion, in order to share experiences on youth services across Europe. She said that it was particularly delightful to see those youngsters, aged around 18, to stand in front of the assembly and speak about the subject in English, all by staying confident and effective. A written report is being made and sent to all towns in the next future. The focus of the meeting was to bring together as many countries as possible and explore youth work policies practice across Europe. What they did was to use UK government policy and the local SHERBORNE policy as a basis to compare the different following areas: what services are provided, how they are funded, what constitutes a healthy life-style, how people are encouraged to live in small towns, criminal justice system and young people's voices in the area of democracy and representation in parliaments. They talked about the facilities and guidance available in the different towns, the types and ways of securing financial support. It became visible that local partnerships had been very important (Dorset County Council) to realise this meeting. She said that much of what is done in the UK and what had been found out during the meeting discussions, is applicable to other towns. One major point was clear, saying that young people represent the future of the Douzelage and that we need to invest in the power of young people to be able to take control of their future. Examples were mentioned where young people had been involved in organisations like the Dorset Youth Opportunity fund, which receives money to make young people take own decisions about local projects for example. Those decisions often show wisdom and maturity. It is also true that involvements of young people are effective and sustainable. The visit inspired enthusiasm and the determination to support the development on structures and spread the earned knowledge across the Douzelage towns. A few challenges and differences concerning structures and financial supports across the towns had also been treated and discussed. They found out that the majority of funding, which is often provided by local authorities, is often more available for capital projects rather than for ongoing revenue funding. Mrs Parson also said that sometimes, when money is raised locally, apart from all bureaucratic processes, there is much more scope to use that money creatively. Another step that needs to be done is to change the receptions of young people and to encourage promotion of the positive things that young people do. A detailed report about the Youth Study Visit will follow.

Janet Parsons thanked Ed Weber for his encouragements and precious help as for the administrative steps and she also thanked the local and government authorities for their confidence in their youth project. Every delegate of this youth project reported to have enjoyed every minute of it and expresses their thankfulness for having been able to express themselves, all by having a great time together with new friends. Further Janet Parson confirmed that their hopes are to continue the Youth Study Visit project in other Douzelage towns, as a multi annual itinerant project. The president expressed his congratulations to Mrs Janet Parson and to the entire organisational committee in SHERBORNE, for their commitment and efforts to organize such a perfect and useful project.

At the end of this Friday meeting, ZVOLEN, PRIENAI and MARSASKALA were asked to sign officially the document proofing that they are new members of the Douzelage.



III. Survey of recent events

A. Projects not yet finished or in preparation

The president mentioned again that the meeting of ALTEA will hopefully be awarded with the Golden Stars of Town Twinning and that is why he asked every town who did not yet send in their activity lists to do so as soon as possible, in order to have every necessary document for the final report together.

ALTEA: Since the last meeting in CHOJNA the Town Hall had been preparing with all the involved committees the actual general Meeting and the parallel Education Meeting and IT-work shop. During the CHOJNA Meeting they also had discussions about getting young musicians to ALTEA Vieja, but unfortunately this could not be done for timing reasons. Finally ALTEA announced that they would be very interested to participate in the SHERBORNE music project, especially as they have many important musicians, music schools and groups in their town.

BAD KÖTZTING: Mr Günther Pecher explained that many of their activities run “on their own” without the help of the local Douzelage committee. This clearly shows that all those little (mostly school exchanges) activities are very popular and efficient. 2 delegates from BAD KÖTZTING participated at the SHERBORNE Study visit in October 2008. 3 musicians went to JUDENBURG for the “Maisingen” event.

