

ALTEA (E)
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CHOJNA (PL)
GRANVILLE (F)
HOLSTEBRO (DK)
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KARKKILA (FIN)
KÖSZEG (H)
KÖTZTING (D)
MEERSSEN (NL)
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OXELÖSUND (S)
PREVEZA (GR)
SESIMBRA (P)
SHERBORNE (GB)
SIGULDA (LV)
SUSICE (CZ)
TÜRI (EST)

27th Douzelage Conference

Granville

30 Sep-03 Oct 2004

Final Minutes

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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I) General Meeting

1) Speech of Welcome by the President

After the welcome speech of the Mayor of Granville Mr Marc Verdier and the President of "Granville Partenaire Européen" Mr Jean-Marc Julienne, Mr Ed Weber, acting as the president of the Douzelage welcomed all delegates, making special references to Mr André Poirier and Mr Henri Haffray, the "fathers" of the Douzelage idea. He thanked Granville and the local Douzelage Committee for the warm welcome and the excellent work they have fulfilled in organising this conference in the native town of the Douzelage.

He specially welcomed the delegations of the new member towns for their first participation as an official member at a General Meeting, as well as the delegates of Zvolen from Slovakia who participated as an observer town. Unfortunately the delegation of Sigulda could not be present due to financial reasons as Mr Pukitis, Mayor of Sigulda, had informed the president in a phone call. The president specially thanked Holstebro for the enormous effort they have made in restructuring their local Douzelage organisation and for the large delegation they had brought to Granville, in spite of all the local support problems they did have.

Finally the president thanked Judenburg once more for hosting the last meeting in spring and for the extremely competent people they had enrolled for leading their workshops. The presentations made in these workshops have been published on the Douzelage Web-site to document the professionalism of the Douzelage meetings.

A) Business Matters

1) Approval of the Minutes of the Judenburg GM 13-16th May 2004

(a) GM Minutes and Education Minutes

The Judenburg GM Minutes, as well as the Education and the Workshop reports had been published on the Douzelage Website. As until now no comments to the minutes have been received, they were agreed with the following amendments:

The dates of the General Meeting in autumn 2005 in Meerssen should be changed to exactly one week later (22-25 SEP 05).

Oxelösund remarked that on page 15 in line 5 of the Minutes was written "now EU-funding is required..." but it should be read "no EU-funding is required..."

Köszeg noted that on page 19 in the last row it should be read "...the Kinder garden project is managed by "PREVEZA ..." and not "...by Teresa..."

The Education Meeting Minutes had been put into the same format as the General Meeting Minutes. These minutes will only be approved on next spring meeting, as there is no Education meeting during this autumn session.

2) Douzelage Accounts

(a) Presentation of the Interim Balance Sheet 1 May 04 - 30 Aug 04

As the Douzelage accounts had already been approved during the spring meeting, only the interim balance sheet had been presented. According to the agreement taken in Judenburg, Oxelösund will be exempted of the annual membership fee, as they had paid their fees the same year of their ascension. As they paid their fees for 2004 already this will be applicable for the 2005 fees.

SESIMBRA was informed that the Douzelage association has no own tax number. As the local administration of Sesimbra needs a tax number to transfer the annual fee, it was agreed that the tax number of the town hall of Niederanven could be used instead as a matter of form.

The president of "Granville Partenaire Européen", Mr J.M. Julienne confirmed that after a longer discussion with Ed Weber on the principle of their unpaid fees for 2002 and 2003, the committee in Granville had agreed to pay the outstanding contribution.

The interim balance explained in detail on the screen shows for the moment a bonus of 2681.65 €.

(b) Simultaneous Translation equipment Balance Sheet.

The president informed the delegates that for the moment there was a minus of 687 € on the translation equipment account and that the account can be brought to zero if the towns would pay their outstanding contribution (in total 600 €). All towns that haven't paid their participation yet were kindly invited to do as soon as possible.

Nico confirmed that he received 50€ by check from Sesimbra and asked all towns not to pay by giving his name as the name of the account holder, but the Douzelage committee of Meerssen, in order to avoid administrative problems. Money should go to the account of the Douzelage in Luxembourg up from now on.

One incoming payment couldn't be identified by Meerssen until then, but after the reading of the account number [350800154] the delegates of Altea confirmed that this had been their payment.

The president confirmed that the advanced money for purchasing the three additional equipments for the translation equipment had been transferred to the Meerssen account, according to the decision taken in the Judenburg meeting, that the Douzelage account should reimburse Meerssen the advanced money.

1. **BELLAGIO** informed that they did pay their contribution to the translation equipment the same date as they paid their annual fee but that it was not mentioned as such until then.
2. **ALTEA** confirmed that they had not yet paid the last two invoices but that they will do so in the next two weeks. (600 € fee and 100 € for the translation equipment.)
3. **KÖSZEG** suggested paying the 300€ membership together with the 50 € translation equipment participation in one account movement in order to save bank taxes. This was agreed and towns can from now on transfer the 350 € to Niederanven, who will forward the money on the right budget account. On this Nico Van de Vliet underlined that a cash payment on the next meeting could save a lot of bank operation fees.

As for the new member towns the acquisition costs should be 1.100 €, it was agreed that this is a heavy charge for the new towns. The president was therefore asked to discuss a decent financing schedule with the towns in order to allow them to pay in 3 or 4 years.

4. To **KÖSZEG's** question what happens to the translation equipment between the meetings and if it could be used in that period and how the transport from one town to the other is managed, Nico explained the procedure and explained that the transportation to the next host town should normally be done carefully by car, as the equipment is very fragile. He also confirmed that the host town of the next meeting could use the equipment for their own Douzelage committee purposes as long as they know how to handle the equipment and as long as it will not be damaged in any way.

Jean-Marc Julienne also underlined that it is the next host town that has to guarantee the transport, so for example the Bundoran delegates should take the equipment with them this time. Unfortunately, as the Irish delegation was there by plane, this was not possible. Therefore Sherborne takes the equipment along because they were there by car and Bundoran can pick up the equipment in Sherborne or Sherborne will take the equipment along to Bundoran.

Nico suggested again that the sequence of the GMs should possibly be arranged in relationship with the best way the translation equipment could be transported by car. This would prevent the cases to be smashed when transported by plane.

As for the new mobile microphone, whose purchase had been proposed by Chris MacAdie in Judenburg, it was being tested these days in Granville.

5. The Granville meeting will also be recorded just as the meeting in Judenburg. The delegates were informed that the 800 €, that a specialised firm did invoice last meeting in Judenburg for this little favour was really too much and that after some discussions with the responsible people on place, the invoice has been reduced to 150 €. Possibly it will be taken in charge by the town of Judenburg. Nico van de Vliet explained that the system is very adaptable and any connection can be added to the equipment as long as the right cables are available so that an own recording facility could be guaranteed for the next meetings.

3) Provisional program for further meetings

On the provisional meeting schedule annexed to the agenda, the former EU-presidency locations have been mentioned and seem to be quite close to the Douzelage meeting schedule. The proposal of Bundoran to define the sequence of the GMs in relationship with the EU presidency changing every 1/2 years seems worth to be studied.

