



otto meets friends from around the world

Twinning Congress

24th to 27th October 2011

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I. Introduction

On 1st March 2010, the city council of the state capital Magdeburg decided to hold a twinning congress with all of Magdeburg's twin cities: Sarajevo, Brunswick, Nashville, Zaporizhia, Radom, Harbin and Le Havre. This congress took place from 24th to 27th October 2011 in the state capital Magdeburg.

The main objective of the congress was the sustainable development of twinning cooperation between the state capital Magdeburg and its twin cities in terms of quantity and quality.



Fig. 1: In front of hemisphere demonstration of Otto von Guericke from left: Gabriele Hübner (Deputy Mayor of Brunswick), Yvette Sebelist (Attorney at Law from Nashville), Anne Kwiecień (Vice-president of Radom), Andrzej Kosztowniak (President of Radom), Dr Lutz Trümper (Lord Mayor of Magdeburg), Beate Wübberhorst (Chairwoman of Magdeburg city council), Brigitte Dufour (Deputy Mayor of Le Havre), Andriy Ivanov (Deputy Mayor of Zaporizhia) and Mulin Yu (Director of Harbin Foreign Affairs in Harbin)

New joint projects between municipal administration, associations and other interested sides in the state capital Magdeburg and its twin cities shall facilitate partnership in all areas.

Beside strengthening the process of integration within the European Union (EU) at community level including potential applicants for EU membership it's of major importance to deepen the cooperation with partners outside the EU in the fields of culture, social matters and economy.

From 24th to 27th October 2011, 34 delegates from six twin cities and diplomatic representatives as well as more than 90 local participants from

politics, administration, economy, culture, sport and other fields of Magdeburg's civil society came together in the state capital Magdeburg. In the plenary session and working groups they discussed general opportunities und specified projects for the development of partnership in the fields of "Youth, international youth work, youth camps", "Cultural exchange programmes, sport events, theatre and music projects" and "Urban planning, energy-efficient city, housing rehabilitation, sustainable urban development, demographics, co-wide ownership". These topics had been worked out as the key items of the twinning congress at a preliminary workshop in October 2010.

Special thanks go to the State Chancellery of Saxony-Anhalt, the Magdeburger Verkehrsbetriebe, the Staedtische Werke and the municipal savings bank of Magdeburg which made the congress so successful with their support. Also important to highlight is the active participation of associations such as e.g. the German-Ukrainian Association Saxony-Anhalt e. V., the German-French Society e. V., the German-Polish Society Saxony-Anhalt e. V. and the German-Chinese Society Saxony-Anhalt e. V. Many thanks also to all those who made their contribution to smooth course of the congress with regard to content, organisation/equipment and logistics, especially the Hotel Ratswaage Magdeburg as venue of the congress. The political importance of the congress was emphasized by the intensive participation and collaboration of Magdeburg's city councillors

Unfortunately, the delegation from Sarajevo had to cancel its participation at short notice.

The following documentation describes the agenda and main results of the twinning congress 2011 in Magdeburg.

II. Schedule

<p><u>Monday, 24th October 2011</u></p> <p>until 2.00 pm</p> <p>4.00 pm Hotel Ratswaage</p> <p>6.00 pm ArtDepot</p>	<p>Arrival</p> <p>Sight-seeing tour by bus supported by the transport services of Magdeburg</p> <p>Dinner with cultural programme - <i>organized by art association ArtDepot e. V. supported by the municipal savings bank of Magdeburg</i></p>
<p><u>Tuesday, 25th October 2011</u></p> <p>9.00 am Hotel Ratswaage</p> <p>9.30 am</p> <p>10.00 am</p> <p>10.20 am</p> <p>10.40 am</p> <p>11.00 to 11.15 am</p> <p>11.15 am</p> <p>11.30 am</p> <p>11.50 am</p>	<p>Enrolment</p> <p>Welcome and opening of the congress by the Lord Mayor of the state capital Magdeburg Dr Lutz Trümper</p> <p>Input papers on 3 topics: Presenter: Michael Reif</p> <p>1. Youth, international youth work, youth camps</p> <p>Go China Speakers: Wolfgang Stein, Karin Bruhn and Yan Arnold</p> <p>Youth work: locally effective – globally networked Speaker: Harald Tschappe</p> <p>Social commitment in the state capital Magdeburg Speaker: Hans-Werner Brüning</p> <p>Coffee break</p> <p>Globalization and European integration – a challenge for the generation 50+ in citizens' commitment Speaker: Gerd Voßmerbäumer</p> <p>2. Cultural exchange programmes, sport events, theatre and music projects</p> <p>Town twinning from the perspective of the state capital Magdeburg Speaker: Prof Dr Matthias Puhle</p> <p>The Upgrade-Festival – Music known no borders Speakers: Anna Koch and Anke Schmidt</p>

	<p>3. Urban planning, energy-efficient city, housing rehabilitation, sustainable urban development, demographics, co-wide ownership</p>
<p>12.10 pm</p>	<p>Le Havre – international maritime metropolis Speaker: Jean-Pierre Niot</p>
<p>12.30 pm</p>	<p>Urban development in Magdeburg Speaker: Stephan Herrmann</p>
<p>12.50 pm</p>	<p>Establishment of working groups</p>
<p>1.00 pm Hotel Ratswaage</p>	<p>Lunch</p>
<p>3.00 to 6.00 pm</p>	<p>Elaborating individual themes in working groups (drafts and discussion of projects; preparation of prospective project agreements)</p>
<p>einewelt haus</p>	<p>1. Youth, international youth work, youth camps “Ideas, projects, prospects in terms of culture, youth and civil society – opportunity of participation of citizens” Presenter: Michael Marquardt</p>
<p>Hotel Ratswaage</p>	<p>2. Cultural exchange programmes, sport events, theatre and music projects “Nothing but theatre? – cultural exchanges as a key element and cornerstone in town twinning relationships” Presenter: Sören Herbst</p>
<p>Hotel Ratswaage</p>	<p>3. Urban planning, energy-efficient city, housing rehabilitation, sustainable urban development, demographics, co-wide ownership “Urban planning in Magdeburg” Presenter: Olaf Czogalla</p>
<p>6.30 pm Hotel Ratswaage</p>	<p>Dinner (for participants from the twin cities and diplomatic representatives)</p>
<p>8.00 pm Moritzhof</p>	<p>Evening programme – <i>organized by German-French friendship society</i></p>