As for the details of the Wilderness camp this summer (last week in July) Günther showed some slides and information material (all the participants will get this material by email before the start of the event). They had to change the name of the project in order to stay in the frame of the EU-regulations. Following Douzelage towns will participate: BELLAGIO, CHOJNA, HOUFFALIZE, MARSASKALA, PREVEZA, SHERBORNE, SUŠICE, TÜRI and KÖSZEG (on the waiting list). The setting of the event is on a very picturesque site in the Bavarian forest. If the EU funding is not approved by the 10th of June 09, the whole project will unfortunately have to be cancelled. If the funding is approved, a detailed information letter will be sent to every involved town immediately afterwards. The preparatory visit is planned to happen from 3-5 July in BAD KÖTZTING with for every participating town each 1 adult and 1 student. As for the event itself normally 4 students and 1 adult are previewed.

BELLAGIO: Mr Sancassano from BELLAGIO explained that most of their activities had been to participate at meetings and visits from other Douzelage towns. In January 2009 they had sent many calendars to the Calendar Museum in PRIENAI. He explained that they are busy preparing the Miniparliament, taking place from 15 to 18th of October 2009. The participants’ age may vary between 11 and 15. This year they are planning to give the organisation of the event to a team of a theatrical company, specialized in working with young people and trying to find a way to characterize the Miniparliament all by offering special activities allowing many exchanging experiences among the youngsters. The main theme will be the “Petit Prince” book of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. There will be theatrical and musical workshop and at the end of the stay the kids will be performing a play they studied in those workshops. The kids will be accommodated in host families and the teachers in hotels.

Mr Sancassano asked every town to inform the potential participants to this event, to read the book “Le petit prince” and learn 3 songs (translated in English) that will be sent by email in MP3 format to the teachers of every town before the event. Then he asked that every participating town should think about a “little prince” logo that represents their special culture of the town. 3 children plus 2 teachers are foreseen, but if more want to come, Bellagio will arrange accommodation for more. As for the gender of the participants, a balance would be the best. Every interested town had to give their contacts to BELLAGIO, so that they could start to prepare the application papers for subsidising as soon as possible.

ACTION: ALL

The president thanked BELLAGIO for their commitment in keeping the Miniparliament event alive and said that BELLAGIO is just a perfect town for theatrical performances and that schools should not hesitate to send their children to BELLAGIO.

CHOJNA: Their activities can be divided in 2 groups, explained Mr Janusz Salamonczyk from CHOJNA: the one are the real activities and the other the administrative procedures (writing applications...). They had the Christmas postcards project that probably will be finished end of May by giving the funds to the institution and sending the finance report to every participating town. The European Club of their Secondary School took part in the regular school clubs’ activities; students and teachers took part in the SHERBORNE Youth Study visit. They had hosted 2



persons from SHERBORNE (Jeremy Barker and a teacher from Gryphon School) for a preparatory meeting in the frame of a Sherborne Comenius project. This new Comenius program is quite exceptional as it combines educational institutions like schools with other communities: the main partner of the project is a Community (town or County) and the 2 others must be a school and a third partner is a voluntary organisation. So from every participating country there must be a group of those 3 kinds of partners participating. They have to apply together and the choice of the topics and themes is very wide: it can be almost everything connected with education. CHOJNA prepared this project with the Dorset County council, the Douzelage Sherborne group, the Gryphon County Secondary School and Douzelage Association from Chojna. They had been working hard on the application which they hope will be successful.

In January/February 2009 they prepared a Leonardo da Vinci project with hotel students, who had already work experience in Germany and England. The Polish – Lithuanian school exchange project *“Let’s get known each other individually and in a European way too”* with their Douzelage partner in PRIENAI, had got approval from the national agencies, so that CHOJNA will host 10 students and 2 teachers from PRIENAI in CHOJNA.

