

Agenda GM

1. Opening of General Meeting

Welcoming speeches by the hosting town and president of Douzelage
Giving the opportunity to add points to the agenda
Settle the agenda

2. Approval of the Rovinj/Rovigno GM minutes

Approval of the minutes of GM in Rovinj/Rovigno, September 28th - October 1st, 2023

3. Approval of the accounts 2023 (January 2023 - December 2023)

- Brief explication on financial status of Douzelage account by Harry Crombag, treasurer Douzelage Europe
- The Douzelage accounts are checked by two auditors: Mr. Thorsten Wohleser (Judenburg) and Mr. Evelyn Koev (Tryavna)
- Statement by Mr. Thorsten Wohleser on the Douzelage account of 2023
- Granting discharge by the auditors
- Appointing one new auditor and thanking Mr. Thorsten Wohleser for his work

4. Annual Douzelage membership

- It is proposed to remain at the amount of € 350,- according to the decision taken in Sesimbra (2003).
The invoices of 2024 will be send after this GM

5. (Social) Media and PR

When having a Douzelage visit/exchange/project think of our **douzelage.eu** website!
Also check whether your email addresses (and/or town information) on the website are still up to date.

Instagram: Feed mostly by Shane Smyth. You are welcome to join as editor. Let us know!

Facebook: We are still looking for editors from certain towns

6. Past, ongoing and future projects/activities within our towns

Bad Kötzting, Bundoran, Judenburg, Meerssen, Niederanven and Sušice will present their projects/activities during the GM.
These projects will all be described in the minutes of Sherborne 2024.

Did we miss something? Please let us know a.s.a.p. and take your presentation with you to Sherborne and hand it over to Alexander Luns or Femie Kengen prior to the meeting.

Agenda GM

7. **Presentations on the cultural and historical heritage of our towns**

All our town presentations were submitted and made into a wonderful digital booklet by Douzelage Rovinj/Rovigno. A digital example has been sent to you on the 29th of March. Two copies will be passed on during the meeting. You can also check the flipbook on our Douzelage Europe website: <https://douzelage.eu/2024/03/01/douzelage-cultural-and-historical/>

8. **(Bus) project Road to Ukraine**

Latest news on the project helping Kamjanets-Podilsky in Ukraine

9. **New candidate town from Slovakia**

Mr. Miha Ješe will elaborate on a new found candidate town in Slovakia, called Senec. There will be a video meeting with the mayor of Senec during the GM.

10. **Program for further meetings**

2025	Preveza
2026	Marsaskala
2027	Niederanven
2028	Vacant

(pages 3/4)

11. **Presentation of Preveza and setting a date**

The hosts of the GM in 2025 will give you further information and will propose a date

12. **Elections for a new Presidency in 2024**

Presentations from the candidates.

(Their letters of motivation and recommendation have been sent to you on the 22nd of March.)

Elections.

(pages 5/14)

The secretary, treasurer and minutes maker will be appointed by the new team of (vice) presidents.

