

Minutes of the 47th General Meeting Rovinj/Rovigno, September 28th – October 1st, 2023

Partner towns present:

Agros, Altea, Asikkala, Bad Kötzing, Bundoran, Chojna, Granville, Holstebro, Houffalize, Judenburg, Köszeg, Marsaskala, Meerssen, Niederanven, Oxelösund, Rokiškis, Rovinj/Rovigno, Sesimbra, Sherborne, Škofja Loka, Sušice, Tryavna, Türi, Zvolen

Partner towns not present:

Bellagio, Preveza, Sigulda, (Siret).

The president of Douzelage, Mrs. Annigje Kruytbosch, thanks Rovinj/Rovigno for organizing the General Meeting (GM) in this beautiful Douzelage town.

The mayor of Rovinj/Rovigno, Mr. Marko Paliaga, welcomes everyone in the beautiful town of Rovinj/Rovigno and expresses his hopes that everyone present will enjoy the hospitality of his town. He also wishes for a good GM with good results.

Mr. Cesary Salamonczyk commemorates Jean Claude Guerry who sadly died in 2023. He quotes the Polish poet and priest Jan Twardowski: "Let us hurry to love people, they depart so quickly, leaving only their shoes and silence on the phone".

Jean Claude was an important part of Douzelage spirit. Jean Claude has been the translator of French to English and English to French at each GM, together with his wife, Fay. Let us hurry to love people, goodbye Jean Claude.

Mr. Shane Smyth commemorates Marc Geagan, the musician who was present at the GM in Siret and several festivals organized by Douzelage. He understood what Douzelage was about and what we are trying to establish. He was one of the initiators of the Douzelage Festival of Europe organized in Bundoran last year. He loved bringing the European vibe into Bundoran, we will dearly miss him.

1. Opening of General Meeting

The president of the Douzelage, Mrs. Annigje Kruytbosch, opens the GM and welcomes all delegations on behalf of herself and the vice presidents, Mette Grith Sørensen, Miha Ješe and Tibi Rotaru.

2. Approval of the Agros GM minutes

The minutes of the 2022 GM in Škofja Loka are unanimously approved.

3. Approval of the accounts 2021 (January 2022 - December 2022)

Mr. Harry Crombag presents the accounts of Douzelage for the year 2022 verbally. There are some difficulties with the slides. Mrs. Veronica Marešová (Sušice) and Mr. Thorsten Wohleser (Judenburg) have served as auditors for the 2022 accounts. Mrs. Marešová unfortunately could not be present, therefore Mr. Tine Radinja (Škofja Loka) stepped in as auditor. Mr. Wohleser and Mr. Radinja propose to grant Mr. Crombag full discharge. The GM unanimously approves the accounts and grants full discharge. The presidents thanks Mr. Radinja for his willingness to step in for Mrs. Marešová.

Mr. Torsten Wohleser (Judenburg) and Mr. Evelyn Koev (Tryavna) will serve as auditors for the 2023 accounts.

4. Annual Douzelage membership

The presidency proposes to keep the annual fee for 2023 at € 350. The GM unanimously agrees. The invoices will be sent shortly after the GM.

5. Announcement of Zvolen

Mrs. Zuzana Laszlova announces that the municipality of Zvolen will step out of the Douzelage network. She thanks the Douzelage community, or her "family", for the friendship and hospitality. She hopes another Slovakian town will step in soon.

The president expresses her sadness about this departure. She refers to the beautiful GM in 2012, organized by Zvolen, the Young Musicians concerts, also held in Zvolen and the participation in the project Free Press under Pressure in Meerssen coming November.

Mr. Cesary Salamonczyk (Chojna) points out that it is wise to recognize problems in member towns and try to avoid the point of them leaving. In some towns Douzelage may not be as visible as we would like.

Mr. Jean-Marc Julienne (Granville) agrees and suggests that all documents concerning the GM will always be sent to all mayors.

Mr. István Mátrai (Köszeg) points to the initiatives to make Douzelage literally visible: the sculpture in Marsaskala, Douzelage flower parc in Köszeg etc.

Mr. Mike Balfour (Sherborne) tells about the initiative to ask teachers to design posters for Douzelage.

The president agrees with this idea, but points to the necessity to involve as many people in your towns in Douzelage by making them participate in exchanges and projects. We need to 'spread the word' and let as many people as possible be part of Douzelage.

It is hard to foresee a towns political climate change, or alter it when a decision by the local townhall has been made.

