

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE ————— ————— CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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## PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



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### COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, REGIONAL PLANNING AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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PROPOSALS FOR THE 1987  
EUROPE PRIZE AND FLAGS OF HONOUR

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Secretariat memorandum  
prepared by the Office of the Clerk

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I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. In order to facilitate the reading and consideration of applications for Flags of Honour, the committee's Secretariat has adopted since 1986 a new and even more condensed method entailing the preparation of a single document incorporating a table of the most important information submitted by the municipalities. It is hoped that members will, as a result, find it easier to compare applications. The document will be progressively supplemented and updated.
2. The original files, often running into several hundred pages, are available in Strasbourg and frequently constitute valuable compendia on the background and development of the applicants' intermunicipal relations and European commitment. It is suggested that members consult the files on the spot, at their convenience.
3. In 1986, over 180 files were received containing additional information. 72 new applications were recorded, 22 of them from the Federal Republic of Germany, thus increasing even more the total number of applications, despite the awarding of 53 flags in 1986.
4. The concern expressed in early 1985 about the increasing backlog of unsatisfied applications has thus proved justified, despite the substantial increase in the number of flags awarded in 1986. Particularly as regards the Prize, which many municipalities would amply deserve, the problem is becoming steadily more difficult : municipalities often stand no chance of winning it for geographical and national quota reasons.

Consequently a revision of the Regulations of the Europe Prize seems indispensable and it is urgent that revised rules apply as from 1988.

## II. 1987 EUROPE PRIZE

5. Everyone knows that the list of potential candidates for the Europe Prize grows longer each year by as many municipalities as there are Flags of Honour awarded. Many municipalities fully satisfy the requirements for the award of the Prize but, since merit and geographical distribution have to be taken equally into account, some municipalities in member states where the Prize has recently been awarded are automatically ruled out.

6. From among the 339 applications listed in document AS/Loc (38) 27, the Secretariat has selected 4 municipalities which seem to have an exceptionally high standard :

- 1) Rambouillet (France)
- 2) Mühlheim/Ruhr (FRG)
- 3) Lörrach (FRG)
- 4) Berlin-Neukölln (FRG)

7. The application of RAMBOUILLET (France) places special emphasis on the recent twinning which took place in 1986 with Waterloo in Belgium. After seeking a twinning with a French town for ten years, Waterloo found its ideal partner, one willing to engage in dialogue and establish exchanges, in Rambouillet, another imperial town. Since true twinings are above all the work of the ordinary people, many activities have already been initiated in Rambouillet to consolidate the pact. They cover not only sport and school and cultural exchanges but also more official events. In all 70 associations are already involved in exchanges with Waterloo.

8. The "historic symbolism" of the twinning with Waterloo must not, however, be allowed to mask the continuity of Rambouillet's long-established European activities with its twin towns of Great Yarmouth (GB), the 30th twinning anniversary has just been celebrated in May 1986, and Kirchheim-unter-Teck (FRG) since 1967. These twinings have become an integral part of Rambouillet life and involve all social groups and age groups : old people's clubs, the physically disabled and schoolchildren, to name but a few. Exhibitions and concerts bring the three twin towns together from time to time, and a quarterly municipal newsletter ensures continuous liaison between them. The Twinning Association publishes a liaison bulletin Rambouillet/Kirchheim-unter-Teck. Reciprocal invitations are issued to all popular festivals, and for nine years now joint holidays have annually brought together some 30 to 50 people of all ages from Kirchheim and Rambouillet.

A detailed press file backs up this outstanding application.

9. MULHEIM AN DER RUHR, a German town already short-listed in 1985, has made outstanding efforts in the field of European activities.

Even in the early stages of Mülheim's twinning activities (official twinning arrangements were signed with Darlington (United Kingdom) in 1953, Tours (France) in 1962, Berlin-Tiergarten in 1965 and Kuusankovski (Finland) in 1965, organisational and financial conditions were created by the town for an annual, international exchange of young people between paired towns. Thus, in addition to the annual subsidies granted by the town (between 1980 and 1986 the municipal budget set aside an average of 50.000 DM annually to foster twinning activities, encouraging especially exchanges between schoolchildren and sports associations), a series of language courses, as well as courses concerned with the preparation of visits to the twinned towns, have been organised by the Adult Evening College.