1. Jeremy Barker noted that the new constitution will probably foresee that the presidency will be held 2 ½ year and renewable once, so it's unlikely that this system as it is now will continue very much longer.

The future EU presidency sequence after 2007 will only be published in spring 2005, so that there are still no further details available.
2. TÜRI confirmed that there is no change in their proposal to host the Douzelage General Meeting in 2008.
3. KÖSZEG could already declare the dates of their GM in 2007: 20 April until 23 April 2007. Their meeting will go from Friday to Monday as they wanted to include an important festivity of theirs the "St. John's Day" (24 April), apparently a very special and interesting event, worth to be included in the GM's program. The theme of the workshop (if the EU-priorities do not change until then) could be "The preservation of historic buildings and how disabled people can use these old buildings".
4. BUNDORAN will be next on the list in spring from 14 April until 17 April 2005. They distributed a draft programme of their meeting that includes an Education and a General Meeting and the main theme will be sent out. BUNDORAN intends to invite one student from each town to participate at the Education Meeting. The final agenda and other details pertaining to this next meeting will be published as soon as possible.
5. MEERSSEN will host the autumn meeting from 22 September until 25 September 2005. There will be no change possible confirmed Mr Kockelkorn after the question of Altea if it could be possible to change the dates as they can not participate at these dates (due to an important festivity in their own town).
6. JUDENBURG proposed some themes for a workshop to Bundoran and noticed that there are so many countries that have no sea. Therefore Willy Schnedl proposed to have a workshop in connection with the sea: i.e. What Ireland does against pollution or what they do against lice and worm infected sea fish and salmon, what they do against the terrible fish farms or if they have the intention of building tide power stations, what they do for the reduction of net fishing, etc.
7. HOUFFALIZE however remarked that it is in the interest of the Douzelage to stick to the theme list proposed by the EU Commission in order to have the possibility to get subsidised.

4) New towns interested in Douzelage

On behalf of all the delegations the president welcomed the delegates of the town of ZVOLEN in Slovakia, Mrs Alenca and Ruyena Barbicova, who had been invited by Granville as observers. They presented their town and distributed documentation on Zvolen and invited all delegates to the Gourmet market to taste the typical goods they had brought along. It was underlined again that Zvolen is only an observer at this meeting.

Jean-Marc Julienne repeated that ZVOLEN was in close relationship with the local high schools of Granville and that he invited them to assist to the Meeting in order to show what the Douzelage represents. Both delegates were in Granville as they are actually involved in a Comenius project with Granville.

1. HOLSTEBRO underlined that it was not making the Douzelage bigger that worries them, it's raising false hopes. They reminded that it had been agreed in a former meeting that the way to do this was to discuss between the delegates different towns before inviting them as observers, in order not to raise false hopes and to avoid the Hungarian incident.

The president confirmed that Holstebro is completely right in its remark and that this is the way that should be followed when the decision to enlarge will be decided. Zvolen as well as Prienai had been informed that this invitation by Granville does not implement any engagement of the Douzelage association.
2. JUDENBURG underlined that in case of a possible adoption of a Slovenian town, Judenburg would like to get a move on that because Slovenia is their neighbouring country in the south. They could undertake to take contacts just as they did when they brought in the town of Köszeg (Hungary).
3. CHOJNA insisted on the fact that every new observer town or potential member town should be fluent in English, a condition that has absolutely to be met.

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4. KÖSZEG offered to any interested delegation to come and visit their town as they are at about 100 km to Slovenia and at about 150 to Slovakia. Köszeg could be a good starting point to visit a couple of cities in both countries. Köszeg confirmed that they would be very pleased to welcome the president, together with a delegation from Niederanven by the end of the year.
5. The delegate of TÜRI Mrs Elbe METSATALU distributed information about the town of PRIENAI in Lithuania. In fact a strong friendship relates these two towns and Prienai is very interested in the Douzelage. The town of Prienai has a very important support from the Embassy of Lithuania in Estonia. The Ambassador is very interested about the Douzelage. During last meeting of the Mayor and his delegation in Prienai they were very interested to be involved in Douzelage activities. Türi also is very interested to make projects with Prienai because they are so very close to Estonia. Prienai is a very nice town of about 10000 inhabitants and is situated on the Nemunas River close to Polish border. Little booklets distributed show the beauty of Prienai and the president confirmed their high activity in educational matters. In fact a very high quality Web site worth to be visited shows some of their activities:
<http://ziburys.prienai.lm.lt/future/> or <http://www.randburg.com/li/prienaiddi.html>.

If ever Prienai might be on the list of a potential member town, their local authorities would totally support this membership and be honoured to join the Douzelage as a member town; this is what the delegation of Türi confirmed.

The president thanked TÜRI and ZVOLEN for the information and repeated once more that for the moment no decision can be taken.

5) Action points of the last meeting in Judenburg

(a) Action points for the presidency

The president apologised for having been late with the action point procedures, but due to a total black-out in Luxembourg, the computer with the main Douzelage information has been blocked for a certain time.

The new bill for Holstebro had been sent to Mette Sørensen (ref page6 [b] Judenburg Minutes).

Finances

The credit note for Oxelösund had also been sent (they won't pay their annual fee in 2005) and the money transfer to Meerssen for the translation equipment had been done two weeks ago and will be showing up on their accounts soon.

List of workshop participants

The document "list of participants" (Annex E) has already been discussed in Judenburg and may represent an easy tool to show the professionalism of the Douzelage workshop participants. The president showed once more the details of the different data asked in this document and confirmed that the confidentiality of this data is absolutely guaranteed as these forms will only be joined to the Brussels documents and will not be published on the public Internet site.

KÖSZEG asked how to remedy to the problem that you cannot fill in the document directly by Internet as it is a PDF file. The president explained that this form should be filled out by hand and signed manually, a necessity for the presence list to be sent to the EU Commission. All other documents available by Internet are normally directly accessible and can be completed and sent without having to print it out. This item is to be discussed again during the next spring meeting.

GRANVILLE acknowledged the good quality of this tool and suggested to use it already during this meeting and to amend it later on when all criterions have been circled.

Schedule of next meetings

Concerning the schedule of the next general meetings discussed before already, (Annex D) the proposal of BUNDORAN to fix the meetings in relationship with the EU presidency schedule has been confirmed as being a good idea. Last named schedule will be available soon, covering the period from 2007 to the year 2012.

Questionnaire on town facilities

1. Pertaining to Annex F MEERSSEN had suggested to every town to add a special area giving typical town linked information (financial support facilities, discussion themes, meeting organisation possibilities ...). A draft had been prepared, similar to an official EU Commission document. (It was shown how this document can be filled out and sent immediately by Internet.)

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2. **SESIMBRA** asked if it could be possible to add personal or not proposed items (like "fishing" for instance) and **KÖSZEG** thought that schools are so different in their structures in the European area that a fixed answer scheme is difficult to be filled out.

The president answered that the form is only a support to hold the information but that any suggestions or remarks may be added. He showed on screen how easy it can be to fill in any supplementary information. The most important role of the document is to exchange information and not the external presentation.