They also had in mind the new project for 2010 called “Douzelage Play”. CHOJNA will probably not be able to organize this project in the same dimensions as KARKKILA did a few years ago, but they hope that they will be able to host 48 young people from 5 or 6 Douzelage towns. In CHOJNA they have their local poet, who agreed to write a play for that special occasion. They also had contacted Mr John Sutherland-Smith from SHERBORNE to help, as he has important experiences in this area. The play will be in few languages and with some pantomime too. They want to perform it on the former Russian airport hangars in CHOJNA. The topic of the play will be about Europe, the future and young people. For all those towns with interested young people aged between 16 and 20 or drama groups, willing to participate, Janusz asked to get an email form those persons by the 15th of June 2009, so that Chojna can send their application by the 1st of November 2009. He had already given a short description the day before to every delegate and an informative email to every town had also been sent. As for the number of participants, the first to register will be in. However if they will not get the asked funds, they will not be able to realise this projects, as the EU funds are absolutely necessary for this.

CHOJNA will also participate in the Comenius partnership project with MEERSSEN and together with secondary schools from Vienna, Istanbul and SHERBORNE. The Christmas cards project will be continued in winter 2009-2010 because the project had been a real success. With small improvements it can easily be continued but this time maybe by involving the local children’s home.

There is a Norwegian fund for non-governmental organisations and CHOJNA prepared an application, because there is a possibility to get money for the Douzelage (there will be 15 projects chosen, but there will be more than 300 participating).

Finally CHOJNA reminded the delegations who have not yet sent in the financial identification form concerning their General Meeting in 2008 to do this as soon as possible because they would like to reimburse the travel costs. Again they thanked the towns who had helped in the Christmas cards project for their generosity. **ACTION: ALL**

GRANVILLE: In order to celebrate the French presidency of the Council of Europe from July to December 2008, Granville Partenaire Européen participated to a big fair event that had been organised at this occasion. In December 2008, they had a stall informing about Poland in a hospital. In January 2009 they held their traditional Douzelage Quiz again, where many young people were very interested in. They had bought a new European exhibition, which allows them to organize every year in all their schools interesting material about Europe.

In May they will participate at the Golf Trophy in SHERBORNE. In July 10 students from the Lycée Marlan will go to KÖSZEG for the Mami-project. In September they will organize a walk to the Mont St Michel for all the members of the Douzelage who are interested. In November a music group from CHOJNA will visit GRANVILLE. In December, in the frame with the partnership of the association “Ecritures d’Europe”, delegates (artists, writers) from the Czech Republic will be invited to GRANVILLE.

The president took the opportunity to present the book “Au fond de la tasse”, which had been realised together with “Ecritures d’Europe”. The president read the foreword of the book written by the European commissioner Mr Jan Figel. The delegates were informed that there is still a possibility to purchase this book, all by ordering them at the presidency office of the Douzelage in NIEDERANVEN.



HOLSTEBRO: Unfortunately all the energy had gone with their financial problems they had had since many months. Their attempt to get back on their feet with advertising contracts had failed because of the economical crisis, which hit HOLSTEBRO together with all other countries. But they have not given up and they want to put all their strength now in saving the situation. Then HOLSTEBRO thanked the Douzelage and its president for the precious support they had got over all this difficult period and they expressed their whole determination to stay as a full Douzelage member in the future.

HOUFFALIZE did participate at the different official visits to Brussels. In June 2008 they had organized the 9th Adeps event. A delegation from HOUFFALIZE participated to the SHERBORNE Youth Study Visit. In December 2008, Alphonse Henrard and Ed Weber went to MARSASKALA to meet the town officials and discuss on the accession. In April 2009 HOUFFALIZE participated, together with MEERSSSEN at the Benelux Meeting, organised by NIEDERANVEN. As for the future they will most probably participate in the Wilderness Camp in BAD KÖTZTING and the youth project in PREVEZA in November 2009.

Then Mr Alphonse Henrard informed the delegates about a new information system, set up by the HOUFFALIZE in the frame of the Douzelage. With every new project launched in the Douzelage, the local HOUFFALIZE Douzelage committee transfers a personal letter to the members of their local group, which represents about 500 personal postings inviting all the interested people to a press briefing before the project starts. Then after the event, the involved persons (mostly young people) invite the press on their turn in order to report about the issues and their experiences. This has shown to be a very efficient way of spreading the news about the Douzelage among the citizens and it could be a model to follow by other towns too.