<p><u>Wednesday, 26th October 2011</u></p> <p>9.00 am <i>Meeting point in front of the Hotel Ratswaage</i></p> <p>1.00 pm Hotel Ratswaage</p> <p>2.30 to 4.30 pm Hotel Ratswaage</p> <p>6.30 pm einewelt haus</p>	<p>Theme-based working visits of institutions/enterprises in the state capital Magdeburg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waste incineration plant (waste management, power generation) - Housing association “Wobau” - Children and youth centre “Next Generation” - Theatre/Opera House Magdeburg - Vocational secondary school “Otto-von-Guericke”: industrial-technical educational establishment with courses of study as vocational school, training college, technical college, upper secondary school and technical upper secondary school - <i>einewelt haus (event centre)</i>: organisation of immigration and the importance of immigrant organisation for a successful integration <p>Lunch</p> <p>Day of the citizens: round table with representatives of the twin cities and the press</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction of each twin city (3 – 5 minutes), presentation possible - then questions by press and citizens <p>Presenter: Michael Reif</p> <p>Reception of citizens</p> <p>Dinner and evening programme – <i>organized by German-Polish friendship society</i></p>
<p><u>Thursday, 27th October 2011</u></p> <p>10.00 am Hotel Ratswaage</p> <p>12.00 am Old City Hall Ratsdiele</p>	<p>Reflection on the congress papers and summary of the outcome of the discussions in the working groups Presenter: Michael Reif</p> <p>Reception by the state capital Magdeburg Final statements by the delegations</p> <p>Final programme – <i>organized by German-Chinese friendship society</i></p> <p>afterwards individual programmes and time at free disposal</p>

III. Opening speech of Lord Mayor (excerpt)



Dear Ambassadors and envoys,
 dear Mayors,
 dear delegations from Le Havre, Radom, Zaporizhia, Nashville,
 Harbin and Brunswick,
 dear participants in Magdeburg Twinning Congress,
 dear guests,

Fig. 2: Dr Lutz Trümper

It is an honour for me to welcome you in the name of the state capital Magdeburg. I am pleased that so many of you could set off, partly on a very long way, to come here and that you arrived safely.

In the following days, together we want to extend our already well-established town twinning relationships and discuss possibilities of cooperation in the future. This is an excellent opportunity to develop varied intercultural collaborations about what I am extremely grateful.

Nowadays, the global community is faced with enormous issues, from worldwide financial crisis over social unrests up to international terrorism and climate change. With our modest resources we can not solve these problems on municipal level. However, we have got a decisive advantage over the "big politics": We are able to address people directly, change things at the social base on-site and remedy smaller difficulties before they become bigger.

While there may be cultural differences between our countries there are very similar themes that we have to deal with in our cities, whether it is youth and family policy, economic development, unemployment or sustainable urban planning. It's the similarities not the differences which need to be strengthened. This is how we can maybe even help by vivid town twinning to establish the relationships between our countries.

An active organisation of our town twinning was and still is possible thanks to the dedicated work of Magdeburg citizens in partnership associations and circles of friends. Among them there are the German-Polish Society Saxony-Anhalt e. V., the German-Chinese Society and the German-Ukrainian Forum e. V. But even KanTe e. V., ArtDepot and the project "ALSO" take a stand for the cooperation with our twin cities in an exemplary way.

Therefore I want to seize the opportunity to thank all the other institutions, companies and citizens of the city Magdeburg who are committed to town twinning. Furthermore, I wish to say thank you to all employees and councillors of the state capital and their twin cities for their support over the years concerning the development of cross-border cooperation.

In the next few days, not only in your respective working group but also during interesting working visits you will get opportunities for sharing professional experience. We would be pleased when to find as many ideas and suggestions for theme-based cooperation as possible during this congress.

Moreover, in 2012 and 2013 there will be anniversaries of signing of contracts with each of our twin cities. Today, let's already join our efforts to prepare the celebration of these anniversaries.

Of course I hope you can enjoy a lot of cultural offers, the lovingly organised national evenings and the informal get-together apart from the large amount of work you have to do. Furthermore, you will hopefully have some time to discover the beauties of the autumnal Otto City Magdeburg.

I wish you all a nice time in the state capital Magdeburg with al lot of new impressions and encounters.

IV. Monday, 24th October 2011

1. Comment on sight-seeing tour by bus

Martina Plosteiner – Children and youth centre B58 e. V. Brunswick

Within the framework of the twinning congress in Magdeburg starting on 24th October 2011 the delegation from the twin city Brunswick had the chance to get an on-site picture of the urban development projects taking place over the last 20 years.



Fig. 3: Sight-seeing tour with the red double-decker bus

After the heavy destruction in World War II and a construction policy forced by serious housing shortage in the following years, the appearance of the city Magdeburg changed since the 1990s. Where once dreary residential buildings used to line the roads, today, thanks to extensive redevelopment measures, trees, green areas and historical facades have changed the face of the industrial appearing dreary in the past.