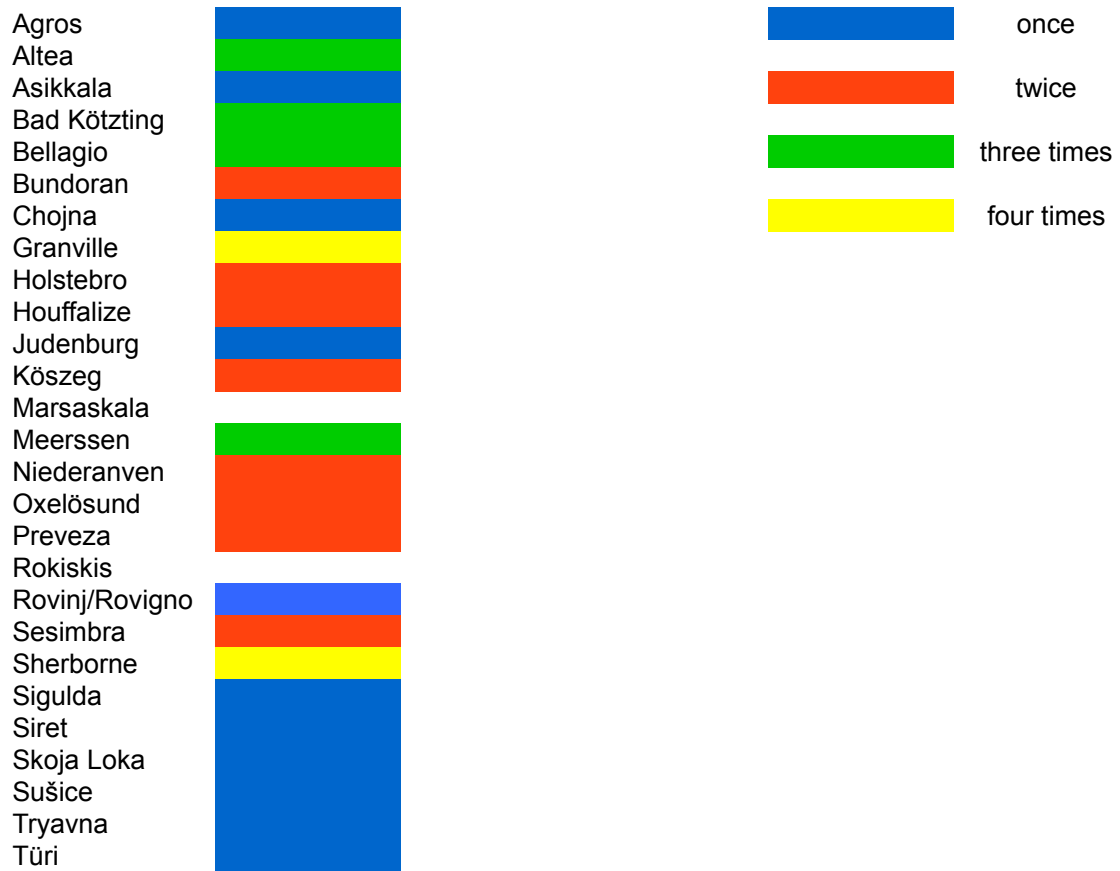
13. **Any Other Business**

Time for questions and announcements

14. **Closing the General Meeting 2024**

GM	Town	Number	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
2027	?	Niederanven	51			█
2026	Spring?	Marsaskala	50	█		
2025	Autumn?	Preveza	49			█
2024	Spring	Sherborne	48			█
2023	Autumn	Rovinj/Rovigno	47	█		
2022	Summer	Škofja Loka	46	█		
2021	Autumn	Agros	45	█		
2020	Spring	Škofja Loka	45	cancelled		
2019	Spring	Asikkala	44	█		
2018	Spring	Oxelosünd	43		█	
2017	Spring	Bad Kötzing	42			█
2016	Spring	Tryavna	41	█		
2015	Spring	Siret	40	█		
2014	Spring	Sigulda	39	█		
2013	Spring	Bellagio	38			█
2012	Spring	Zvolen	37	█		
2011	Spring	Granville	36			█
2010	Spring	Susice	35	█		
2009	Spring	Altea	34			█
2008	Spring	Chojna	33	█		
2008	Autumn	Türi	32	█		
2007	Spring	Köszeg	31		█	
2006	Autumn	Sherborne	30			█
2006	Spring	Köszeg	project meeting cancelled	█		
2006	Spring	Bellagio	cancelled			
2005	Autumn	Meerssen	29			█
2005	Spring	Bundoran	28		█	
2004	Autumn	Granville	27			█
2004	Spring	Judenburg	26	█		
2003	Autumn	Holstebro	25		█	
2003	Spring	Sesimbra	24		█	
2002	Autumn	Houffalize	23		█	
2002	Spring	Oxelosünd	22	█		
2001	Autumn	Karkkila	21	█		
2001	Spring	Niederanven	20		█	
2000	Autumn	Preveza	19		█	
2000	Spring	Altea	18		█	
1999	Autumn	Bad Kötzing	17		█	
1999	Spring	Sherborne	16		█	
1998	Autumn	Meerssen	15		█	
1998	Spring	Bellagio	14		█	
1997	Autumn	Granville	13		█	
1997	Spring	Bundoran	12	█		
1996	Autumn	Holstebro	11	█		
1996	Spring	Sesimbra	10	█		
1995	Autumn	Houffalize	9	█		
1995	Spring	Niederanven	8	█		
1994	Autumn	Altea	7	█		
1994	Spring	Preveza	6	█		
1993	Autumn	---				
1993	Spring	Bad Kötzing	5	█		
1992	Autumn	Sherborne	4	█		
1992	Spring	Bellagio	3	█		
1991	Autumn	Meerssen	2	█		
1991	Spring	Granville	1	█		