Then Miss Anne Redotté, a graduate in tourism from HOUFFALIZE, presented new ideas that she had been working out. The idea of her project is to offer a bed and guidance to all the citizens of the Douzelage towns, who would like to visit their twinning partners, a kind of “couch-surfing” action within the Douzelage community. She had already discussed with the IT-workshop people in order to get a special link for this project on the Douzelage website.

On the second place she proposed a music project, like setting up a special Douzelage music group, what would engender of course rehearsals at every meeting or 2 or 3 more and then perform a concert at the end of every meeting. Maybe the music workshop (rehearsals etc.) could represent a part of the General Meeting, just as for IT for example.

The president thanked Mrs Redotté very much for her dynamism and he underlined that it is very important to support the young peoples’ ideas. He confirmed that the tourism project might be very interesting but that for the music action it would be more difficult for matters of time and the increasing number of delegates at the meetings.

Anne Redotté asked all the delegates to express themselves about their ideas for tourism, in order to develop a new project out of these suggestions. **ACTION: ALL**

JUDENBURG: Mr Willi Schnedl gave a short view on JUDENBURG’s activities of the last months. They recently had their traditional “Maisingen”, with the performance of a large choir from KÖSZEG, living as a “minority” group. A choir from BAD KÖTZTING was also participating to this event. Pupils of the JUDENBURG Economic high school will take part at the Hungarian Youth project “Mami” in July 2009. This year JUDENBURG has got a “plaque of honour” of the Council of Europe. This sign was given to them during their Tuscany festival by a member of the European Parliament. They also celebrate the 10th anniversary of being a member of the Douzelage. A sign post will be set up to show the distances between all the different Douzelage towns.

Michael Langgner continued by giving explanations (slide show) about their new youth project “Mission Global Warming” planned for probably the second week of July 2010 (the dates are not yet definitely sure). They want to tie in with the other Global Warming project that had already been running in OXELÖSUND and add a personal note from Austria: it will be an adventure camp (sports and nature activities, supplementary to the workshops) and workshops with the topic of global warming. The base camp will be in a 1800m high situated site in the middle of the alpine nature at the border of a beautiful lake. The target group of participants will be active youth aged 16+, interested in the theme of global warming. Mr Langgner gave also a glimpse on the probable time schedule (mountain biking and hiking trips, discussions, cultural visits, lectures, sports, final bonfire...).

Normally 25 persons will be the maximum the base camp could host. The number of participants per town can only be defined after having seen how high the interest will be. A possible duration extension to 2 weeks in case the



interest would be very high, is a matter of funds and availability of the base camp. JUDENBURG will check this out, as they have enough time to prepare this project.

JUDENBURG informed that they have not yet decided what will be the best funding source, but probably the project will be run under the Youth in Action program. In their opinion no teachers are needed, as the trainers on the site will have this function. CHOJNA explained that according to the application regulations they have to define at least 4 participants per town and that there have to be teachers (adults) with the students, no matter how old they are, as they are still students in the frame of school groups. JUDENBURG confirmed that this is what they will be respecting.

The president added that it is always good to have experienced people around and that JUDENBURG should not hesitate to get more advice if ever they need. István Mátrai from KÖSZEG underlined that for the Youth in Action projects there should be at least 4 different participating towns because then only the one application of the organizing town has to be submitted and the others do not have to apply for money. Everything will be running under the application coming from JUDENBURG. He further confirmed that there has to be one group leader per town and that it does not necessarily have to be a teacher, but just an adult.

The president congratulated the JUDENBURG team for this excellent project coming from the young people and he insisted on the good idea of this itinerant nature project. He confirmed that the slide presentation will be put on the Website of the Douzelage, so that all interested people can get the details easily.