The maintenance of historical monuments was always important so that we can still today admire buildings such as the Monastery of Our Lady, the Magdeburg

Cathedral and further churches being a part of the “Romanesque Road”. The very good integration of modern architecture into existing structures is also worth mentioning, as we could convince ourselves e.g. at the shopping mall “Allee-Center” with its plenty of green spaces.

With the Otto-von-Guericke-University, a location of the University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal as well as several institutes (e.g. Fraunhofer-Institute, Leibniz-Institute) and its history, Magdeburg has an outstanding reputation as a university city in the heart of Germany at home and abroad. A city which paved its way into the 21st century combining the old and new.



Fig. 4: from left: Renxia Chen, Qiao Guo, Mulin Yu, Ru Cao

2. Statement on German-Ukrainian friendship evening at ArtDepot

The German-Ukrainian friendship evening at ArtDepot marked the beginning of the different evening events which were organised with the support of friendship societies.

Kateryna Iesikova, manager of the youth centre of German culture “Sammelsurium” in Zaporizhia, was impressed by the Ukrainian fashion designers who presented their latest creations. “In my opinion it was a good idea to organise this evening at ArtDepot because the manager Mrs Brieger knows all about the Ukrainian culture. I was also very pleased that the Ukrainian Ambassador to Germany, Her Excellency Natalia Zarudna was able to participate” summarised Kateryna Iesikova this evening event.



Fig. 5: from left: Galina Brieger (Manager ArtDepot), Roman Taran (Zaporizhia), Vitalii Grytsenko (Zaporizhia), Hans-Werner Brüning (Deputy for Social Affairs, Youth and Health), Natalia Zarudna (Her Excellency Ukrainian Ambassador to Germany), Andriy Ivanov (Zaporizhia), Rainer Nitsche (Deputy for Economy, Tourism and Regional Cooperation)

Also the representatives of the City of Zaporizhia Andriy Ivanov, Vitalii Grytsenko and Roman Taran thanked Lord Mayor Dr Lutz Trümper in a personal letter for the invitation to this congress. They want to put the promising projects into effect as soon as possible.

“The Ambassador of Ukraine to Germany, Natalia Zarudna, assured us that projects from Zaporozhia will always be supported by the Ukrainian Embassy to Germany. It was the friendly and warm welcome at ArtDepot which gave us the feeling of the warm atmosphere of a German home.

V. Tuesday, 25th October 2011

1. Topic I: Youth, international youth work, youth camps

1.1. Go China

Speaker: Wolfgang Stein – Group leader of international youth exchange programme in Harbin

Town twinning relationships do not only exist at the economic level but links are strengthened and established especially by teenagers during youth exchanges and stays abroad in the respective city. Therefore the International Business Promotion Office as well as the Federation for Cultural Education of Children and Youth (Ikj) pledged their support. Promotional funds for the exchange programme in Harbin were provided by the Federal Government and the Land Saxony-Anhalt.

In cooperation with the All-China Youth Federation, the Communist Youth League and the Harbin Institute of Science and Technology, a unique and unforgettable experience was offered to all participants.

Speakers: Karen Bruhn and Yan Arnold – International youth exchange programme in Harbin

A lot of interested teenagers applied on the official tender of whom 13 ambassadors of the state capital Magdeburg were picked out to participate in a thirteen-day journey to the Middle Kingdom. During a weekend seminar all young persons in the age of 18 to 26 were prepared for this trip.



Fig. 6: Yan Arnold

Everybody was able to get to know the 10 million metropolis Harbin in host families and by integration in every day life of Chinese students in a very personal way off the beaten tourist track.

In project groups German and Chinese teenagers examined and discussed topics such as the different education systems but also current themes for example fashion to figure out the similarities and differences. Furthermore, films were shot and photo exhibitions were organised together.

From now on, all participants are excited to welcome the Chinese teenagers as host and hostess.

1.2. Youth work: locally effective – globally networked

Speaker: Harald Tschappe – City of Brunswick

The topics youth, international youth work and youth camps are among the complex practice possibilities – demanded by Book eight of the Social Code of the Federal Republic of Germany – that should encourage and lead young people to social responsibility and commitment.

These subjects are high-priority elements of the youth work in the City of Brunswick.



Fig. 7: Harald Tschappe

Thus, institutions and offers for youth work belong to the social infrastructure in each district and are an integral part of the municipal education, culture and recreation. This is also based upon the entire range of various organisations responsible for youth work with their different values, contents, and forms of work as well as methods.

In consideration of the diverse cultural reality in Brunswick, the task of youth work is to integrate and involve especially young people having a migration background into these projects of youth work. This applies in particular to the involvement of girls and young women in offers of youth work.

Youth work in general and international youth exchanges in particular can help to overcome prejudices and to understand the interdependence in a world growing closer and closer together to the point of a “global village”.

1.3. Social commitment in the state capital Magdeburg

Speaker: Hans-Werner Brüning – State capital Magdeburg

The basis for social services are the books I to XII of the Social Code which can be completed by laws of the federal states. In Magdeburg, the city council and the committees decide on the fundamental objectives and use of material and financial resources. All important social and charity organisations as well as associations work together in networks, as for example “Network Child Protection” or “Family Alliance of Magdeburg”.

The budget of the state capital Magdeburg in 2011 amounts to expenses of about 531 million euros, with 184 million euros allocated to the social sector. Amongst others there are 85 million euros available for assistance in case of indigence of job applicants, incapacitated people and in old age as well as 53 million euros for child care and 16 million euros for assistance in education.