6. New Codicil of Charter of Douzelage Partner Towns

There is a need for a new Codicil because towns have stepped out of Douzelage and others have stepped in. The presidency proposes to leave this for a future presidency. As Zvolen leaves Douzelage and another town has to be found in Slovakia, it is best to wait for this procedure to be completed, before a new codicil is signed.

The GM unanimously agrees.

7. Extra amendments to the constitution: the voting system (Constitution Douzelage, 4. Organisation, point c.)

During the 2022 GM the decision was made to draw up some alternatives for the voting system. The main question was whether a town has two votes or only one. Mr. Wohleser (Judenburg) and Mr. Kerscher (Bad Kötzting) have drawn up three alternative systems:

1. Each delegation may cast one vote in the GM, one vote in the EM and one vote in the YM.
2. Each member town may delegate two persons in the GM, one person in the EM and two persons in the YM. Each delegate may cast one vote in the respective meetings. If only one person is delegated per town, then that town has only one vote.
3. Each member town may delegate two persons in the GM, one person in the EM and two persons in the YM. If only one delegate from a member town is present in the GM or YM, that vote counts double.

The delegations of Altea, Asikkala, Bad Kötzting, Bundoran, Chojna, Granville, Houffalize, Meerssen, Oxelösund, Rovinj/Rovigno, Rokiškis, Sherborne, Škofja Loka, Sesimbra, Türi and Zvolen voted in favor of option 1. This is a majority and the constitution will be amended accordingly.

8. (Bus) project Road to Ukraine

Vice president Mette Grith Sørensen (Holstebro) describes the origin of the project "Road to Ukraine". In January 2023 the presidency has gathered in Siret and joined a humanitarian convoy to the Ukrainian city Kamjanets Podilsky. The regional governor invited the delegation and informed them about the effects of the war with Russia in general and on their town. The town was filled with Ukrainians from the warzone that are internally displaced to among others the city of Kamjanets Podilsky. There is an overall shortage in supply. All products that were brought by the convoy were distributed. The people involved in the distribution of goods and the social support lacked means of transport.

Once at home Douzelage Holstebro started a collection for a small bus. This initiative was also published on the Douzelage Europe website. Right now, there is about € 4.200 on the account, but we need about € 10.000. Mrs. Sørensen asks everybody if they can contribute.

She quotes a Finnish former minister of foreign affairs, Elina Valtonen:

"Aiding Ukraine is not charity. It's standing up for the European way of life, in this case, Western values and of course, it's the [country's] sovereignty, territorial integrity, and those are the values that we share. What would happen if we let go of Ukraine or stopped helping them? Perhaps there wouldn't be Ukraine, but there certainly would be a very empowered Russia. And I don't think anybody benefits from that, especially not neighboring countries".

Donations can be transferred to the Douzelage Europe account, indicating 'Road to Ukraine'.

IBAN: NL02 RABO 0310 4918 78

BIC: RABONL2U

The presidency will install two carton boxes for the GM and the EM where people can contribute. Several member towns announced a donation to this project. The money is for a 8+ minibus. Possibly this is best bought in Germany, as was the bus for Siret (2015).

The question arose if Douzelage Europe can contribute. This is difficult, as this is the money of the member towns. It should have been on the agenda.

9. (Social) Media and PR

The president urges all member town to send information and pictures in case of exchanges, projects and so on to the secretariat (secretariat.presidency@douzelagemeeerssen.nl), so it can be published on the Douzelage Europe website.

The contact page of the Douzelage Europe website may not be up to date. Please visit and check. Mutations can be sent to the above email address.

An Instagram page is registered and Mr. Shane Smyth (Bundoran), Mr. Julian Preidl (Bad Kötzing), Mr. Ovidiu Oniciuc (Siret) and the president are posting messages. Everyone is welcome to join.

As for the Facebook page, there are still some member towns without an editor. These towns are stimulated to join.

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

Bad Kötzing

- "Stay Fit Without Borders" - a joint project between Bad Kötzing and Sušice (June 2021 – May 2022). For one year, activities for children aged 3-10 and their families were offered in Bad Kötzing and Sušice. The movement and sporting activities of children have suffered greatly as a result of the corona pandemic. The project was joined by the University of Deggendorf.
- Oberpfalz trifft Böhmen – Horni Falc se setkává s Čechami. Joint Concerts Chamber Choir Bad Kötzing und Choir Svatobor Sušice. Two concerts in May and June 2023 in both towns.