3. **MEERSSEN** expressed their gratitude and compliments to the chair for picking up this idea. Of course this document can be fine-tuned but it gives the possibility to focus on the main activities of each town. However **KÖTZTING** said that this document risks to be one more document in a long row and that any information you want to get about a town is easily detectable on the town's web site normally. **HOLSTEBRO** thought that there is not enough space to fill it in by hand, depending on your handwriting.

It was explained that this form was only a suggestion and any way to exchange the necessary information may be good as long as this way is practical and easily accessible. All suggestions will be gathered and the document will be reviewed. In spite of all good web sites it is much easier that the information runs together in a central place in any form (document or e-mail...) in order to avoid running through a multitude of different Internet pages.

4. Pertaining to the different educational structures, **SHERBORNE** thought that it might be a good idea that everybody brings its own documentation (structure, holidays, projects...) to the Bundoran Education Meeting for the next meeting, so that this information can already be summarised. The president agreed that this is an acceptable solution to capture once and for all every information needed at that time.

(b) Proposed purchasing

Mobile microphone

The mobile microphone that Chris MacAdie proposed to buy was being tested on him during the meeting. Holstebro asked if it would really be necessary and reasonable on a financial basis to buy such a microphone in this moment. This was agreed and it was proposed to postpone the decision on a purchase.

Nico proposed that if it was found to be too expensive to buy such a unit which costs about 500 €, we could think about buying just an additional microphone with a long cable of about 20 m. This would cost about 200 € only together with the unit you need for the connection to the system. A third option is renting such a unit, which is about 60 € for four days. Renting was found the easiest and cheapest way but a definite decision on this will be decided in next spring meeting. If for Bundoran a mobile microphone will be needed Nico has to be informed in time in order to arrange the renting.

Douzelage Banner

BELLAGIO had asked the producer of the Douzelage banner if it could be possible to modify the existing one by adding the new town's coat of arms. Unfortunately this is not possible and new prices or producers have to be found. The dimensions and the layout of the banner should also be reviewed, as the problem will persist as long as new towns will be joining the Douzelage.

KÖSZEG thought that as the banner is only used during 8 days a year it can as well be a less good quality but much less expensive. But anyhow the transportation problem would persist. Köszeg presented some interesting price offers and a suggestion of a demountable banner with a kind of zip in Vinyl quality as it should also be able to use it outside. They had samples too of all the proposed materials offered.

MEERSSEN thought that only a two-coloured banner could reduce the production costs and Holstebro found that technically the banner could also just be showed by overhead as it was made during the Granville meeting.

The president resumed the different offers and it was agreed that a decision will be made later on and that the Douzelage should live with the actual banner at least for the next meetings until a satisfying solution can be found.

Douzelage-sign, stickers and posters

Price estimate for signs, stickers and posters had been presented by **KÖSZEG**, **TÜRI** and **NIEDERANVEN**. The president asked the delegations to ask for prices and proposals in their towns and send it to the Douzelage office. All offers will be gathered and a decision will be taken on a later date.

(c) Douzelage in the World Wide Web

All modifications that had been decided in Judenburg had been done. Even if John Pettersson was not assisting to the Granville meeting the president thanked him for the efforts and steps he had made to optimise the Douzelage Web-site. New software is being prepared: there will be two working areas on the site, one open to the public with more informative and general information and one in a secured confidential area, destined to the internal use of the Douzelage members (sending mails and data, forums and chats...).

Three students from Austria, Mike LANGGNER, Martin SIX and Max SCHOETTL, students at the "Bundeshandelsakademie und Bundeshandelsschule Judenburg" graduating in IT technologies want to take the Douzelage Web site as the subject of their graduate and proposed to create a new designed website according to these criteria.

The president proposed to support this wonderful idea and all towns agreed to give these young students full support to realise this interesting project that should normally be set up at the end of January 2005. Judenburg also congratulated the young students and thanked the Douzelage for accepting their project.

MEERSSEN proposed that these students should take contact with Martijn Hosman. This was confirmed, as Martijn is one of the members of the "Web design working group" decided in Judenburg.

The president underlined that initiatives like this one are welcome in the Douzelage Association as they give a good opportunity to involve young people in Douzelage projects.

One of the modifications that has also been realised is the "Who is who" document, initiated by an idea of Martijn. The official "Who is who" with general Douzelage personalities as i.e. A. Poirier or former presidents, is that one that should be on the official Douzelage website. Every town is free to setup a local "Who is who" menu in their local town description.

In order to edit The Douzelage Magazine everybody having photos or stories about Douzelage activities in their town is kindly asked to send them in, to be published in this magazine. The president insisted on the point that this is the best way to show to the public what the Douzelage is doing and who is doing it (a good example is the "sailing in Granville" project). The aim consists in gathering all interesting information and making them available in one document.

Also the workshops projections are published on the Web, in order to complete the data about the Douzelage actions. The president apologised for the fact that the Judenburg photographs had not yet been published, but as it is Oxelösund who only can put the pictures on the Web and as the CD has been lost on its way to the person in charge, the president brought a copy of this CD to Granville in order to hand it over to Christer Wargert. These pictures will be published in a few weeks on the Web.

As for the new towns, they were asked to send in a short town description in order to complete the Douzelage town descriptions.

(d) Action points for the different towns

From the 1st of November 2004, the new EU Commissioner will be on duty (Mr Ján Figel from Slovakia) and the president will try to have a meeting with him in order to present the Douzelage association. The names of the new members of the EU-parliament on board can be read on a special link on the Douzelage Web site and in the documents transmitted prior to the meeting. It is a listing of the names of the persons in charge with the cultural, educational and town twinning matters. As the new commissioner Mr Ján Figel is originate from one of the new countries, he will possibly be particularly sensitive to the problem of the new towns in a European town twinning association. Maybe this fact can help the Douzelage to find easier ways to let those towns participate at every meeting and also help to get a better chance to be subsidised for all our activities. Finally it should be underlined that we did get the confirmation from Brussels that we are the only town twinning association with 20 permanent member towns, which should give the Douzelage a special status within all other town twinning associations.

The "Committee of the Regions", responsible for town twinning matters will have a meeting on 14 October 2004 and the Luxembourg delegate promised that the Douzelage Association and its specific problems would be one of the items he would point out.

The president and the vice-president Alphonse Henrard will prepare this meeting in Brussels. Delegates should not hesitate to contact them if they are interested to get more details about this meeting or if they want any subject to be discussed at that occasion.

(e) Douzelage Codicil

All member towns had given their stamps to be put on the Codicil with the exception of Holstebro. The president asked the new towns' delegates to turn to the secretary's office if they want to have a copy of the Douzelage Charter or the Codicils.

(f) Members to be honoured in Granville

As agreed during the Judenburg meeting, Mr André Poirier is being honoured as Honorary Initiator of the Douzelage and Henry Haffray, who did the brilliant good job of building the institutional basis of the Douzelage as Honorary Foundation Member of the Douzelage. The president thanked all other people participating in the birth of the Douzelage Association for their devotion in the Douzelage idea. All towns agreed that Jeremy Barker, the former Douzelage president will be honoured during the next Sherborne General Meeting and Karel Majoor will be honoured in Meerssen in autumn 2005.