In an effort to look after the interests of the approximately 12,400 foreign residents in Mülheim, the town council formed the "Foreign Inhabitants Advisory Committee", to which representatives of the foreign residents belong.

A further contribution to promote the European idea, in particular to confront young people with questions of European solidarity, was made in 1981 with an essay contest on "What a European Parliament Member has to do". A total of 81 entries came from schoolchildren aged between 13 and 15 years in Darlington, Tours and Mülheim.

The town council has submitted a particularly elaborated documentation entitled "Städte schliessen Freundschaft" (Towns seal friendship), which reflects lively partnership to propagate the European spirit.

Mülheim was awarded the Flag of Honour in 1977. When reading its periodical and illustrated reports, one can appreciate the commitment of the whole population towards European twinings.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

10. LÖRRACH, Baden Württemberg (Federal Republic of Germany), also deserves to be included amongst the proposals for the Europe Prize 1987. In fact, this proposal aims at awarding two Prizes, to Lörrach and to Sens (France), its twin-town, which was proposed several times as candidate for the Europe Prize. Since 1966 these two towns have an exemplary partnership. According to the Parisian authorities, this twinning is considered one of the best in France. The number of exchanges amounts to approximately 40 twinning encounters as an average per year and in 1984, 44 manifestations were organised. The 20th twinning anniversary between Sens and Lörrach was celebrated in 1986. The twinning is due largely to the initiatives taken by former servicemen, but from the relationship between the two towns it becomes apparent that practically the whole population, through a multitude of associations, participates in the European action. Welcoming families (up to 500 people) is standing practice in both towns. In 1983 Lörrach contributed to the organisation of the Landesgartenschau of Baden Württemberg, which was visited by over 1 million people from Switzerland, France and the Federal Republic of Germany. The teaching of foreign languages takes an important place in the popular university, where French, English and Italian teachers are employed.

As well as a very active twinning committee, the towns of Sens and Lörrach have also created a French-German association. Moreover, the town of Sens was twinned with the Italian town of Senigallia in 1980. Little by little Lörrach joined in these activities and in 1986 was also twinned with Senigallia.

Situated on the Swiss border the town of Lörrach has also been very active in setting up a whole network of transfrontier co-operation links with Switzerland, notably in the economic, social, first aid and cultural fields.

To conclude it should be noted that the town of Lörrach has given considerable support to exchanges and other European activities: 53,000 DM in 1985 and 221.000 DM in 1986 (anniversary year).

CONFIDENTIAL

- 6 -

11. BERLIN-NEUKÖLLN (district : about 300,000 inhabitants)

This candidature was proposed in 1986 for 1987, year of the 750th anniversary of the town of Berlin. However, these anniversary celebrations could provide a situation where a possible award of the Prize might take on a significance hardly compatible with its vocation as an award for exceptional merit in the propagation of the European idea.

However, Berlin-Neukölln's merit in the field of European activities is unquestionable. Twinned since 1955 with the towns of Boulogne-Billancourt (F), Anderlecht (B), Zaandam (Netherlands) and Hammersmith (GB), these towns and their citizens have met regularly and in each of the different twin-towns in turn, frequently gathering more than a thousand people.

Other twinnings have since taken place with Marino (Italy) and Bat-Yam (Israel). Berlin-Neukölln has also a friendly relationship with the towns of Köln, Leonberg and Wetzlar in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Flag of Honour was awarded to Neukölln in June 1967 by the Chairman of the Committee on Local Authorities, Mr Radius.

According to reports submitted as of 1986 Neukölln has maintained its European relations at a high level. For example numerous exchanges between youth groups, secondary classes took place, notably with Boulogne-Billancourt. Exchange programmes also took place with Carcassonne and Lyon (France), Nyksund (Norway) and Figueras (Spain). Friendly relations have even been established with a Czech municipality (Usti nad Orlici). Each of the twin-towns has constituted a secretariat for twinnings to organise exchanges, notably of youth groups. The secretaries responsible meet regularly in order to coordinate the various activities over a year.