- Bad Kötzting participated as a partner in the „Juniors for Seniors, Active Aging“ project of Skofja Loka. 5th Event Bad Kötzting, 21. - 23. April 2022. The event focused on the forms of housing and ways of life for the young and the old as well as the possibilities of living together in the European cities.

Bundoran

- From 14-10-2022 to 16-10-2022 Bundoran organized the Douzelage Festival of Europe, a gathering of musicians. Musicians from Asikkala, Kőszeg, Meerssen, Sherborne, Škofja Loka and Sušice joined Irish musicians and played their music in several outlets. A video on this project is shown in the GM.
- St. Patricks Day was celebrated in Bundoran on March 17th 2023. Delegations from Altea, Meerssen and Sesimbra joined in the celebrations.

Chojna

- From apprenticeships to work
Programme: Erasmus+ VET
Coordinator: ZSP Chojna
Partners: Kőszeg, Marsaskala, Siret
This project started in 2004. Students from technical universities, hotel management etc. are sent directly to companies to gain working experience. Students are always very happy, they learn a lot more than only working experience. Many thanks to Mr. István Mátrai (Kőszeg), Mr. Tiberiu Rotaru (Siret) and Mr. Mario Calleja (Marsaskala) for making this possible.
- European Apprenticeships
Programme: Erasmus+ VET
Coordinator: ZSP Chojna
Partners: Kőszeg, Marsaskala
- Career counselling, practical approach
Programme: Erasmus+ School Education
Coordinator: ZSP Chojna
Partners: Hungary , Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Turkiye
Under this projects materials are created for career counselling of students, teachers and parents.

Mr. Cezary Salamonczyk (Chojna) encourages all towns to apply for projects under the Erasmus+ program. It is easier for 'old' EU-countries to participate because of less competition. Mr. Salamonczyk is willing to advise on writing the applications.

Granville

- In 2022 Granville received the third level of the “Prix de l'Europe”, the plaque of honor, from the Council of Europe. The Prix de l'Europe aims to reward municipalities that are particularly active in promoting the European ideal and thus crown the efforts made by local authorities in terms of twinning, European events, visits and exchanges in particular.
- In March 2023 Granville participated in the Global Greening for St. Patrick's Day.
- In June 2023 hikers from Sherborne and Meerssen visited Granville to do some hikes through Normandy.
- Granville plans to invite one town per year to stay in Granville on May 9th, the Day of Europe. Invitees will stay over with the members of the Douzelage Committee.
- Granville holds a monthly video-meeting with a partner town. These sessions are called “Apéro Time”. During these sessions the participants will toast with a drink, inspired by the invited town. This way Granville gets an insight in the culture and customs of the different partner towns. The sessions are partly meant to help the people of Granville in becoming more fluent in English.
Asikkala, Judenburg, Bellagio, Siret, Meerssen, Marsaskala and Holstebro have already joined them at Apéro Time.

Judenburg

- The project "Juniors for Seniors, Active Ageing", the conference that was organized in Judenburg, received a star that was awarded by the president of Austria.
- Next year Judenburg will celebrate their 800th birthday. There will be an exhibition all over town of artistic photographs. Member towns are invited to participate with their artistic photos. Information will be sent to all member towns.

Köszeg

Mr. István Mátrai (Köszeg) thanks Mr. Cezary Salamonczyk (Chojna) for writing all the successful project proposals over all these years.

- Köszeg applies for a project under the Erasmus+ program on pre-Christian myths and stories from the participating towns. Students from school will learn more about their history and culture. Schools and associations will be involved.

Marsaskala

Mr. Mario Calleja (Marsakala) also thanks Mr. Cezary Salamonczyk (Chojna) for writing all the successful project proposals over all these years.

- Marsakala will receive students from Bad Kötzing under Erasmus+ in October 2023.