B) Activities reports

1) Survey of recent events

(a) Activities report

All towns were requested to bring along 20 copies of their Douzelage activities, both internal and external, since the last meeting in Judenburg, together with their plans for the future. Unfortunately most of these reports had been sent too late to be published in the Douzelage Magazine before the meeting.

The president asked all member towns who did not yet send their reports to do so if possible as a mail file in order to facilitate the publication.

1. **THE HOLSTEBRO LOTTERY** had been a great success. In September there had been a big local festival and the Douzelage was also represented in order to make publicity and at the same time gather some funds. A lot of nice gifts had been sent from a lot of other Douzelage member towns and Holstebro thanked once more everybody for the massive support they had shown (special thanks were expressed to the brewery "Chouffe" from Houffalize). In fact this lottery brought 670 € together and the Douzelage had been presented in its due way.

The president also thanked the towns for the spontaneous support action and he thanked Holstebro for their dedication to the Douzelage association. He underlined that actions like these can bring a very positive image to the association and should be continued by all means.

2. **THE VISIT OF THE 5 NEW TOWNS** in Sherborne was reported by Jeremy Barker as being a great success. In the activity report of Sherborne all details are documented. Unfortunately the town of Sigulda could not be present because of another appointment they had in Germany. The delegations were all very interesting people, keen to discover the local political authorities as well as the educational or cultural aspect of Sherborne. Sherborne reported that together with Türi a probable music exchange for young people is being prepared. Türi confirmed that maybe next summer youth orchestra training and leaders exchange in collaboration with a very performing orchestra leader from Türi would take place.

Mr Jeremy Barker also reported on the meeting in Chojna during the "Days of European Integration" where very encouraging initiatives could be taken on economic exchanges using Wessex Business Link. Through these contacts we may actually be in the situation to do something really positive on the economic front.

Mr Barker further informed the delegations that there would be a big twinning meeting in Kent where he had been asked to represent the Douzelage. He said that every interested town is kindly invited to participate to this meeting.

3. **THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN FIREMEN CYCLING** took place in Luxembourg and was a big success. Unfortunately there were no participants from Douzelage towns.
4. **THE ADEPS 2004 SPORTS WEEK** took place from the 6-12 June 2004 and welcomed about 120 students among others from Bellagio, Granville and Niederanven in Houffalize. The main theme was the importance of the languages in social relationships and as ever the action had been a full success, which was confirmed by the president who had been there during this week. Mr Alphonse Henrard thanked the 6 teachers for their engagement in this project. For the 6th edition of the Adeps in 2005 it is planned to treat as a main theme "Relationship between the able-bodied and disabled people".

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HOUFFALIZE (B)
JUDENBURG (A)
KARKKILA (FIN)
KÖSZEG (H)
KÖTZTING (D)
MEERSSEN (NL)
NIEDERANVEN (L)
OXELÖSUND (S)
PREVEZA (GR)
SESIMBRA (P)
SHERBORNE (GB)
SIGULDA (LV)
SUSICE (CZ)
TÜRI (EST)

5. **THE YOUTH WEEKS IN WALDMÜNCHEN** near Kötzing in Germany took place for the 6th time already and received during 10 days 2 students from Bellagio and 3 from Houffalize among 34 other participants from France; Germany; Czech Republic; Slovakia; Croatia; Serbia; Macedonia; Romania and Poland. The students had reported an interesting and rich experience and a lot of friendships and new contacts had been made. Mr Pecher insisted on the importance of advertising in time the idea of going to Waldmünchen in next August. As soon as the new information will be available it will be sent out by e-Mail to the member towns. Thanks were expressed to Kötzing by Houffalize and Bellagio for the excellent organisation of this stay for young people in Waldmünchen.
6. **THE "SAILING IN GRANVILLE" PROJECT** which took place from August 20 to 28 this summer had left enthusiastic and pleased participants as for the location and for the organisation of this action. Mr Julienne explained that the idea was set up and processed by Mr André Gendre and that it had really been a full success. He thanked the people in charge for the good presentation and publicity on the Web site and confirmed that Granville had also got the funds from Brussels for that event, which was pleased by the motto "Voile et Environnement" of this event. A new edition is foreseen for 2005.
7. **THE EUROPEAN DAYS OF INTEGRATION IN CHOJNA**, which took place through August 27 and 28 this summer are being held since 5 years already and it was the first time that Douzelage member towns were participating. It has been a success especially on the economic level (just as Mr Barker already reported). Also a ceremony was organized during that the local authorities did sign the Codicil to the Douzelage constitution. By this occasion Chojna thanked the president and all the delegates from the other towns for their comprehension of the difficult situation Chojna had in Judenburg, where it was not possible for them to sign the Codicil as the official agreement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not yet been received at that moment.

The president thanked once more Mr Konarski and Mr Salamonczyk for the engagement and hospitality they showed during this meeting in Chojna. He reported a very hearty welcome and a stay full of interesting discussions.

8. Judenburg reported that in Mai and June **TWO GROUPS FROM JUDENBURG OF ABOUT 30 EACH WENT TO VISIT SIGULDA** and were very pleased about the welcome of the Mayor and the beauty of the town and surroundings. Sigulda has a lot of winter sport facilities worth to be visited; also as the price-quality relation is very interesting.
9. A group of people of a local history club from **KÖTZTING CAME TO VISIT JUDENBURG** in September and was delighted to discover the Spanish Riding School near the town. Another visit from the chamber quire from Kötzing is planned to take place in Judenburg in October.
10. Two important **LETTERS FROM BELLAGIO** were read. One from the newly elected Mayor who reconfirmed the interest of the new administrators of Bellagio in the Douzelage project and their wish to continue co-operating with the local Douzelage committee, in order to enable further projects to be realised. The mayor further thanked Maria Angela Gilardoni, the actual president of the Douzelage committee for the entire job done and the motion she put till now in the Douzelage. Further the mayor thanked Donatella Gandola, administrative secretary of the Bellagio Douzelage committee for the big job she did making all the projects get reality.

Then the message of Maria Angela Gilardoni had been read where she explained that she will retire from the active Douzelage participation after December 31st. She thanked every one that helped her during her long activity in the Douzelage. In fact she was with the party up from the beginning and she promised that this association will always hold a special part of her heart.

On behalf of all the Douzelage towns the president thanked Maria Angela for the extraordinary contribution she has brought into the Douzelage up from its beginning. He expressed the hope that the Douzelage will not have to miss her experience, her competence and her friendliness in the future and that collaboration in the new committee could possibly be made real.

(b) Douzelage Magazine

The president asked every delegate to send any pictures or texts to be published in the Douzelage Magazine, to the Douzelage secretary. Only if everybody participates in this action it can succeed and the different puzzle pieces of photos and material can form an entire and consistent picture of the Douzelage community.