KÖSZEG presented their activities with a slide show, as they wanted to show some pictures about the exhibition “Köszeg –Pearl of Pannonia” that took place in Brussels at the European Parliament. István Mátrai presented special thanks to the president and the vice-president for attending this event and to the president Ed Weber who officially opened the exhibition.

By this way the Douzelage had surely got some more publicity among the European officials. The lectures that were given in this frame had been very interesting and profitable to them, explained István Mátrai. As for other activities there had been 4 youngsters at the Youth Study Visit in SHERBORNE, an invitation to a preparatory visit from the town of CELJE (potential Douzelage applicant) in the frame of a project called “Postcards from EU”. This project is running under the program “European Citizenship” and CELJE has got around 40.000€ of funds. Another meeting will take place in July 2009 and maybe it will be in KÖSZEG.

KÖSZEG did also apply for the Youth in Action fund for the “MAMI” (Major Minorities) project. Originally there had been GRANVILLE, CHOJNA, SHERBORNE, SIGULDA and SUŠICE and KÖSZEG with 10 participants each. Unfortunately SIGULDA had to resign, although the participation fees were not very high. JUDENBURG will come instead of SIGULDA, so that the condition of 4 participating towns at least is luckily respected. A partly preparatory visit for that project (with SHERBORNE and GRANVILLE) had already taken place. For those 2 cities it had been especially interesting, as they had not yet been to any of those Youth projects in KÖSZEG. The Croatian choir from KÖSZEG reported about a beautiful event of the “Maisingen” in JUDENBURG. In the town of KÖSZEG they also organised an exhibition about town twinning programs and the Douzelage. They also distributed the Christmas cards from CHOJNA among their citizens.

As for future activities, a student group from BAD KÖTZTING is coming to KÖSZEG for a traditional visit. Lectures about the Douzelage activities are regularly organised in the school of KÖSZEG and soon there will be a report about the meeting and the town of ALTEA.

They plan to give some benefits to the other Douzelage partner towns by giving a Town Twinning Card to those visitors from the Douzelage towns who would like to come to KÖSZEG and get 10% discount in the town.

The president thanked KÖSZEG and its committee for the good work and their very successful projects. Then he asked if the idea of the “Theatre Play” which should eventually be performed in KÖSZEG and which was discussed in CHOJNA, is still alive. KÖSZEG explained that the idea is still there and that they are in contact with SHERBORNE for that, but it will only happen after 2011 as the people that have to be involved are all so busy and could not yet find free time to look after it. But they keep on the idea and most surely this will be a very interesting project for young artists.

MEERSSEN explained that the whole Douzelage committee in MEERSSEN had been renewed; so that they are very busy for the moment exploring what can be done and organised. As for past activities, they had hosted a wonderful



choir from SUŠICE. They performed on different places in MEERSSEN, together with a MEERSSEN school choir. This event had been a real success among the citizens. A few students participated in the SHERBORNE Youth project too. For the future they want to make the Douzelage more popular among their citizens, by favouring small activities in MEERSSEN. One of these activities is of course the Marathon, where Douzelage members (as a special Douzelage team) can also participate at and which will take place in MEERSSEN on the 13th of September 2009. All details can be checked on the special Website for this purpose.

Another project is that they want to invite artists from the Douzelage for an exhibition in MEERSSEN. Ger Kockelkorn, as a chairman of the synagogue in MEERSSEN, will organize this exhibition on that location. As for the Roman project, issued by Jan Swanenvleugel and Jeremy Barker, they are still working on it and next September there will be a delegation from MEERSSEN going to SHERBORNE, in order to discuss the going on.