Fig. 8: Hans-Werner Brüning

The aim of social commitment is the individualized planning of assistance to needy inhabitants in the interest of the whole population. For example, unemployed people, single parents, senior citizens and disabled people receive special assistance.

The Social Department has about 470 employees and consists of the welfare and housing office, the youth welfare office, the health and veterinary authorities as well as the staff unit of youth work, social and health planning.

1.4. Globalization and European integration – a challenge for the generation 50+ in citizens’ commitment

Speaker: Gerd Voßmerbäumer – German-Chinese Society Saxony-Anhalt e. V.

“One world, one dream” was the motto of the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and provides also today the foundation for international cooperation.

Gerd Voßmerbäumer attended various youth exchanges which led him to all directions of Europe. He shared his experiences with his pupils when he worked as a teacher and headmaster.



Fig. 9: Gerd Voßmerbäumer

This is how two Comenius projects with partners in France, Italy and Poland, various international contacts and especially a partnership with a Chinese school in Chengdu for more than 10 years had a sustainable influence on young people of a whole generation.

Tolerance, respect and confidence are prerequisites for meeting young people but also people with life experience of different origin. Nevertheless, even a misunderstanding belongs to intercultural communication and the easiest way to get over it is humour.

2. Topic II: Cultural exchange programmes, sport events, theatre and music projects

2.1. Town twinning from the perspective of the state capital Magdeburg

Speaker: Prof Dr Matthias Puhle – Museum director of the state capital Magdeburg

The Department IV for Culture, Education and Sports has established a great variety of relations with the twin cities of the state capital Magdeburg. 23 of 73 Magdeburg schools foster 45 international and 4 German domestic school partnerships. Further more, one school participates in the network “UNESCO-schools” and two schools are members in the “EUROPEAN-schools” network.

The Cultural History Museum Magdeburg already organised the exhibition “Autumn 1989 in Nashville” in 2009 and at present plans the exhibition project concerning Magdeburg Law in which also the museum in Radom should be involved. The Museum of Natural Science handed over two selected pieces – Elbe beaver and White Stork – to Harbin Museum as permanent loans in 2010.



Fig. 10: Prof Dr Matthias Puhle

The big band of Radom Music School which maintains close contacts with the Telemann Conservatory, made a successful guest appearance within the framework of the summer festival in Magdeburg in 2011. Work on projects with other twin cities is currently under way.

In 2012 the Magdeburg Puppet Theatre will organise the Children’s Day of Culture for the fourth time. Participants from the twin cities are invited to this event. The Puppet Theatre itself was already to be seen with performances and exhibitions in the twin cities Sarajevo and Nashville.

2.2. The Upgrade-Festival – Music known no borders

Speakers: Anna Koch and Anke Schmidt – KanTe e. V.

Since 2004, the Upgrade-Festival (engl. to upgrade = to improve, to restructure) is a series of events with changing locations and different bands and DJs coming from the twin

cities of Magdeburg. Thanks to new team members and some unique items on the agenda new ideas and impressions are integrated into this project every year.

This music event is already well-established in the culture scene of Magdeburg and represents an alternative free-time programme for young people with different cultural backgrounds. Since 2008, the musical part has been extended by a cultural framework programme, too. For example, during readings or exhibitions the visitors gain an insight into the cultures of the twin cities.

From 24th to 25th June 2011 the Upgrade-Festival 2011 was headlined as “Cultural importation in one location” took place in Magdeburg. Beside bands from Magdeburg, Radom and Brunswick, even a DJ from Zaporizhia made his guest appearance. At the same time, 30 teenagers from Magdeburg and Radom met for the “Update theatre workshop”.



Fig. 11: Anke Schmidt and Anna Koch

In the future, even more artists from the twin cities should be involved in music and theatre projects so that the relationship can become even stronger.

3. Topic III: Urban planning, energy-efficient city, housing rehabilitation, sustainable urban development, demographics, co-wide ownership

3.1. Le Havre – international maritime metropolis

Speaker: Jean-Pierre Niot – Manager of the housing association Alcéane in Le Havre



Fig. 12: Jean-Pierre Niot

Alcéane manages a portfolio of 15,628 properties including 13,918 multiple family houses, 800 single family houses, 910 places in halls of residences and 1,100 factory buildings. This makes Alcéane represent about 18% of the property market in Le Havre.

In five agencies there are 340 employees giving advice to their 32,200 clients in all matters of renting.

Alcéane as a trend-setting housing association relies on power from renewable energies for years. Thus, wood-fired boilers for energy supply have already been installed in 360 apartments.

Since 2006, Alcéane has installed 700 m² of solar systems and since 2009 just another 870 m² of photovoltaic systems on housing rooftops.

Their additional responsibilities include the equipment of the buildings with security systems, the reconstruction of handicapped accessible bathrooms as well as environmentally responsible waste disposal. In the future, the buildings will be provided even with defibrillators.

3.2. Urban planning in Magdeburg

Speaker: Stephan Herrmann – State capital Magdeburg

Magdeburg, the 1,200 years old city of Otto the Great, was largely destroyed and almost depopulated in 1631 during the Thirty Years War. In the 17th and 18th century, Magdeburg was a fortress city and was strongly characterized by the different epochs and architectural styles.



Fig. 13: Stephan Herrmann

After the destruction during World War II, only a few valuable buildings could have been restored, among them the Cathedral of Magdeburg, the Monastery of Our Lady and the city hall. Thus buildings of Wilhelminian style and Soviet architecture based on the Stalin era as well as multi-storey tower blocks of the 70s and 80s shape the heart of the city of Magdeburg.