C) Projects

1) Projects not yet finished or in preparation

(a) Douzelage Play

The last play was organised by Karkkila and the next one is foreseen by Sherborne in 2007. As Sherborne did not get any host confirmation from Judenburg (which had been said in former discussions), every other member town is welcome to check on their local level if a hosting in 2007 could be possible for them.

(b) Sherborne Festival 2005

Chris MacAdie made a special presentation (by the help of the new mobile microphone) of the mentioned festival. He insisted on the fact that it is not a "Cavalcade" as it stands in the heading but a festivity celebrating 1300 years of Sherborne. The title should be changed in "Sherborne Festival". All the details are to be found on the Web site and everybody has to register himself. He insisted once more that it is of a great importance to inform the local youth of each town about the possibilities they have to participate at this "wonderful, gigantic" event where international stalls, art exhibitions, concerts, workshops, forumswill entertain the participants and the visitors during three days. Mr MacAdie announced that he will personally try to accommodate everybody who is willing to participate to this event.

Judenburg confirmed that they would participate with a youth modern music group to this festival.

(c) Student and Trainee Youth Exchanges (Houffalize)

EURES

The president showed the main opening page of the links pertaining to the Houffalize youth exchange project:

<http://europa.eu.int/eures/>

[European Youth Portal](#)

http://europa.eu.int/youth/working/traineeships/index_eu_en.html

All answers to job questions, traineeships, exchange jobs, EU youth programs and their respective procedures can be found on these very interesting links. Towns are encouraged to use this facility in order to make the project that Houffalize did set up survive. These links will be put on the Douzelage Web site too. Houffalize confirmed their further interest in keeping this project up and thanked for this action.

(d) Centenary Scout Camp Sherborne 2007

There was nothing new to report on this project. Sherborne confirmed that the project is still under development.

(e) Douzelage who is who

The president asked Jeremy Barker to send in his photographs in order to complete the documentation of his person in this document.

(f) English Song Festival

Cezary Salamonczyk explained that the absolute deadline to register is the 15th of November 2004. Every interested student should not hesitate to participate. As for the preparations, the local committee is still working on it. Until now Sherborne and Türi already confirmed their participation in this event that should be something special and international this time. One hundred participants from Poland are expected.

(g) Mayors Meeting in Preveza

Mrs Kleopatra GIANNOULIS explained the ideas of the mayor of Preveza expressed in the letter distributed before that resumes following: the promotion of local products should be pushed, the Touristic institution offices should collaborate between the different member cities and the realisation of projects with European character should be supported by the Douzelage association. Preveza proposes to display in the next meeting concrete proposals that will lead us to actions that will be useful for our citizens and for our local economy.

Jeremy Barker supported the idea of arranging meeting between the different tourist offices, as it had often already been tried in the past. He thought that the effort of setting up such meetings should ever persist until a good collaboration could be realised. Further he underlined that actually at the last Granville meeting efforts on economic and commercial level have been undertaken too. He reminded that, years ago, a very exhaustive report had been presented on this initiative and he invited every delegation to have a look at this document

again. In his view we should all give full support to the initiative of Preveza in the hope to finally achieve something.

The president suggested to discuss these items on the next meeting as those themes need more preparation and could be very important for the future. A link on the economy of each town is foreseen on the Douzelage website according to the request expressed by Mr Clark, mayor of Sherborne. Each town is asked to update this link individually. If help is needed they are invited to address to the Douzelage secretary.

In his function as the mayor of Meerssen, Mr Kockelkorn asked if it is foreseen that the Mayor of Preveza is inviting all other Douzelage Mayors to a meeting in Preveza to discuss the position of the municipalities and asked how the Preveza proposal should be understood. Preveza answered that it had not been the proposal of their mayor to meet in Preveza but only to meet in one of the Douzelage towns.

The president remarked that if such a meeting will ever take place it would be extremely important to invite also town twinning specialists and not only mayors. This to ensure that the town twinning idea will be the main topic and not the doubts some mayors may have on the sense and profit of twinning. If such a meeting will ever take place it must be prepared in a due way and with twinning officials or MEP's as speaker.

Sherborne confirmed as their mayor is not involved in Douzelage matters for example, it is important that the mayors cannot take decisions about the Douzelage in a meeting only for mayors and if such a meeting is ever possible, then only on an informative basis.

The president took once more the opportunity to thank the mayors present in this meeting for their supporting attitude and to express his wish that all mayors of the Douzelage member towns should have the same positive and dynamic engagement. As an example he cited the organisation of the recent festivities in Chojna which had been prepared with great care and professionalism and offered thus an excellent opportunity to involve the mayor and the whole town council in the Douzelage interests. Again the president invited all towns to encourage their mayors to participate to the Douzelage meetings if ever possible in order to show them what we are doing.

2) Discussion on our projects/activities

(a) Short briefing on the EC-Call for proposals

The president showed a projection about the Call for proposal and informed the delegates that the link for the EU-call proposals is to be found on the European Commission Web-site for town twinning matters. All other necessary information can be read on these official pages. The only challenge is to prepare the call for proposals by time and within the given deadlines in order to be subsidised. The president said he would try to get an appointment in Brussels with the new commissioner in charge in order to get more support for the Douzelage from the EU side.

He showed by example the nature of the different meeting forms and explained one more time the difference between the "A-Form" meetings (meeting of citizens) and the "B-Form" meetings for conferences. The Douzelage General Meeting could as well be classified among the B-form meetings as the Douzelage delegates, being town twinning officers, are debating about the Douzelage general or education matters. Towns were reminded that all applications must be sent in due form, signed by a legally authorised official person.

For all questions on the European level it is the office being in charge of the town twinning matters that should be contacted. Contact addresses are to be found on the appropriate Website.

Before turning to them the president suggested to contact the Douzelage secretary, the vice presidents assistant Mrs. Manuela di Pinto in Houffalize or the national EU representative each country has, in order to discuss the subject. There is even a sort of "helpdesk" called "Euro Desk" (<http://www.eurodesk.org>) on the Web, giving explanations to all official procedures, eventual questions or even to the running and future projects. Some of the services offered by the Euro Desk are subject to charges.

(b) Activities

The president asked all present delegates to report their former and future activities and the related experiences. These reports allow the document "What we do", published on the Web-site to be completed.

1. ALTEA reported that they have not foreseen a special activity at that moment and that they are unable to participate in the Meerssen meeting in autumn next year due to a local festival. However they said that they will be in Bundoran for the spring meeting.

Mr Kockelkorn and the president regretted very much that they will not be able to assist in Meerssen but a change to another date is not possible for Meerssen.

2. **BELLAGIO** said that they had not yet taken a decision about the Miniparliament 2005, as the new committee is not yet installed. Everybody hopes that this interesting project will continue.

The president also remarked that this event is one of the most popular and successful ones and that he hopes the new town authorities and the new committee will continue to support this activity.

3. **BUNDORAN** reported that they are busy preparing the next General Meeting for April 2005. The details of the meeting will be communicated later on.
4. **CHOJNA** said that they have very tight relationships with a lot of other European towns especially from Germany. They did also get the final approval from the EU Commission for the Comenius school project. As for the Lingua Project they will take part in the meeting in Sherborne, planned for end October and in January 2005 in Karkkila.

