



42nd General Meeting Bad Kötzing, 11th - 14th May 2017

EUROPEAN TOWN TWINNING

Douzelage General Meeting 2017 in Bad Kötzing / D

11.05. – 14.05.2017

Newsletter 1

Some information about the next General Meeting in Bad Kötzing

1. Delegates

As usual, Bad Kötzing will host two delegates for the GM, 1 delegate for the EM and two delegates for the YM. We are also prepared to host the Presidency one day before the GM.

2. Main theme:

The main topic of the meeting will be as follows: “Refugees in Europe – a challenge for us as Europeans, which we can only manage jointly. Europe has to get to the citizens again.”

We choose this subject after having gotten advice from our National Agency for the “Europe for Citizens” program. The original plan to get funding for the subject “Health and Prevention” therefore had to be skipped because it had no chance to get funding. Our National Agency told us that the only chance of getting funding at the moment is to deal with the subject of refugees in Europe. The application for the new subject has been sent to Brussels, but they have not yet decided on it.

Some thoughts about the subject:

The EU is under stress. The increasing number of refugees and asylum-seekers is as well a strain as the migration within the EU or the economic imbalance between the member states. It causes euro-scepticism, aversion and even fear. And it leads citizens to vote for populist parties that are against the EU.

We are not politicians and we will not discuss national or EU solutions for the problems. We just have to realize that the refugees are here and we have to live with the challenge. In our municipalities we are more or less confronted with refugees and migrants and with the problems they have and that they cause. Bad Kötzing for example has an accommodation for 200 refugees, mostly from Syria and Ethiopia, in an old hospital. Therefore integration will be an important topic, especially for the Education Meeting and the Youth Meeting.

We want the experiences, the problems and the chances to be discussed in a matter-of-fact, even-tempered and non-polemic way.

3. Reports and Workshops

Reports and workshops on the main subject are an important item of the program.

Preparing the different workshops we will ask the participants to collect material for concise reports of the situation in their municipalities. We suggest a questionnaire for the GM and reports for the EM and the YM. Details will follow.

4. Youth Meeting Information

As a preparation for the workshops the participants should interview different people from their home towns, among them also migrants or refugees, if possible. Details will follow. Workshops will include practical subjects like sports, folk-dancing, a drummer workshop and a cooking workshop, partly together with refugees.

5. Tasting Tables

Tasting tables have been a successful way to introduce the Douzelage to the public. So, if possible, delegations should take local food and drinks and information material about their town or region to Bad Kötzing.

6. Transport

Bus transport from Munich Airport will be provided. For some of the delegations Bad Kötzing can be reached easily by car. You can even get there by train (it is a bit intricate, but possible).

7. Accommodation

We only have some smaller hotels and pensions. Thus we can not provide accommodation for all participants in a big hotel. But we will provide transport from the different locations to the meetings. Distances within Bad Kötzing are short and mostly easy to walk. The YM delegates will stay in a Youth Hostel with sports and leisure facilities.

8. Non-delegates

Non-delegates will be welcome. There are no accommodation limits. But they should be aware of the fact that their accommodation might be a little distance outside or in a village nearby, so there might be travelling distances. The costs for non-delegates are estimated 250 € to 280 €. The exact amount will be posted in due time.

9. Contact

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We are looking forward to our friends from the Douzelage. More information will be published in the next newsletter.