NIEDERANVEN reported about their activities in the frame of the Poetry book. The design and an official presentation of this book had been organised. The manager of the NIEDERANVEN Youth house and the president of one of the Youth Clubs had been participating to the SHERBORNE Youth project. Both had been very pleased about the high quality of this event. In December the tourist office in NIEDERANVEN had organised a concert with a well-known Czech choir. This concert was sponsored by the Czech embassy in Luxembourg and the municipality of NIEDERANVEN. In February NIEDERANVEN had sent a beautiful collection of wall calendars to the Calendar Museum in PRIENAI. In March a school class from the NIEDERANVEN primary school participated to the PREVEZA Douzelage Promotion Office by sending them a self made CD with typical Luxembourgish songs. NIEDERANVEN also participated to the Christmas cards project coming from CHOJNA. In April NIEDERANVEN had organised the Benelux meeting, where MEERSSEN and HOUFFALIZE came to discuss some important items prior to the ALTEA General Meeting. In May 2009 the elderly people association 50 Plus went on a visit to BELLAGIO, where they had been warmly welcomed.

OXELÖSUND informed that they had not started any new activity since the Global Warming project because of the financial crisis which is also hurting their town. They will however send some young students to BELLAGIO to the Miniparlament. Of course they will also join the JUDENBURG Global Warming II project. Mats Ericsson thanked every delegates and the Douzelage for the good cooperation, as he will soon be retired and no longer participate to a general meeting.

PREVEZA reported that they have started a broadcasting station promoting the town twinning in PREVEZA. Already now it turned out to be very popular. A new Douzelage promotion office had been created called *"Europe in a room"*. All Douzelage towns had been asked to send promotion material in order to be exhibited in this room (pictures of this office will be sent as soon as possible). PREVEZA also launched the youth project *"The youngsters control the Climate change-the EU shows the way"*, starting in November 09. GRANVILLE, TÜRI, HOUFFALIZE, SHERBORNE, BAD KÖTZTING, NIEDERANVEN, KÖSZEG, JUDENBURG and PREVEZA will participate to this activity. Then they had launched the idea of publishing a 4-page newspaper every 6 months, informing about articles and events for all the Douzelage partners and other towns, twinned with PREVEZA. First of all the newspaper will be published in Greek, then in English and later on in all European languages. The newspaper will probably be called *"Europe on the newspaper"*. 2 months before the general meeting they had put a newly printed Douzelage banner in the entrance of the town of PREVEZA.

PRIENAI: Two representatives from PRIENAI took part in the Youth Study Visit in SHERBORNE in October. This event had left a deep impression on their delegates. In the next future a Youth Centre will be set up in PRIENAI. At this moment the gained experience of this meeting will be very valuable for the involved persons of the municipality. On the initiative of the Douzelage president, the PRIENAI calendar museum had been generously supplied with new calendars, which will certainly enrich the already existing exhibition. A delegation (10 students and 2 teachers) of the PRIENAI gymnasium will take part in the CHOJNA youth project. PRIENAI Municipality proposed a new project in the frame of the "Europe for Citizens" program. If there will be an approval of the EU Commission, there will be delegates from SHERBORNE and an Italian town. Both delegations will consist of teaches, representatives of the municipality and students (13 visitors per delegation are invited). During this project various events will happen in the frame of the commemoration of the millennium of the name of Lithuania. Delegates from TÜRI will assist to this celebration.

As for their future events, PRIENAI will participate at the SHERBORNE project "Musician of the year". The president congratulated the "young" Douzelage town for so much action and commitment.



SESIMBRA reported that for the project “SESIMBRA 360°” no other Douzelage delegation showed interest but that the project will however be continued. As for the Birdwatch Project III, planned to happen in SESIMBRA a Power point representation had been showed to the delegates in order to give details about the scheduled activities and sites. The project will happen in March/April 2010 (the exact dates are not yet defined) and it will last 6 days. The maximum of participants is 20 persons and 4 per delegation. SESIMBRA is going to apply for the “Youth in Action” program. If they will not get the subventions, they will not be able to realise the project. Then the delegates were shown the different natural sites around SESIMBRA, where the different scientific, cultural and sports actions of the project will happen. A lot of interesting tours and lectures are planned and promise a follow-up of the same high level quality as for Birdwatch I in NIEDERANVEN and II in CHOJNA. A printed version of the project details had been distributed among the delegates and will be published on the Web later on.