The demographic growth shows that the average age of Magdeburg citizens is continually rising and it is to be expected that the number of inhabitants will decline from the year 2020. This makes it even more import to realise one's advantages and to develop Magdeburg as a centre of education, logistics and business. Within the project of housing rehabilitation the deconstruction takes place from outside to inside and associates the reevaluation from inside to outside.

Since 1994, Magdeburg is a member of the Climate Alliance and since 2006 model city for renewable energies and took part in the Federal Competition "Energy-efficient city" in order to support the development of renewable energy and to assume the important function of a role model.

4. Impressions from the three different working groups

Working group I at *einewelt* haus



Fig. 14: Mulin Yu (centre)



Fig. 15: Exchange of ideas on the issue of youth

Working group II at Hotel Ratswaage



Fig. 16: Exchange of ideas on the issue of culture



Fig. 17: from left: Martina Plosteiner, Ru Cao, Oliver Müller

Working group III at Hotel Ratswaage



Fig. 18: Exchange of ideas on the issue of urban planning



Fig. 19: from left: Stephan Herrmann, Frank Theile, Gunter Schindehütte, Reinhard Gogolok

5. Comment on German-French friendship evening at Moritzhof

Florence Jeanne – International Affairs Le Havre

The German-French friendship evening was very interesting for the delegation from Le Havre. It gave us the opportunity to meet the new French Ambassador to Germany, His



Fig. 20: Bérnagère Palix (left)

Excellency Mister Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, who wishes to work on the fiftieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty (1963-2013). The town twinning between Le Havre and Magdeburg is indeed the youngest town twinning between France and Germany. It is very important for the City of Le Havre that the French Embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are supporting the exchanges and approving the planned projects.

The concert of Bérnagère Palix has shown afterwards in the most beautiful way how you can successfully harmonize the culture of those two countries. The announcements made in German together with the old and contemporary French chansons evoked an extremely pleasant atmosphere in this charming place. We would like to thank the German-French Society in Magdeburg as well as the city administration for organising such a beautiful evening.

VI. Wednesday, 26th October 2011

1. Comments on theme-based working visits

1.1. Waste incineration plant

Sabine Böse – Waste incineration plant Mageburg-Rothensee

Within the framework of the twinning congress of the state capital a small group of interested guests has enrolled for a visit of our waste incineration plant in Magdeburg-Rothensee.

During the two-hour guided tour it was immediately clear that waste incineration is an issue that crosses state borders. Our guests were especially interested in the history of our plant, the location, the authorization process and, of course, the technology. The concept of the Magdeburg plant particularly impressed by its efficient production of electricity and long-distance heating by cogeneration of heat and electricity as well as the supply into the network of Staedtische Werke Magdeburg. Afterwards the participants exchanged their experiences about environmental issues and waste legislations in their home countries. There were no language barriers.



Fig. 21: Group of visitors at waste incineration plant

1.2. Housing association “Wobau”

Matthias Schenk – Housing association “Wobau” Ltd.

Within the framework of the first twinning congress in the state capital from 24th to 27th October 2011 there was also a working visit at the municipal housing association “Wobau”



Fig. 22: Discussion group at Wobau

Ltd. The managing director Heinrich Sonsalla extended the invitation. “For us as a municipal company it goes without saying to support the city concerning the implantation of the congress” says the “Wobau” managing director.

The participants were picked up in front of the Hotel Raatswaage and carried to the company’s headquarters where the managing director welcomed his guests from Le Havre and Zaporizhia. During a relaxed discussion there was a

presentation of the “Wobau” company with an explanation of the particularities of a municipal housing association. Moreover, topics such as urban redevelopment and dismantling aroused high interest to our guests. Afterwards, we took the bus to go directly to the Magdeburg urban district “Reform” to visit one current project on urban redevelopment in the street “Quittenweg”. Later, during a sight-seeing tour by bus further projects of urban redevelopment were visited.

For example we took a look at “Resewitzstraße” in the urban district “Neustaedter Feld” where “Wobau” rebuilt five storey residential buildings to terraced houses. Then we went back to the city centre passing by the residential area “Neustaedter See” with the completely renovated 16 storey skyscrapers along the lakeside.

At “Breiter Weg” the housing association presented its current large-scale projects in the field of commercial properties. Especially the development of “Catherine’s Tower” aroused great interest. All the impressions were discussed and assessed during following joint lunch. The overwhelming thanks expressed to the “Wobau” by all guests were a sign of this successful event during the twinning congress.

1.3. Children and youth centre “Next Generation“

Mike Teichler – Children and youth centre “Next Generation“

The excitement was huge when it was said that guests from our twin cities will be coming to visit our institution to become more familiar with our work. After all, such a “high-ranking” visit is rather rare to us and, of course, we wanted to appear at our best.

That is why we thought about what a “sensation” we could present to our guests. However, we came to the conclusion that we should not show a “blockbuster” but just us and our everyday work, entirely unvarnished.

Surprisingly, that was receiving very well. Not only the institution itself got highly praised but also the projects and offers presented by us were often appreciated. The esteem that we experience very rarely in our own city will certainly have a motivating effect on our future work.

After an extensive guided tour through the house, all participants of this working visit met in our event room to have a little refreshment and to discuss further projects in a relaxed atmosphere. There were many questions asked in detail so that the interpreters had to do some hard work.



Fig. 23: Presentation of children and youth centre “Next Generation“

After two and a half hours, unfortunately, it was already time to say goodbye. Unfortunately, because many things that moved us could not be asked and answered thoroughly. The French delegation made the suggestion to strengthen the town twinning by the exchange of qualified employees because we all can still learn from each other.