Towns





- **Who am I?** My name is Shane Smyth, 46 years old from Bundoran, Ireland – I’m a PR professional, broadcaster and podcaster. I have worked in tourism for the past 11 years and in radio for 16 years before that. I’ve been to 9 General Meetings and visited 14 out of the 28 Douzelage partner towns.

- **Why me?** I believe in Douzelage and Europe. I believe in the fundamentals of partnership and cooperation with others across this great union and in what Douzelage does and wants to achieve. I am passionate about the future of our shared society and how our unique organisation can help it to grow and give our citizens the experience of other cultures across the continent.
- **What I can bring?** Enthusiasm and an appetite to work hard for Douzelage. I’m highly organised and a details person with a passion and track record in PR, Communications and Digital Media.

Experience

- Online Europe Day celebrations in 2020 during covid with Douzelage members.
- Greening of European towns with Tourism Ireland.
- Douzelage Festival of Europe in Bundoran 2022.
- Annual St Patrick’s celebrations welcoming 50 Douzelage delegates to Bundoran for parade participation since 2016.
- Welcoming other Douzelage town members to Bundoran over the years from Slovenia, Germany, Netherlands, Czechia and France.
- Creation and management of Douzelage social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.
- Regular contributor to, and admin of, the douzelage.eu website.

“Together, ordinary people can achieve extraordinary results” - Becka Schoettle

Aims

To continue the legacy left by the current board and president and to have my presidency based on three pillars:



ViSiBiLiTy

Increase the visibility of Douzelage across the member states through a PR and comms campaign as well as the introduction of new collaborative initiatives and cultural events.



TRANSPARENCY

Create governance documents for Douzelage which will outline policies and procedures as well as board job descriptions. Financial summary to be made available to all members.



SUSTAINABILITY

Promote the sustainability measures being taken by each town. Share best practices with each other. Aim for Net Zero for GMs and Board Meetings.

www.shanesmyth.com/douzelage





Ms Annigje Kruytbosch,
President,
Douzelage European Town Twinning,
Sint Gerlach 50,
Valkenburg,
The Netherlands

Cllr. Tom Conaghan
Member of Donegal County Council

Main Street,
Donegal Town,
Co. Donegal.

22nd February 2024

Ref: Shane Smyth candidature for Douzelage Presidency

Dear Ms Kruytbosch,

I wish to recommend Shane Smyth of Bundoran, County Donegal, Ireland for the position of President of Douzelage European Town Twinning at the upcoming elections taking place in Sherborne, UK in April of this year.

Shane has worked for the county and Bundoran, the Douzelage Irish partner town, since 2013 and in this time has shown himself to be a committed and valuable asset to us from his creativity to his organisational skills, outside the box thinking and his ability to work in harmony with his colleagues in the tourism unit.

I believe that Shane will excel in his role of President of Douzelage European Town Twinning – a cause and organisation that he is so passionate about and has held close to his heart since first being introduced to it ten years ago. I know that he is a firm believer in the many collaboration opportunities which exist and that will come about over the term of his presidency between now and 2027 and beyond.

I have no hesitation in recommending Shane for this position and wish him well in the election.

Please contact me for further information if required.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tom Conaghan'.