As the dates of the Chojna English Festival are the same as those of the Bundoran Meeting, they did change the dates of their festival to one week earlier (8th and 9th of April 2005), in order to be able to participate in the Douzelage Spring Meeting.

5. **GRANVILLE** announced that a sailing event similar to the Sailing 2004 Project will be organized next year. The theme and other details have not yet been decided. The president confirmed once more the interesting character of this activity for students not familiar with the Sea and expressed his hope that this could become a permanent annual activity like the Miniparliament for example.
6. **HOLSTEBRO** remarked that the main purpose of their activities should consist in raising money in one way or another, as their committee does not have the support of the local authorities any more. So for them it is vital to connect their events with the necessity of getting funds. They confirmed their participation in the Bundoran and Meerssen Meetings for 2005 and the also in the Sherborne Anniversary Festival. They will also probably arrange something together with Köszeg.

The president welcomed their commitment and reconfirmed the full support of all the delegates.

7. **HOUFFALIZE** will organise as ever the Adeps sports week event from 5-11 June 2005. They did already get the support of the EU Commission for that activity and one of the main themes will be "Rapports sociaux entre les personnes valides et non valides" (social relationships between the able-bodied and disabled people).

Mr Henrard took the opportunity to express their support to Bellagio concerning the continuity of their fantastic Miniparliament action. He said that Houffalize will surely continue to participate in this event. As for the Sailing project Houffalize was also very enchanted to participate and will be with the party again in 2005. The same remark was made for the Waldmünchen youth week project. Houffalize will also try to send a youth delegation to the Sherborne activity in 2007.

In his function as the vice-president Mr Henrard explained once more that the realisation of a project is always difficult as you have to liaise between the EU-funding authorities, the local politics and the Douzelage purposes. But the experiences and the efforts can lead to the best formula to get most of the needed funds.

The president confirmed that Houffalize has become a sort of "specialist" in these administrative matters and that those towns having problems or questions on that level should not hesitate to contact the Houffalize committee for help.

Mr Kockelkorn asked Houffalize if they could assist them in getting the maximum of support and funds from Brussels for their meeting in 2005. The vice-president asserted adding that after the 1st of November the new people will be in charge in the EU Commission and that then it will hopefully be easier to raise the necessary funds after then.

8. **JUDENBURG** said that the chamber quire from Kötzting would come from 9-10 October 2004 to Judenburg to make a performance. They will also take part in a youth exchange programmed with Köszeg, gathering a group of adults escorting the students who will be profiting in that way to absolve a cultural program in Judenburg. They will send a delegation of young people to the Sherborne festival too.

Willi Schnedl informed that the town council of Judenburg intends to arrange a language school at Judenburg in a beautiful baroque country house for roughly 40 young people with possibilities for different sports as well. All towns will be informed in time for the schedule, the age of the pupils, the languages taught and the financial situation. Judenburg of course invites all towns, if possible, to take part and first of all to read the information they will get.

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KÖSZEG (H)
KÖTZTING (D)
MEERSSEN (NL)
NIEDERANVEN (L)
OXELÖSUND (S)
PREVEZA (GR)
SESIMBRA (P)
SHERBORNE (GB)
SIGULDA (LV)
SUSICE (CZ)
TÜRI (EST)

9. **KARKKILA** explained that they have no committee for the moment as there will be new elections in 3 weeks from there and that they hope finding better support among the new authorities. Anyhow local media publicity had already been previewed to be done. As for their activities they did only plan to continue the school exchanges started in 2003 and 2004 (with Granville and Chojna) and of course they did foresee to come to the Bundoran Meeting in spring.

10. **KÖSZEG** reported that they finally did set up all legal steps, necessary for a good working town twinning procedure. Publicity for the Douzelage had been made in the press and on the radio and it is planned to send groups of "pioneers" to the new related twin towns (Kötzting i.e.). After the Judenburg meeting in spring delegations from Niederanven, Karkkila, Sherborne and Meerssen came to visit their town. A delegation from Köszeg itself went to visit Sherborne and Sušice, while a senior group from Kötzting came to Köszeg. There had been a two-day beach volleyball festival in Judenburg where Köszeg participated in and had a lot of fun. Mr Mátrai thanked all people for their nice welcome and support.

As for the future projects it had been confirmed from the official side that the kinder garden project will take place. The first project meeting will take place at the end of November in Köszeg. Oxelösund, Preveza, Sigulda, Niederanven and some other towns will participate. Every town is welcome. Everybody, wishing to escort the kinder garden teachers is also welcome in Köszeg.

From 1 until 6 July 2006 there will be a youth exchange, probably together with Chojna, Granville, Holstebro, Judenburg and Karkkila. A Comenius project will be running with Sherborne and other cities and a student delegation from Köszeg will also be participating in the Sherborne anniversary festival in June 2005.

Köszeg further informed that unfortunately they will not be able to participate in the Bundoran Meeting without the financial help of the European Commission. For them it had already been so very difficult to organise and finance the transport to Granville. As Bundoran is on an island, they will definitely have to use other means of transportation as their private car. They ask Bundoran to add in the application form that they are in a disadvantaged area. The EU officials should know that the new towns will be forced to miss important meetings because of an important lack of funds. Maybe this fact can make the commissioners aware of giving more support to the new EU member countries, still financially weak but so willing to integrate themselves in the official programs.

The president acknowledged this statement and underlined once more the importance of knowing very well the EU-funding procedures. The correct use of all the prerequisites for obtaining EU funding should be perfectly known by all member towns. As Mr István Mátrai has become a kind of specialist in Comenius projects and all other town needing help on this level should not hesitate to contact him.

11. **KÖTZTING** started by saying that Kötzting's financial situation being horribly the same as Meerssen's, this makes their prosperities look a little bit poor. Activities or possibilities are strictly limited. Whenever there is an activity like the Miniparliament in Bellagio or the Sailing in Granville all they can do is ask for some participation or full participation from the young people who take part otherwise they could not finance that.

On the other hand they are quite happy to see that there are quite a number of activities going on that the Douzelage brought along over the years. There is a relation between one school in Kötzting and Sherborne. The Kötzting people go to Sherborne for a summer course and the Douzelage committee in Kötzting does not have to take care of that as this is more or less automatic. There is another relation between one school in Cham, situated at about 20 kilometres from Kötzting that has held up another relation with the "Handelschule" in Holstebro for more than 10 years. Kötzting is very happy to see that the Douzelage has these consequences and brings about these results.

Mr Pecher explained that there is another aspect that has been noticed the last five years. Since Austria, Hungary and the Czech Republic have become members they are building up a relation just as the Benelux towns for example. This will facilitate the realization of small projects and encourage the people and local clubs to participate with much more easiness on the financial, distance related or even the language basis in the proposed activities. Finally Mr Pecher said that he hopes that their local authorities will find more understanding and support for the Douzelage.