Meerssen

- Via Douzelage: In May 2023 the team of Via Douzelage visited Holstebro. They were warmly welcomed and have seen many landmarks in the city. The cycling routes were well prepared. Mr. Herman Langenberg shows slides of the visit. Next stop will be Sherborne around the GM in 2024.
- Free Press under Pressure: This is a project funded by the EU program "Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values" (CERV). Young adults (18 - 30 years) will discuss the news that is spread by the press, social media and other media in order to develop a toolkit that helps by discerning factual news from fake news. The project will be organized from November 5th to 8th. Please send participating young adults to the project, it is important that we have enough EU participants from outside The Netherlands.
- In January 2023 a Douzelage tree was planted in the Forest of Memories in Meerssen.
- Benelux Meeting: With Houffalize and Niederaanven Meerssen organizes a meeting of these towns to discuss Douzelage topics and possible projects. The next meeting will be in 2024 in Niederaanven.
- Marsna Jamborette: July 29th to August 9th 2024 Meerssen will organize the Marsna Jamborette, an international meeting of scouting groups. The scouting groups of member towns are cordially invited to join.
- 2024 Douzelage Meerssen will organize Zoom meetings with member towns on specific topics and with professionals participating.
- 2024/2025 Meerssen will try and receive an orchestra of Granville in Meerssen.
- September 2027: Chess tournament in Meerssen. Member towns are invited to participate.

Niederaanven

- Niederaanven will develop a Douzelage app for the smartphone with all possible information on our organization. The app will be developed by Niederaanven but will be open for use by all member towns. The president expresses her gratitude for this.

Škofja Loka

- In 2023 all reports concerning "Juniors for Seniors, Active Ageing" were finalized. Mr. Miha Ješe thanks everyone involved.

Sušice

- June 19th – 24th 2024 Sušice will organize the Young Musicians festival. It is a festival, not a competition. A maximum of ten towns can register a musician around aged 14 to 18 years, The deadline for registration is February 2024. Transport is not paid for. The registration form will be sent by email.

Türi

- Türi has organized a teachers exchange with Škofja Loka. Teachers from Türi went to Škofja Loka and joined classes there. Four teachers from Škofja Loka went to Türi to give lessons there. Now Türi is preparing a student exchange.

11. Presentations on the cultural and historical heritage of our towns

Rovinj/Rovigno

The theme of our GM is “Preserving our Cultural and Historical Heritage”. All members towns have sent presentations, some were of great quality. We like to zoom in on the immaterial heritage, traditions and how they are passed on to the next generations. Are there any projects in schools? All presentations will be combined in a booklet that will be sent to all member towns.

- In a powerpoint presentation Mrs. Maria Črnac-Rocco shows how Rovinj/Rovigno cherishes their traditional boat, the “Batana”, the “Bitinada”, a traditional way of singing fisherman songs, traditional games, historic and archeological heritage. Several musea, schools and the Open University are active in passing the heritage to the next generation.

Škofja Loka

- Mr. Miha Ješe shows with a powerpoint presentation how an old historical bridge over the river Sora has been washed away by a storm in August 3-4 2023. The only part that remained was the chapel of St. Nepomuk. The bridge will be restored.

Köszeg

- Mr. István Mátrai uses a powerpoint presentation to explain the local, regional and national cultural and historical values of Köszeg. Among others there is the 1740 Book of Wineshoots, a book with drawings of the wineshoots since the 18th century, a celebration of the successful Siege against the Turks in 1532, many traditions from the many minorities, specific animals and flowers and many historical buildings.

12. Program for further meetings

2024	Sherborne
2025	Preveza
2026	Marsaskala
2027	Vacant

The president thanks Rovinj/Rovigno for a wonderful stay in this beautiful town.

She also thanks Sherborne for helping Douzelage out with a GM in 2024. Because the UK stepped out of the EU there is no funding available, which makes it more difficult to finance. It demands a lot of ‘creativity’ to get the necessary funds.

- Niederanven would like to organize the 2027 GM!
- The 2025 GM in Preveza stands although communication is scarce. The presidency will contact Preveza on this matter. If anything changes the members will be the first to know.
- The 2026 GM in Marsaskala will be held from September 3rd to 6th.
- The GM was originally held in spring, some towns have shifted it to autumn.
Mr. Cesary Salamonczyk points out that it is complicated and costly to organize a GM and the host town should have as much room as possible. Towns should feel free to shift to Autumn when necessary. Of course the GM needs to know the exact dates as early as possible. The GM unanimously agrees.

13. **Presentations of the Sherborne 2024 GM and setting the dates**

Mr. Mike Balfour presents the plans for the 2024 GM with a powerpoint presentation.