Councillor Tom Conaghan,
Cathaoirleach (Chairperson) Donegal Municipal District,
Donegal County Council.

MOTIVATIONAL LETTER

Dear Douzelage Presidency,

I hope this motivational letter finds you well.

I am writing with great enthusiasm to express my interest in the position of **Vice President of Douzelage** for the next term.



My name is Evelin Koev, a 31-year-old resident of Tryavna, Bulgaria, with a full-time position currently based in Sofia. Despite my professional commitments in Sofia, I maintain strong ties to my hometown, visiting at least twice a month. My home and family are also situated there so it is with great pride that I wear my roots.

My Douzelage journey began eight years ago in 2016, when Tryavna hosted the 41st General Meeting. Since then, I have actively participated in every General Meeting and various Douzelage projects. Notably, during the pandemic years and in Asikkala, Finland (2019), I served as the elected Youth Vice President, actively contributing to the organization's youth activities. Additionally, I have consistently remained involved in cultural and international exchange programs within Tryavna, very closely working with the municipality.

On a personal note, I am thrilled to share that I recently achieved the status of a certified professional accountant (ACCA) in January 2024, following a dedicated four-year pursuit. Currently, I hold the position of Accounting Country Lead, managing a team of six finance professionals and collaborating internationally with colleagues across Europe. My volunteer experience in Tryavna spans nearly a decade, a passion ignited during my high school and university years.

Educationally, I possess a Master's degree in Accountancy and Finance in addition to my ACCA qualification. I also hold a Bachelor's degree in International Business Relations from one of Bulgaria's most prestigious economic universities.

Beyond my professional pursuits, I enjoy exploring the world and its beauty. I am an avid hiker, adventurer, and music lover. For physical activity, I favor swimming, tennis, and challenging strength training routines.

Considering my extensive professional experience, active involvement within Douzelage, and unwavering dedication, I believe I possess the necessary skills and qualifications to excel as Vice President. I am eager to contribute meaningfully to the organization's continued success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I have attached my professional resume (LinkedIn) for your review and I welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications further.

Sincerely,

Evelin Koev, ACCA

Tryavna, Bulgaria 19.03.2024



ОБЩИНА ТРЯВНА

Letter of recommendation

Dear Douzelage Presidency,

It is my distinct honor to endorse Evelin Koev, a valued member of our community in Tryavna, for the position of Vice President.

Mr. Koev possesses a proven track record of success and the necessary skills to excel in this leadership role. For the past eight years, he had been a dedicated participant in the Douzelage organization, consistently making significant contributions.

The long-term sustainability and dynamism of these communities and town-twinning associations hinge on actively engaging the younger generation. Fostering intercultural understanding and global citizenship through these organizations requires cultivating the interest and participation of younger people.

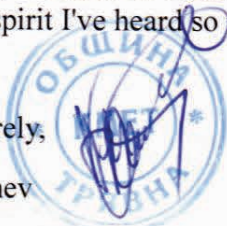
I strongly believe that Evelin embodies the very essence of Douzelage – a youthful, talented, energetic, and collaborative individual who exemplifies the potential for strong cultural exchange within the organization.

I trust that these considerations will be carefully weighed during the applicant evaluation process. I'm looking forward to meet all of you in Sherborne next month and experience firsthand the Douzelage spirit I've heard so much about.

Yours sincerely,

Dencho Minev

Mayor, Municipality of Tryavna



Maria Črnac Rocco
Mazzini Street 17
52210 Rovinj-Rovigno
Istria – CROATIA

Mr Joe McNulty
The Douzelage Returning officer
Joemcnulty90@gmail.com

APPLICATION LETTER FOR THE POSITION OF VICE PRESIDENT OF THE DOUZELAGE

My name is Maria Črnac Rocco and I am the responsible of The Douzelage in its Croatian member, Rovinj-Rovigno.

I have graduated International and Diplomatic Sciences (Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Trieste, Italy) and afterwards - after I became mother of two, obtained a master degree in Public Administration Management (Faculty of Economics, University of Rijeka, Croatia). The topic of my master degree was local development management, something I am very interested in, so I continuously take initiatives and join various project in this field.