The Europe Day offers the opportunity through public events and by specific actions in schools to foster the propagation of the European idea.

III. THE 1987 FLAGS OF HONOUR

The excellent publicity constituted by the Flags of Honour of the Council of Europe has no longer to be proved since each year the record for new applications is overtaken. 72 new municipalities have expressed their interest for this European distinction and the total of applications for the Flag of Honour amounts to 184. Before proceeding to a revision of the Regulations of the Europe Prize and Flags of Honour, which seems every year more necessary, the Secretariat recommends, in agreement with the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Europe Prize, to award, as last year, about fifty Flags of Honour.

AUSTRIA

Out of the two applications presented, one could be supported this year :

Ringelsdorf-Niederabsdorf (Lower-Austria)

BELGIUM

Out of the six applications, 2 might be awarded the Flag :

De Pinte/ arr. Gent (Flemish municipality)  
Visé (province of Liège)

FRANCE

Out of the 32 applications, 11 of which are new, it is proposed to award 9 flags :

Beuvry (Pas-de-Calais)  
Château-Gontier (Mayenne)  
Clamart (Hauts-de-Seine)  
Grand-Quevilly (Seine-Maritime)  
Jarnac (Charente)  
Montmélian (Savoie)  
Sainte-Foy-Les-Lyon (Rhône)  
Saint-Peray (Ardèche)  
Saumur (Maine-et-Loire)

[possibly : Baccarat (Meurthe-et-Moselle)  
or Rouffach (Haut-Rhin)]

CONFIDENTIAL

- 8 -

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Once again the greatest number of applications came from the Federal Republic of Germany. Out of 93 candidates 19 are new applicants. It is suggested to award the flag of honour to :

Alheim (6445) - Hesse  
Bad Dürkheim (6702) - Rheinland-Pfalz  
Burghausen a.d. Salzach (8263) - Bavaria  
Elze (3210) - Niedersachsen  
Giengen (7928) - Baden-Württemberg  
Hainburg (6452) - Hesse  
Heppenheim (6148) - Hesse  
Herzebrock (4836) - Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Idar-Oberstein (6580) - Rheinland-Pfalz  
Iserlohn (5860) - Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Mühlheim (6052) - Hesse  
Ostrach (7965) - Baden-Württemberg  
Overath (5063) - Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Pohlheim (6301) - Hesse  
Schorndorf (7060) - Baden-Württemberg  
Schotten (6479) - Hesse  
Sindelfingen (7032) - Baden-Württemberg  
Unna Kreis (4750) - Nordrhein-Westfalen  
Wörth am Rhein (6729) - Rheinland-Pfalz

[possibly also to : Hechingen (Baden-Württemberg)  
or Königstein (Hesse)  
or Zwingenberg-Bergstrasse]

ITALY

This year Italian municipalities showed a great interest for this award since we registered 19 applications out of which 17 are new ones. It is suggested to give satisfaction to 5 of them :

- Bucine (Prov. d'Arezzo)
- Collegno (Prov. Torino)
- Priverno (Prov. Latina)
- Sarsina (Prov. d'urbino)
- Tortona (Prov. d'Alessandria)

NETHERLANDS

9 applications have been submitted, out of which 4 new ones. It is suggested to award the Flag to the following municipalities :

- Dinxperlo
- Oud en Nieuw Gastel
- Wessem



CONFIDENTIAL

- 9 -

PORTUGAL

3 applications were received. One should be satisfied :

- Figueira da Foz

SPAIN

Only one application has been received and should be satisfied:

- Cuenca

SWITZERLAND

Only one application :

- Aigle

UNITED-KINGDOM

15 applicants, 9 of them are new ones. It is suggested that 5 flags be awarded :

- Ashford B.C. (Kent)
- Bristol (Avon)
- Exeter (Devon)
- Glamorgan B.C. (South Wales)
- Torbay B.C. (Devon).