- The GM will be held from April 11th to 14th 2024.
- The theme is "Wellbeing through Nature and Music".
- Involvement in nature brings mental wellbeing. Young people have environmental concerns, they start getting involved in local initiatives to improve the environment.
- Making music together has also wellbeing benefits. We have a teacher Mrs. Rachel Milestone who is an expert on this. We hope there are musicians among your delegates, we hope to be able to play together.
- 5 delegates – 2 for the GM, 1 for the EM and 2 for the YM (18+). Youth should be 18+ due to the strict safeguarding laws in the UK. Their passports information should be sent in advance. (No ID!)
- Accommodation – Schools, Hotels and Home Stays (details to follow)
- Transport – delegates arriving at Bristol airport will be met. If you arrive at a London airport you can travel to Sherborne by train from London Waterloo and you will be met at Sherborne station.
- Non-delegates welcome – costs to be confirmed.
- Young people are asked to prepare a presentation/lead a discussion to show what is happening in their town to establish wellbeing.
- Visits to nature reserves, conservation projects and peaceful places in Sherborne and Dorset's area of outstanding natural beauty.
- Projects: Please bring your ideas for activities with Sherborne which can be achieved without EU funding.
- Music: young musicians to bring a musical instrument, where possible, to form an ad hoc orchestra. If the instruments is too large to move, please contact Sherborne, perhaps there is one available in Sherborne.
- There will be more information later – meanwhile if you have questions please contact Mike, Moira or Lin while in Rovinj or our secretary Mary: marydmc38@gmail.com
- A Newsletter will be sent with more detailed information.
- We hope you will all enjoy our town and our General Meeting – please do come and meet old, and make new friends and connections!

14. **New Board in 2024**

In Sherborne a new president and three vice-presidents will be elected. The secretary, treasurer and minutes maker will be appointed by the new presidency.

- The presidency would like to invite all to consider being a candidate. In order to shed some light on what the task of a (vice) president is all about, a workshop will be organized by the presidency for those who are interested, after the GM is officially closed (see point 15).

- The applications should be sent to the Returning Officer, Mr. Joe McNulty (Bundoran) who has played this role since 1991!
- The applications should be sent at the latest 4 weeks in advance before the next GM and to the email address: joemcnulty90@gmail.com.
- Joe will inform the presidency on the candidates. The secretariat will then send an email to all towns informing them on the candidates.

15. **Workshop Presidency**

The presidency would like to see many candidates during the elections in 2024 (Sherborne). Therefore the presidency will organize a workshop on "What does it mean to be a (vice)president and can I do it?". The workshop will be held directly after the closing of this GM. We would like to see many of you attending it, it is however not obligatory.

16. **Report on the 2023 Educational Meeting**

Mrs. Riikka Penttilä (Asikkala), chair of the Educational Meeting, reports on the Educational Meeting 2023.

Participants: 32 (number of countries 21)

Native history and traditions in education:

The EM meeting started off with a presentation of a project in Rovinj-Rovigno (Istria, Croatia) aiming at preserving local heritage and traditional culture. The presentation was given by Mr. Vladimir Torbica, the Head of Department for Culture and Local Heritage of the Region of Istria.

The main idea of the Istrian project is to highlight the role of the children and young people and let them choose what to explore and what themes might interest them in the context of preserving local heritage values. "If you want to preserve local heritage values, you will need to institutionalize them", Mr. Torbica pointed out in his speech.

In 2017, the curriculum introduced a local heritage education program for preschoolers, primary and secondary school pupils. As a result, a handbook for teachers was compiled. The presentation gave an example of a locally created project (2023-2024), which is called Heritage Education program and uses project-based learning methods. The teachers and pupils choose together a theme for the whole year, study the theme, and finally present the results to the community. Mr. Torbica wanted to highlight the crucial role of the pupils as well as that of the teachers in choosing the theme to make the participants more willing and motivated to take part in the project. The community can see the results of the project in a local heritage festival where the audience is mostly peers and teachers, but increasingly also tourists. According to Mr. Torbica, the project is an excellent example of project-based learning, which improves critical reflection skills. There is also a website available to learn more about the project: <https://www.za-nas.hr>

The EM had a lively and enthusiastic conversation after the presentation. There was discussion, for instance, whether there is a link between educating cultural heritage and reducing vandalism. Apparently, there is no research yet, and the EM found it an interesting possibility. In addition, we talked about the role of cultural identity when children and youngsters represent the first generation in the area, and whose families have roots elsewhere. The question was how to integrate the new generations locally and make them value the local cultural heritage. Finally, we discussed that especially in Istria, as in many similar areas near borders in Europe, bilingualism and multiculturalism are core values, which are necessary to be transferred to younger generations.