Being born in a bilingual family and living in Istria – a bilingual region in Croatia, my two mother tongues are Croatian and Italian. Besides them, I speak English, German, French and Spanish (with different level of fluency due to the fact that I do not have many occasions to practice the last two ones).

I've worked for years in a hotel management company, the Spanish Melià, more precisely for its Croatian branch – Sol Melià Croatia. I held different positions during my career there: the coordinator of the Public Relations, the coordinator of the Guest Satisfaction Programme and then of Special Programmes (loyalty programmes). I was a trainer, worked on human resources development and also in sales. My greatest satisfaction from working in Sol Melià Croatia, besides had worked with people from all over the world and travelled a lot, is that many colleagues I've helped to develop their skills are now successful managers in different companies.

Currently, I hold the position of the Chief of the Mayors' and Municipal Council Office in the Rovinj-Rovigno municipality. My duties range from organising a municipal Council meeting, administrating elections, coordinating the national minorities councils, the Youth Council, the town administration with regard to human resources and operational functioning, the media, the protocol, the collaboration with other Croatian towns and the international collaboration.

Besides that, I am responsible of coordinating different projects financed by the EU. Right now I am working on a very interesting project concerning the application of the artificial intelligence tools onto a city administration.

My superiors have always appointed me to coordinate different projects because I have quite good organizational skills and am very responsible. I can optimize well the resources I have, define the most efficient operational steps, manage time and collaborate with people. And I really enjoy these parts of my job: the collaboration and the coordination of people and operations.

I am particularly interested in culture and heritage. I've been member of the "Cultural Council" of my town (before I came to work in the Municipality) for years and currently I am vice president of the Management board of the Town Museum. I am also President of the Istrian Foundation for the Development of Civil Society (a public foundation of the Region of Istria).

I am a huge fan of democracy and the European Union. The sort of one that only somebody that has lived in a communist country can understand. We have waited half a century to join the "lucky" European countries and enjoy the democratic rights we have today. That is why I started working on elections from the very beginning of this blessing in Croatia, when I was still in high school and I am working today with young people, helping them understand how precious it is to participate and fight poor turnouts. My gratitude to the illuminated EU founders is immense. Probably we all forget too often that historical bitter enemies have become reliable partners in constructing a community of peace and prosperity – the European Union, indeed. With all its difficulties and imperfections, I believe the EU is the worlds' best place to live. And The Douzelage represents at best the European Union on local level.

I am very enthusiastic about the prospect of becoming a vice president of The Douzelage. I am confident that my skills and experience will contribute to accomplish many important goals of our association.

Thank you for your consideration,



Maria Črnac Rocco



REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA REPUBBLICA DI CROAZIA
ISTARSKA ŽUPANIJA REGIONE ISTRIANA
GRAD ROVINJ-ROVIGNO  CITTA' DI ROVINJ-ROVIGNO
Gradonačelnik Il Sindaco

KLASA/CLASSE: 024-03/24-01/51
URBROJ/NUMPROT: 2163-8-02-24-4
Rovinj-Rovigno, 11.03.2024.

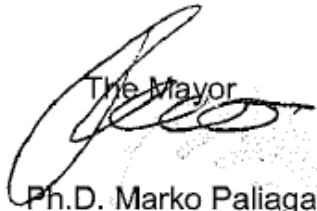
**To the attention of
The Douzelage Presidency**

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

We are herewith recommending Mrs. Maria Črnac Rocco for the vice presidency of The Douzelage.

Maria Črnac Rocco, the Chief of the Municipal Council and Mayors' Office is a highly professional and reliable collaborator since my first election in 2017. It has been so even for my predecessor. Trusty, efficient, responsible and sympathetic are the characteristics that describe her most and we are sure that Maria could, with her skills and experience, contribute significantly to the achievement of the Douzelage goals.