For visual impressions please visit our homepage:
<http://ng-jugendclub.de/Galerie/Staedtepartnerschaft2011/?63,45>

1.4. Theatre/Opera House Magdeburg

Freya Paschen – Deputy Director for Marketing and Communication Opera House Magdeburg

In my opinion it was an enrichment for the Theatre Magdeburg to welcome and guide such an interested group among many experts for example theatre makers from Radom,



Fig. 24: Guided tour through the Opera House

Poland. Based on the questions asked during the guided tour, I could see that the guests took part with great enthusiasm.

I am sure that all participants gained a great impression of the charisma and international flair of the Theatre Magdeburg both as a seat of art and culture and a place of representation of the state capital Magdeburg, and they will pass it on to their home towns or simply to their own surroundings in Magdeburg. We would be very pleased to contribute to better international

communication and external representation of the state capital Magdeburg also in the future – in addition to existing cooperation projects e.g. with Otto-von-Guericke-University.

1.5. einewelt haus

Manja Lorenz – Auslandsgesellschaft Sachsen-Anhalt e. V. einewelt haus Magdeburg

Members of organisations which are representing the largest groups of immigrants in this region reported on their development from advisory and consultancy organisations for immigrants in the 1990s/2000s up to a provider of venues, integral learning opportunities as well as artistic-cultural exchanges across cultural and generational borders.



Fig. 25: from left: Michael Marquardt (Manager Auslandsgesellschaft Sachsen-Anhalt e. V.), Elena Klein (Miteinander e. V.), Katharina Reso (City of Magdeburg), Yvette Sebelist, (Nashville, Tennessee, Attorney at Law), Anna Trojanowskaja (Jewish Socio-Cultural Centre „Ludwig Philippson“ e. V.), Vu Thi Huong Ha (German-Vietnamese Friendship Association e. V.), Olga Melnykova (Harmonia e. V.)

1800 events take place at *einewelt haus* every year. The major part of them offered by autonomous migrant organisations: such as teaching of German and foreign languages, pre-school, theatre groups, children and youth artwork studios, choirs, women's groups etc. They make theatre action possible for children from socially disadvantaged families (Harmonia e. V., Meridian e. V.), take action in local community work (Jewish Socio-Cultural Centre), support the maintenance of the language from the country of origin and get involved in parent's work (German-Vietnamese Friendship Association). Of course, all this happens also outside the walls of *einewelt haus*. But here there is the chance to pave the way by combining

interests under the roof of the Auslandsgesellschaft Sachsen-Anhalt e. V., by spatial proximity and short communication channels and distances as well as by structural support in terms of different active labour-market policies.

Our guest Yvette Sebelist encouraged an exchange of experience about the role of autonomous migrant organisations in Magdeburg and Nashville in terms of correspondence by letter and mail as well as perspective artistic-cultural exchanges within the context of visits and meetings (e.g. German-American Dialog Centre).

Yvette Sebelist – Attorney at Law in Nashville, Tennessee

I attended the *einewelt* haus working visit and met with several of the immigrant group leaders. We discussed challenges of their communities and of course we discussed possible ideas for exchanges with Nashville. Nashville has a large population of immigrants including many Russians and Vietnamese people. We talked about possibly having Nashville immigrant organisations communicate with the Magdeburg groups to share ideas. We discussed a possible exchange of a photo exhibition of photos of Magdeburg's immigrants and Nashville's immigrants. We discussed ways to exchange that we might do that would not be expensive.

2. Concise profiles of twin cities

During the day of citizens representatives from all twin cities presented their home towns to all congress participants and citizens of Magdeburg in the form of PowerPoint or films. In the following, you will find the most important information about the cities as well as projects and events which took place during partly town twinning relationships lasting already for decades. Furthermore, please find valuable information about initiators, associations and friendship societies on our homepage www.magdeburg.de keyword "twin cities".

Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)



- ▶ Population: about 305,000
- ▶ Mayor: Alija Behmen
- ▶ First mentioned in 1415
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 1,051 km
- ▶ Twin city since 29th September 1977



Fig. 26: Sarajevo

Our oldest town twinning had been established with Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city impresses with its mosques and beautiful location in a valley on the Miljacka river shoreline but suffered terrible battles and destruction during the Balkan War. Particularly in the 1990s, we tried to support the reconstruction with different aid programmes. In 1996, with the support of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade medical devices, clothes and in-kind donations were sent to children organisations in Sarajevo.

At present, most of all young people are committed to this town twinning with its long tradition. For years there has been already a regular exchange between bands from Sarajevo and Magdeburg within the framework of the Upgrade-Festival. But also our local music school, the Conservatory Georg-Philipp-Telemann, organised a number of promising actions with Sarajevo in recent years. Already in 2004, musicians from the twin cities gave the concert "A tribute to Sarajevo" in Magdeburg.

In 2007, also the Magdeburg Puppet Theatre made a guest appearance in Sarajevo and performed the fairytale "Little Red Ridinghood" by the Brothers Grimm.

Since January 2007 there has been a partnership between the private Waldorf Kindergarten Magdeburg and the Waldorf Kindergarten Phoenix in Sarajevo. In 2009, the kindergarten of the university hospital collected toys and drew pictures for a children institution in Sarajevo. Last year, teenagers from Sarajevo participated in the 10th federal midnight football cup “ALSO” in the state capital Magdeburg.