12. **MEERSSEN** said that their main energy is spent on the preparation of the general meeting in autumn 2005. A very motivated committee, together with their Mayor Mr Kockelkorn, they try to set up a strong and interesting program. The fact that the Mayor is so strongly involved in the Douzelage idea makes it easier for them to organize participations in the different activities and allows him, as he is member of different committees who are. But their main problem still remains the financial one. Mr Joop Hosman is setting up a sort of informative folder in order to find sponsors for the local Douzelage committee. Every year they try to organise a lottery or TV activities in order to gather funds and he encouraged every town to do the same as it has always been very successful until now.

13. **NIEDERANVEN** underlined the importance of involving the youth into the Douzelage. For that reason they have foreseen to make a presentation of the Douzelage to the SNJ (the National Youth Service). Having more youth activities guarantees a longer life to the Douzelage and will encourage the EU Commission to get more aware of the importance of our ideas as Brussels has become very keen in supporting any youth related action. Niederanven will try to gather students for the Sherborne festival and will also try to bring a youth delegation to Bundoran too.

14. The **OXELÖSUND** music school is very active and has been visiting Bellagio and Sherborne, Meerssen. Next summer a group from the Stella Maris School from Meerssen will come to Oxelösund. This school has found a way to finance the exchanges without requiring an EU-funding, which facilitates the procedure and shortens the preparation time. They have the ambition to visit all the Douzelage towns a wish that can only be but encouraged.

For this summer they have been able to implement a youth exchange with a football team between Oxelösund and Granville. As this project had already been planned in Houffalize in 2002 and as it had been changed so many times until then, Oxelösund proposed to add a new item on the Web site called "Project Ideas" or "partner search" in order to make the project realisations much easier and effective. With this forum the project procedure discussions could run between the general meetings and be treated faster during the meeting itself.

The president agreed that this might be a very good idea and that this link could be added on the website as soon as possible.

Mr Wargert distributed a document with the ideas of a youth project in order to be discussed i.e. on the Web or in further meetings. Furthermore Mr Wargert informed that Oxelösund made a lot of efforts over the last years to organise a supporting committee outside the town administration. A group of interested persons could be found and a second meeting has already been planned.

15. **PREVEZA** has planned to organise an exchange visit of the local Rotary Clubs together with Sherborne. Sherborne also has many youth exchanges with Preveza and this time both town will try the extreme opposite and exchange the Rotarians.

16. **SESIMBRA** had no activities or plans to report. The president asked them to try to get in touch with Mr [João Vale de Almeida](#): Head of Cabinet of the new European Commission President, who had honoured the Douzelage at the Sesimbra GM in May 2003 by speaking to the audience on the EU subvention system for twinning activities. Mr de Almeida knows the Douzelage quite well and may be an important contact to facilitate communication with Mr Ján Figel' Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture, and Multilingualism. (See this [link to the EU President Barroso's Team](#))

17. **SHERBORNE** has got many ongoing projects with the schools as outlined in the paper they distributed before the meeting. In particular they have Comenius projects and Sherborne preparatory school has its Douzelage Club that is ongoing. Children are in contact by mail with children in Türi and Köszeg. Sherborne also had the visit of the delegates of four of the new towns which are linked with the councillors, teachers and the students. This exchange was found very useful and should be considered to be an ongoing activity engaging local authorities, teachers and the children from other countries. Sherborne also has strong links with Chojna, outlined by the fact that their mayor, Jeremy Barker as well as the actual president went to Chojna for the ceremony, which was very useful. Mrs Ashby underlined that the present mayor of Sherborne is very involved and interested in Douzelage. As they will have a new mayor in next May they will have to build new links with him and the town council. Mrs Ashby will be doing a presentation of the Douzelage and its activities at the council meeting, as Sherborne believes that these links are very important. The committee in Sherborne does not get much financial support from the town council and the fact of involving politicians in their actions makes getting grants much easier. Apart from any small crops they might get from the council, they have an organization called "Friends of Douzelage" who organises social events and other events to fundraise a bit of money but also first to gather socially they have skittle evenings for example where they have people not just from the Douzelage but also from the twinning association, young people from the town and anybody else who wants to join them. This just to widen the net of those involved in what they do. Generally they are not too bad with the funding because they have fundraised for a specific fund for youth travels so that when they do bring young people to an event in a Douzelage town they can often subsidise their travel, generally by half, depending on the criteria's fixed for that event. A lot of the money for the Douzelage is raised by the committee. In their country they have a very long tradition of volunteering and fundraising and they much of the support is given by the town council.

Finally Sherborne will of course have the festival in June 2005 explained before, the Symposium in 2006 and in 2005 they also will participate in the Bundoran and Meerssen meeting as well in the Miniparliament in Bellagio if it will take place.

The president asked Sherborne to tell their mayor that all delegates in the GM were in favour of creating a business link on our Website. He briefly explained how a member town can add itself their own business links on the Website. This business link will be integrated into the new Douzelage Web site.

18. **SUSICE** reported from their Comenius project "my home my Europe" actually running with Preveza and Granville where pupils from Sušice will go in October. Their main goal is to create a Douzelage interested team in Sušice in order to be more efficient in their Douzelage work. They highly appreciated the 5-town meeting in Sherborne, which was an excellent event to promote the Douzelage idea among the new towns. The financing still remains for them the major problem and they probably have to review their situation every six months in order to define how to go to the meetings and how to finance the travel expenses. Fortunately their town council promised to give financial support to the Douzelage in the future. One of their schools will take part in the Comenius programme with Sherborne "Languages and Culture". Actually the mayor of Sherborne is in Sušice and they also invited the president to come to Sušice in autumn. All other interested people are kindly invited to the "Day of Sušice" that will take place in May where during two days groups from other towns are welcomed to perform dances, singing or music. This invitation is also valid for the football cup which will happen in May as well and where football players from 12 to 18 can take part. Sušice will also participate to the Sherborne Festival, the Miniparliament in Bellagio. They thought that it is very important to promote activities within their nearer area between Sušice, Köszeg and Kötzing and maybe Judenburg. Maybe a better co-operation could bring a lot of advantages i.e. the travel by coach that would make it cheaper and easier to take along products for the gourmet market too.

19. **TÜRI** reported that apart from their activities published on the Website, they did point out their visit to Sherborne and underlined that their delegation was very satisfied of this co-operation.

As one of the new members Türi has not yet got the experience to apply to the European Commission but they had many projects in the past with Nordic countries and also with countries around the Baltic Sea where they were supported by INTERREG, from PHARE, from NORDIC COUNCIL and the BALTIC-AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM. Now they have engaged a Comenius project between Kindergardens from Sweden and Bulgaria. As they are new members and people don't know too much about the Douzelage towns they intend to prepare a project for youngsters. In a first step students are researching information about the different member towns, in a second step every town can send questions about their town which will be published on the Web-site as a sort of Quiz game where the students and their teachers can participate and finally in the third step, the best solvers will be invited to a youth camp stay in Türi.

The president thanked Türi for this very good idea and encouraged every member town to continue with such energy and fantasy the Douzelage way. He gave special thanks once more to Sherborne for the great work they had done in prospecting and involving the new Douzelage towns.

(c) Translation equipment

According to the discussion in para 2. [b] before, the president informed that an arrangement with the new member towns has been found. They will pay the purchasing costs of 1100 € per unit in delayed payment of 200 € per year. This was unanimously agreed.