Sincerely,


The Mayor
Ph.D. Marko Paliaga

Dear Douzelage family,

Hereby I apply as a candidate for the position of Vice President of the Douzelage. My experience as vice mayor and as a member of the Douzelage family has taught me how important collaboration and exchange between cities and municipalities is in order to achieve common goals and improve the quality of life of citizens. Of course, the fun shouldn't be neglected either!

My central goals as Vice President of Douzelage are to **strengthen** the opportunities for **cooperation** between the Douzelage communities. I firmly believe that problems and challenges in our cities are often similar and we can learn from each other by sharing best practices and exchanging ideas. Through close cooperation and the mutual exchange of experiences, we can find effective solutions to common challenges and sustainably improve the quality of life in our cities. More so -> make the **Douzelage visible**. We all have competitions and contact points in our cities/regions where we can work on projects together.

Another important aspect of my vision is promoting exchange between associations, schools and other social institutions. These organizations form the backbone of our society and play a crucial role in promoting culture, education and social integration. By sharing best practices and collaborating locally and internationally, we can learn from each other and develop innovative approaches to strengthen collaboration between our cities and strengthen communities. The Douzelage-path of the past few years must be continued here.

How do I want to achieve my goals?

- Regular exchange between municipalities about current problems. For example, a quarterly online workshop on a specific topic.
- The Douzelage should present a regular report to the local councils and mayors in order to bring the projects and goals closer to the municipalities.
- Stronger links between clubs and schools so that they can be given the opportunity for international exchange.

My experience, my passion for European cooperation and my commitment to promoting diversity and tolerance make me a suitable candidate for this position.

I would look forward to having the opportunity to implement my visions and ideas as Vice President of Douzelage in a great team and to work with you on a strong and cooperative future for our cities and our Douzelage.

So: Let's go and celebrate the Douzelage!

Thorsten Wohleser

THORSTEN WOHLERER

::: Functions

City:	Vice mayor of the city of Judenburg (Responsible for urban development, citizen participation and Europe)
Austria-wide:	Member of the network of European local councils
YEP-COR:	Member of the YEP program (Young Elected Politicians of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union)

::: Experience

Since April 2012:	Österreichische Post AG (Current position: Team leader for data protection law and contract management for the division BWP)
Since 2018:	Lecturer in the areas of data protection law, tax and financial law as well as association law

::: Education

School-Degree:	BHAK-Judenburg, Information-Technology
University:	Master's degree in law (University of Vienna) Bachelor's degree in business law (Vienna University of economics and business)

::: Skills

Language:	German, English, French
Additional:	Member of the Young Executives Academy of the Austrian Post





**950 JAHRE
JUDENBURG**

2024 | WIR FEIERN VIELFALT

Stadtgemeinde Judenburg - Hauptplatz 1 - 8750 Judenburg

Datum 01.03.2024
Abteilung Büro der Bürgermeisterin
Tel. 03572 83141 266
E-Mail elke.florian@judenburg.at

Dear Douzelage Board,

as mayor of the municipality of Judenburg, I am submitting this letter of support from Thorsten Wohleser for the election as Vice President of the Douzelage.

In his previous role, he has shown that he represents the European and Douzelage agenda with passion and has already implemented numerous projects in this area, e.g. the Juniors for Seniors project in Judenburg.

His ability to address European issues into concrete measures makes him an ideal candidate for the Douzelage vice-presidency. The networking between all the cities in our network is a great added value for our community. Thanks to the ideas that Thorsten has brought in this area, the idea and vision of Douzelage can be shared even further.

I am convinced that with his commitment and experience he will honorably fill the vice presidency of Douzelage. I therefore recommend that you consider him as a candidate for this position.

Best regards

Elke Florian

Mayor of the municipality of Judenburg

Seite 1 von 1

Tel.: 03572 83141 - 0
Fax: 03572 83141 - 222
Web: www.judenburg.at
E-Mail: post@judenburg.gv.at

Stadtgemeinde Judenburg
Hauptplatz 1
8750 Judenburg
UID: ATU69185268

Bankverbindung:
Bank Austria, UniCredit
BIC: BKAUATWW
IBAN: AT02 1200 0100 1080 5306