Brunswick (Germany)



- ▶ Population: about 247,000
- ▶ Lord Mayor: Dr Gert Hoffmann
- ▶ First mentioned in 1031
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 80 km
- ▶ Twin city since 8th December 1987



Fig. 27: Brunswick

In 1987, the Lion City Brunswick and the Otto City Magdeburg established their town twinning against a certain resistance. In the years 1988/89, “worker’s delegations” and “women’s delegations” from Magdeburg visited Brunswick. Especially, the common experience of the German reunification contributed to a close relationship at this point. There was also a very significant support of Brunswick when an autonomous municipal administration was established in Magdeburg after the political turn. Without the help of many employees of the Lower Saxony local government – and in particular also from Brunswick – this rebuilding phase would not have been managed as fast and successful as it was. On 8th December 1992, the town twinning agreement between both cities was renewed after the successful cooperation of five years.

Guests from Brunswick are invited to anniversaries and others event to Magdeburg again and again as well as Magdeburg citizens are equally welcomed in Brunswick. Delegations from Brunswick traditionally participate in the town hall festival on the occasion of the German Unity Day.

The partnership is also inspired by enthusiastic sportsmen in both cities. On 3rd October 2003, the “Cycle tour on occasion of the German Unity” took place between Brunswick and Magdeburg. Common exchange programmes for young persons such as between the youth art college “buntich” and the Magdeburg art college “house clover” in 2003 but also expositions about the vivid partnership were organised.

Nashville, Tennessee (USA)



- ▶ Population: about 626,000
- ▶ Mayor: Karl Dean
- ▶ Foundation in 1779
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 7,441 km
- ▶ Twin city since 28th May 2003



Fig. 28: Nashville

In May 2003, Nashville became the third twin city of Magdeburg. Even since May 1998 there have been official contacts between both cities. Since then, regular visits and also the foundation of the staff town twinning of the German-American Dialogue Centre e. V. in June 2011 have been arranged. The partnership with the famous capital of country music was and is still carried by the enthusiasm of our citizens. Therefore, numerous encounters between people of both cities took place in the last years. There were various contacts between universities, non-profit organisations, museums and theatres.

These events include special highlights such as the big Magdeburg hemisphere experiment in Nashville in 2004, the participation of a group of students and artists in projects on the occasion of the 1200th anniversary of Magdeburg in 2005 and the common theatre project “das treffen – the other side” as well as the participation of a Magdeburg delegation in the festivities for the 200th anniversary of the founding of Nashville in 2006.

On the Day of German Unity 2010, a delegation from Nashville headed by Douglas Berry, “Sister Cities of Nashville” board member and Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in Tennessee, visited the festivities in Magdeburg. Every year, school exchange programmes between the two cities take place and a lot of young people spend a year doing voluntary work in Nashville. Particularly after the devastating flooding in Nashville in May 2010 the willingness to help and donate was huge in Magdeburg.

Zaporizhia (Ukraine)



- ▶ Population: about 777,000
- ▶ Mayor: Oleksandr T. Sin
- ▶ Foundation in 1770
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 1,662 km
- ▶ Twin city since 29th May 2008



Fig. 29: Zaporizhia

In 2008, the town twinning with Zaporizhia, the city with the longest highway in Europe and the biggest central hydroelectric power station in the Ukraine, resulted at first from the good economic connections. But in the meantime, the cooperation has gone far beyond. A common project on animal welfare with the Society for Protection of Animals was initiated by councillor Sören Herbst. Also with the support of Mr Herbst and the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, the city administration organised a transport of medical equipment and supplies which set out for Zaporizhia in May 2011. The donations were made by hospitals and doctors' surgeries of the region.

Since 2008, there has been a cooperation between the Kinderfoerderwerk Magdeburg e. V. and the early intervention centre “Kangaroo” of the partnership organisation “Florence” in Zaporizhia. The project includes the support of disabled children from 0 to 6 years. Just recently, a charity run in Magdeburg assured the work of the early intervention centre for another year.

Moreover, a declaration of intent was signed between the Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg and the National Technical University as well as the National University Zaporizhia. On the basis of these contracts the project “centre for cooperation” was initiated together with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Magdeburg. Furthermore, graduates from the University Zaporizhia should get the opportunity to be employed as trainees in companies approved by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce to realize further projects.

Radom (Poland)



- ▶ Population: about 222,000
- ▶ Mayor: Andrzej Kosztwoniak
- ▶ First mentioned in 1155
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 662 km
- ▶ Twin city since 8th June 2008



Fig. 30: Radom

Radom in Poland with its numerous universities and schools of higher education as well as the famous international air show became our fifth twin city on 8th May 2008.

First contacts between the educational centre for construction in Magdeburg and the grammar school specializing in construction in Radom go back to the 1980s. The German-Polish Society Saxony-Anhalt e. V. together with the friendship circle Magdeburg-Radom have taken an active part in establishing contacts in the different fields such as education, culture and sports within a short time.

For example, the friendship circle organised a citizen travel to Radom on the occasion of the signing of the twin city agreement in June 2008. Students from the secondary school “Hans Schellheimer” in Magdeburg participated in the handball school championships of the Voivodeship Mazovia in Radom in summer 2008.

There are regular exchanges between the Biederitz church choir and the choir of the City of Radom as well. Moreover, the music schools in Magdeburg and Radom are closely connected. That is why the big band of the Radom music school performed on the summer festival of the Magdeburg Conservatory last June. In summer 2011, young people from Magdeburg and Radom also met in the framework of the update theatre workshop to stage theatre plays together.

Harbin (China)



- ▶ Population: about 9.92 million
- ▶ Mayor: Lin Duo
- ▶ Foundation in 1898
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg 7,504 km
- ▶ Twin city since 2nd July 2008



Fig. 31: Harbin

On 2nd July 2008, the “most eastern” town twinning with Harbin was sealed. The icy beauty in the north-east of China is a real attraction for tourists. Since 2001, regular visits in Magdeburg and Harbin took place. On 17th June 2001, a declaration of intent was already signed and was renewed on 22nd September 2006 with main emphasis of cooperation. The annual ice and snow festival in January has been already visited by delegations from Magdeburg several times. At the same time, they had the opportunity to get to know representatives of the city administration just as companies and institutions of the City of Harbin.