SHERBORNE informed the delegates that they had got an almost new local Douzelage team and that they plan to continue with the same commitments as their predecessors in their mission. As they are 16 persons in their committee they had done a kind of sub-committees, all sharing the responsibilities (local projects, international events, education). They had set up a monthly coloured spreadsheet, where all the international and local actions are being shown, so that everybody can see where his commitment is asked.

2 major events were mentioned: folk musicians from TÜRI and a group of CHOJNA are coming to SHERBORNE in next July for 3 days of festivities of music and dancing in the town. Then in early spring 2009, SHERBORNE had organised a Hungarian Feast for fund raising purpose. They planned to continue this idea for the next future. In September it will start with the event called “Towns of the Douzelage”. The plan is to have presentations of each Douzelage town (dinners and lectures...) and bring the idea of Douzelage closer to the SHERBORNE citizen. Any promotion material is welcomed. The project of the “Young musician of the year” had found very much interest and seems to develop to become a very important event. Before the 20 November 2009 the towns would have organised local competitions and the selected persons will meet in SHERBORNE then for the final stage. All these events are planned to rotate over time and become a multi annual project, as a certain success of this project is most probably for sure. The first edition will be hosted in SHERBORNE and SHERBORNE will also coordinate the next editions to happen in other towns. For that reason SHERBORNE asked to get the contact details of the persons in charge of music in the different towns.

Chris MacAdie addressed a few words of thanks and good bye, as he will be moving to another city and no longer be a member of the Douzelage committee. But he is at the same time the initiator of a new Douzelage golf project, destined to stimulate golfing actions on a regular basis among the Douzelage members (at the location of the general meeting one day before the conference).

The president thanked Chris MacAdie for his strong support and commitment over all these years and he thanked him for setting up this golfing project, a project that will certainly live on in the Douzelage.

SUŠICE: Two participants went to the SHERBORNE Youth Study Visit. They also had their traditional exchange actions with the gymnasium of BAD KÖTZTING. A common concert had been organised with the choir of SUŠICE and JUDENBURG in JUDENBURG. A return visit will be organised in autumn 2009. A concert performing “Carmina Burana” is being prepared together with the BAD KÖTZTING choir and rehearsals took place on a regular basis during the winter time. The concert will take place in BAD KÖTZTING and SUŠICE at the end of June 2009. All towns are invited to come and assist to this extraordinary performance. They addressed their thanks to MEERSSEN for having hosted the SUŠICE children choir.

They also had sent out promotion material (CD and documents) to PREVEZA for the new Douzelage office. As for the future activities, children from SUŠICE will participate at the Adeps sports stay in HOUFFALIZE in June. In July then some young delegates will go to the “Mami” project event to KÖSZEG and to BAD KÖTZTING for the wilderness camp in August.

In April 2010 the next SUŠICE Song Festival will take place, a traditional event that only happens every second year. The SUŠICE children choir would be happy to invite and welcome another children choir from a Douzelage town at that occasion. All interested towns should inform SUŠICE by the end of October. SUŠICE will also take part in the Miniparlament in BELLAGIO.

TÜRI repeated that they will participate almost to the same events as SUŠICE, as all these running projects and events found very much interest among their children and citizens.



10 Musicians and singers and 2 committee members from TÜRI will go to SHERBORNE in July. Probably a group of the Wessex Morris Men from SHERBORNE will come to TÜRI on a return visit to perform at the occasion of the TÜRI flower Fair next year in May. They will also take part in the PREVEZA Youth project in November 09. Just as many other towns they declared to have financial problems so that they are not able to participate in every project but they confirmed already their participation in the “Young Musician of the Year” project, together with their music school as a partner. The TÜRI cycling club together with the KARKKILA club is preparing a joint cycling trip in Estonia.