Jeremy Barker speaking on behalf of Chojna pointed out that, should a town actually succeed in getting money from Brussels for a conference, one of the legitimated expenses is the translation equipment. It could well be that whenever some equipment that we still have owing, could be put down on the expense sheet when applying to Brussels. That means that we will get half of it back from Brussels. If those towns which are functioning next try that, it just might be one way billing it. Another fact that Jeremy pointed out is that the equipment is losing value every year and a certain percentage of the value can be written off every year as an amortized value.

Nico also reminded that every organizing town can put the renting of this equipment on their budget for their General meeting. Before applying the towns should ask how much renting such equipment would cost in their country and put this amount on the GM budget.

The president agreed in these remarks and underlined the item foreseen in the B_Form for applying for a conference where exactly this option for translation equipment is foreseen. All towns are reminded to pay attention to this when applying next.

(d) Youth Exchange program

One of the main proposals for the future in Judenburg was that all towns should develop a basic program for youth exchange. If the necessary logistics are installed for once it will be easy and effective to proceed in

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KÖTZTING (D)
MEERSSEN (NL)
NIEDERANVEN (L)
OXELÖSUND (S)
PREVEZA (GR)
SESIMBRA (P)
SHERBORNE (GB)
SIGULDA (LV)
SUSICE (CZ)
TÜRI (EST)

student exchanges because all the important and time stealing questions about catering or accommodation no longer need to be discussed.

The president informed the delegates that the town of Niederanven is trying to set up such structures and that they will prepare a draft document about proceeding as soon as it will be ready. He encouraged every town to do the same and prepare this and to point out the specialities of the different towns: i.e. sea; sailing; surfing; swimming; mountains, skiing, biking; tracking; etc. As European programs are available for youth exchanges real chances to get subsidised by the EU exist.

(e) Why have youth exchanges?

In Annex R and S the official EU documents about youth exchanges were transmitted. It is absolutely important to stick as close as possible to their ideas in order to profit a maximum of the EU-help. The president explained the different details about the links, application forms and facilities and encouraged every town to include youth exchanges as much as possible into their activities. Also the Program Youth for Europe is worth to be studied as there are a lot of useful information i.e. the insurance possibilities in case of youth exchanges. Interested towns should contact their national contact address and inform at the next meeting on the answer they received. As other questions on insurance for the Douzelage were raised, this question will be checked in detail.

(f) Preparation of projects

The document "Project description Form" (Annex U and T) had been approved in Niederanven and the president asked the towns to use it for introducing their projects. It is easy to use, very informative and can be filled out and sent immediately by internet.

(g) Meerssen General Meeting – "The European Citizenship"

The Meerssen General Meeting will have as the major theme "The European Citizenship". This title may bring up the question if the meeting is a meeting of "citizens" or a "conference" pertaining to the EU funding criterions.

Mr Kockelkorn explained that it is the first time that an EU convention has been written with the rights of the European citizens. This is a very important aspect and should not be dismissed, he explained, especially the famous European town of Maastricht being so close to Meerssen. This town will also be the outgoing point of the General Meeting, in order to underline the European importance of the meeting. Another important aspect for them will be the youth connection. Therefore a special booklet will be published, where the youngsters of Meerssen will write down their opinions and demands, their hopes and fears pertaining to their EU citizenship and on top their town.

There will also be an art exhibition in order to underline the cultural exchange within the Douzelage, within Europe. Finally a dance performance had been foreseen to round up the colourful program and support the encouragement of communication between the different towns. Unfortunately this turned to be too expensive so that it had to be skipped and replaced by a production from Stella Maris. The mayor announced that Meerssen got already a subvention of 10.000 € for their meeting from the Netherlands organisation "Prinz Bernhard Kulturfonds" and expressed his hopes that also the European subsidies will be granted.

3) Presenting the Douzelage

(a) Douzelage - What we do!

The document "What we do" is a word document on the Web site and is updated on a regular basis. The president explained that every discussion to a subject that had ever been treated in a meeting can be read on those pages. He thanked all towns that did send their old meeting minutes, allowing updating the document in the due way.

Meerssen informed the delegates that they did prepare a special Douzelage newspaper and the president asked them to send it as soon as possible to the presidency office so that it can be published. He also proposed Mette Sorensen from Holstebro to send in the articles she wrote about visiting the different towns. All written testimonies about any Douzelage experience are worth to be published and will give a better image about what the Douzelage is able to realise. The secretary will try to translate all articles in English language.

Mette informed that she had contact with other journalists from Granville and Houffalize present at the meeting and they found it to be a good idea to have a group of journalists with one journalist from each town. They could set up a sort of network in order to get more information of the Douzelage in the newspapers.

(b) Documentation on the application forms sent to the EC

All the before mentioned documents will be gathered before the Brussels Meeting and they can only but underline the importance of the Douzelage within all other European town twinning associations.

D) Provisional Agenda for the Bundoran GM

Bundoran had circulated a draft program at the start of the meeting. The meeting will take place from the 14th to the 17th April 2005, the week end after the eastern week end. Delegates hopefully will arrive by plane as Bundoran is on an island. Most will probably arrive in Dublin and will have connections by train and by a local flight to Slygo airport at about 40 minutes from Bundoran. The delegates will be collected either at the airport or the train station. The program will follow the normal type of program of a general meeting and continuing the involvement the young people Bundoran proposes as theme of the meeting to have a workshop on "Transition Year Program" for young people aged 15 to 16. They invite young persons from each town who will be engaged in the workshop with their students and discuss the benefits of the "Transition Year program".

There will be no gourmet market because of the difficulties in transporting the goods by plane. Finally the towns were reminded to send in their financial identification forms as soon as possible.

As for the EU funding the president reminded that in the future towns should not give to much importance to the gourmet market in their application form, as this activity is classified being a touristic activity and therefore it is not subsidised by the EU Commission.

II) Nutrition Workshop Report

Mrs Christel Barbier and Elisabeth Anderssen reported on the nutrition workshop that took place at the Agora Center and that grouped delegates of 12 different countries. At the end of their very detailed report, Jean-Marc Julienne thanked them on behalf of "Granville Partenaire Européen" for the very good job they have done.

The president thanked the two leaders of this workshop, Mrs. Christel Barbier and Elisabeth Anderssen for the professionalism with which this workshop had been prepared and directed. He pointed to the excellent idea to include the young people in this workshop. It is precisely the integration of the young people in the activities that is one of the essential goals of the Douzelage.

1) Closing of the meeting

SHERBORNE expressed their thanks to the president for the professional way the meeting has been conducted with the very useful internet information and the useful way it has been presented.

Vice-president Alphonse Henrard proposed on behalf of his friend Luc Nollomont, that the Douzelage towns should send a statement to those towns that have problems to be supported by their town council in order to help them in this very difficult situation. It was agreed to prepare such an official statement.

The president thanked the vice-presidents Alphonse Henrard and Günther Pecher, the secretary Patricia Salvatore, the organizing "Granville Partenaire Européen", the translators and all the delegates for this very successful meeting.

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