The first presentation was followed by several interesting talks about good practices in various member towns. The presentations offered plenty of useful ideas for creating new practices, but we also learnt about the member towns and their cultural and historical heritage. Rovinj-Rovigno started with their presentation of numerous projects, one of which was created in a local vocational school, Eugen Kumičić. After the general presentation, the EM had the possibility to visit this school and to listen to a presentation by local

students. We were told about their project called “Bake it away”. For instance, the students are learning to 3D print the mold and create cookies with the city symbols. The EM group was happy to see a concrete example of a good practice.

This presentation was followed by various inspiring presentations by member towns. The presentations were shared using Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oVzBEzHV9Mc-YjHQzGzBmQjPap1KhUA?usp=sharing>

As a conclusion, it can be stated that the presentations gave numerous examples showcasing the long and rich history of our Douzelage member towns. However, the EM discussed whether all the rich cultural heritage traditions are included in the curriculum in each country, and whether the co-operation between different sectors is possible in practice. All in all, we were able to share some good practices that could be implemented within Douzelage communities and schools, with the help of the examples of good practices.

The second working day included hands-on workshops where we learned about local cultural heritage. In addition, we listened to more presentations by member town delegates. Finally, we also discussed Erasmus+ funding possibilities within our education meeting group. The aim was to remind that we should make the most of our existing network of contacts to promote creating new projects involving young pupils and students in the member towns. Contact information was exchanged and new ideas suggested and shared using Padlet. <https://padlet.com/riikkapen/douzelage-em-meeting-september-2023-somueu91jdb1> We finished the day by handing out the diplomas.

17. **Report on the 2023 Youth Meeting**

Mr. Zino Vreysen (Altea), president of the Youth Board, reports on the Youth Meeting 2023.

“I am pleased to provide a comprehensive overview of the Douzelage General Meeting that took place in Rovinj/Rovigno this September, where youth members engaged in insightful discussions on the preservation of cultural heritage. The gathering not only deepened our understanding of the rich heritage of Rovinj/Rovigno, but also fostered meaningful exchanges on the importance of balancing tradition with adaptability in the modern world.

Throughout the meeting, a series of workshops were conducted, allowing us to delve into the intricacies of cultural preservation. Rovinj/Rovigno, with its Venetian-influenced architecture and vibrant traditions, served as an ideal backdrop for our discussions. We explored various aspects of the town's cultural heritage, from its historical landmarks to its delectable cuisine, gaining valuable insights into the challenges and successes of preserving such a rich legacy.

One of the key takeaways from our deliberations is the consensus that cultural heritage, while deserving of preservation, should not be bound by rigid adherence to the past. We acknowledge the importance of allowing traditions to evolve, recognizing that this adaptation is vital for their continued relevance in the modern world. By embracing change, these traditions can avoid becoming perceived as outdated or irrelevant. We believe that this approach not only ensures the vitality of cultural practices but also facilitates their acceptance and appreciation by younger generations.

As youth members, we advocate for a balanced perspective that cherishes the essence of cultural heritage while embracing the dynamism necessary for its survival. This sentiment aligns with the idea that traditions should be a living, breathing part of society, capable of resonating with people of all ages.

In conclusion, the Douzelage General Meeting in Rovinj/Rovigno was a resounding success, fostering a deeper understanding of cultural heritage preservation. Our discussions emphasized the importance of striking a balance between tradition and adaptation, ensuring that cultural practices remain relevant and cherished by present and future generations. We look forward to applying these insights in our respective communities, contributing to the dynamic preservation of cultural heritage across Europe”.

Zino Vreysen also shows the new website of Douzelage Youth: <https://youth.douzelage.eu>

18. **Any other business**

- Mr. Mike Balfour (Sherborne) urges the presidency to proceed with finding a new Slovakian town. A shortlist of towns should be drawn up.
The presidency has had a tip for a possible candidate. The presidency will ask Mrs. Zuzana Laszlova (Zvolen) for help in this matter.
- Mr. István Mátrai (Köszeg) points out that Zvolen still has the option to form an NGO for Douzelage.
- He also asks for a list with attending delegates with pictures from all towns present at the next GM, so everyone can know who is who.
- Mrs. Mette Grith Sørensen (Holstebro) reminds everyone on the box for the "Road to Ukraine".

19. **Closing the General Meeting 2023**

The president closes the General Meeting 2023 and praises Rovinj/Rovigno for their very well organized GM, the interesting program and the very relevant topic. She also thanks all delegations for their constructive attitude on all issues.