Then TÜRI asked the other delegated towns to participate at their local song and dance festival, which will take place the 31st of July 2010. They would appreciate to have a youth dance or singing group to participate. There will be a running race from one town to another about 40 kilometres in October and school classes or training groups are welcomed to participate. The local TÜRI Brass band with about 30 musicians, awarded with the highest category is looking for a town to give a concert during the summer months. If there is any town organising an event where a brass band is needed, they can contact the TÜRI Douzelage committee.

MARSASKALA explained that every year they have a big town feast and that at this moment many activities are being offered. Next year every Douzelage town will have the opportunity to participate to this event. All other Douzelage actions will be decided in June 09 by the council of MARSASKALA Municipality, who will fund the Douzelage and try to involve all the citizens as much as possible.

ZVOLEN: In May 08 there had been the Douzelage exhibition where Ed Weber had been welcomed as the Douzelage president, to open officially this event. In August students from ZVOLEN took part in the Global Warming project in OXELÖSUND. In October some students also went to the Youth Study Visit in SHERBORNE. The local Douzelage Committee in ZVOLEN had recently been established and for the future they are looking for getting very active. A local Douzelage website with interesting information about the Douzelage to all the citizens had been created at the same time. By this tool they want to involve as many citizens as possible into the Douzelage activities, all by keeping on promoting all running projects. In their schools they will put an information panel that will be updated on a regular basis, so that every student will be informed about all youth project offers or other useful actions.

ZVOLEN announced that they will host the General Meeting 2012 in ZVOLEN.

The president thanked ZVOLEN very much for this information and above all for their commitment and courage to organise a general meeting all by being still a very young member of the Douzelage family. He took the occasion to send all his regards and compliments to the Mayor and the town council of ZVOLEN.

B. Provisional Agenda for the General Meeting in Sušice in Spring 2010

The 35th General Meeting of the Douzelage will be held in SUŠICE from 29th April to 2nd of May 2010. For the moment SUŠICE is very busy preparing the application forms and they announced that all help from other towns is welcome. The proposed main theme of the meeting will be “*People’s well-being in Europe*”. This is one of the topics recommended by the EU Commission and they thought that this theme may be very useful to compare and discuss national policies and politics as well as economical conditions, sectors that are all linked to people’s well-being. There will also be a parallel Education Meeting where the topic would be “*Institutions dealing with after-school activities for youth in the Douzelage towns*”. SUŠICE as a town has a lot to offer on this purpose, as they have music, dance and arts school in their Commune. There will probably also be a Youth workshop and the details still have to be discussed with the Douzelage youth committee. As SUŠICE is located very close to important National Parks (Bavarian Forest), the theme of the workshop could be around protection of natural environment, or something in that direction.

As for the venue to SUŠICE they suggested to fly to Prague (about 150 km away) and then most probably buses will come and pick up all the delegates. Unfortunately there are no big hotels in SUŠICE, but there are enough “bed and breakfast” possibilities. All information will be put on the Douzelage Website as soon as possible.

The president reminded Vera Svobodová who will be the election officer that the target date for the nominations is on the 1st of March 2010.

ACTION: ALL



István Mátrai from KŐSZEG proposed that suggestions of topic themes can be made by all other towns by internet by the end of June in order to be able to prepare the proper application forms. He insisted that if there are suggestions, they should be made together with a consistent argumentation.

SUŠICE thanked for the advice and asked however that if there is any suggestion about the theme, to present it as soon as possible as time is very short and as the procedures have already taken their way (deadline= 1st of September). But in any case as soon as they have defined a definite theme, all details will be sent to the towns and published on the Website.

Before closing this session, a short film about the town of SUŠICE had been shown.

IV. Education Committee Report

See the Education report

I. IT-Workshop Report

See IT-Workshop report