Above that, Magdeburg and Harbin maintain a very close cooperation, mainly in the field of economy. For example, the Harbin Entrepreneur Days took place in Magdeburg from 13th to 16th April 2011. Companies, institutions and representatives of the state capital Magdeburg participated in the Harbin Fair from 15th to 19th June 2011.

In the fields of art and culture possible projects will be discussed with school twinning between both cities as one of the aims. During the international youth exchange “Go China” 13 young people got the opportunity to get to know the twin city in the north-east of China as ambassadors.

Le Havre (France)



- ▶ Population: about 179,000
- ▶ Mayor: Edouard Philippe
- ▶ Foundation in 1517
- ▶ Distance to Magdeburg: 1,004 km
- ▶ Twin city since 9th May 2011



Fig. 32: Le Havre

The French city Le Havre received the UNESCO world heritage site title for its modern architectural ensemble and is the centre of globalisation as well as recently name giver for a cinema film. The establishing of a lasting town twinning was obvious because of the similarities between Le Havre and Magdeburg. Both cities are important logistic centres. During World War II, they were heavily destroyed because of their infrastructural and military importance. Just as Magdeburg, the city centre of Le Havre had to be rebuilt completely.

On 9th May 2011, on Europe Day, the twin city agreement was signed officially. Common projects in the fields of art, culture and education shall be supported in the future. In the beginning of March 2011, the first meeting between the Magdeburg Boys Choir and the choir "Entasis" from Le Havre took place. Highlight of this encounter was the common concert in the Monastery of Our Lady on 5th March 2011. Furthermore, there is high interest concerning a cooperation on the topics urban planning and sustainable urban development.

However, there were already different forms of cooperation and friendly connections between the two cities, for instances exchanges between schools and student projects. In the framework of a journey to Magdeburg, pupils of the grammar school Saint-Vincent de Paul in Le Havre kept their impressions of Magdeburg in form of photos. After the opening of this photo exhibition in the city hall of Le Havre, these works can be seen for example in libraries.

3. Comment on German-Polish friendship evening at *einewelt* haus

Ewa Koscielniak – Interpreter of the delegation from Radom

Our delegation was very delighted that so many nice guests came to our evening programme. We were able to organise it together with members of the German-Polish Society and we are very grateful for that. We hope that all guests enjoyed the concert of the Radom artist Jaga Wrońska and her two musicians just as much as we did. We had the opportunity to admire the beautiful works of Radom art director Krystyna Joanna Szymańska. The buffet with typical Polish dishes is unforgettable, too.



Fig. 33: Anna Kwiecień (centre)

The vice-president of the administration of Radom Anna Kwiecień had consultations with representatives of the administration of Magdeburg about further projects and possibilities of cooperation.

VII. Thursday, 27th October 2011

1. Summary of the results of the discussions in the working groups

1.1. Topic I: Youth

Theme: "Ideas, projects, prospects in terms of culture, youth and civil society – opportunity of participation of citizens"

Moderator: Michael Marquardt

Presentation: Konstantin Müller and Kateryna Iesikova

Zaporizhia:

- Manager Kateryna Iesikova, youth centre "Sammelsurium" in Zaporizhia offers and is interested in cooperation in the fields such as youth exchanges, culture and development of skilled manpower
- Possible partner in this cooperation: children and youth centre "Magnet" Magdeburg, employee Marina Blume
- Exchanges between teenagers from Magdeburg and Zaporizhia are planned for summer 2012, Brunswick has also shown interest
- The City of Magdeburg indicates its support; the municipal meeting place "Barleber See" could be used for this exchange

Harmonia e. V. Saxony-Anhalt, Olga Melnykova:

- Establishing a youth internet platform called "youth turntable" for teenagers from all twin cities
- Touring exhibition and youth exchange "Roads of Friendship" between Magdeburg, Zaporizhia and other interested partners
- Agreement on cooperation for the Europe Day in Zaporizhia and European Week in Magdeburg: German-Ukrainian twinning week Magdeburg/Zaporizhia

Auslandsgesellschaft Saxony-Anhalt e. V., Konstantin Müller

- "International training for honorary and professional persons committed to youth work" and preparation of a cooperation in the field European Voluntary Service (EVS)
- Interest in exchange programmes by assignment locations for EVS of agencies for youth work in Magdeburg, Brunswick, Radom, Le Havre and Zaporizhia

KanTe e. V. Magdeburg, Anke Schmidt:

- Invitation of young artists and musicians from all twin cities to the "Upgrade-Festival - Music knows no borders"
- Extension of the "Update theatre project" where teenagers from Magdeburg and Radom participated in 2011

Network projects:

- Aim: development of theme-based networks between the twin cities
- Basic conditions:
 - o 4 or more participating countries eligible for funding;
 - o at least 3 activities in a period of 2 years;
 - o deadline phase 1: 01.02.2012;
 - o Magdeburg, Le Havre and Radom are ready, however one EU partner is still missing;
 - o aim is one network Application
- Advantages: regular meetings and possibility to establish various activities
- Ideas coming from German-Chinese Society, Gerd Voßmerbäumer:
“Network project 50 +“
 - Citizens’ commitment in the framework of town twinning, exchange programmes of older citizens
 - Proposed subjects: quality of life, getting older, globalization and demographic development
- Ideas coming from Auslandsgesellschaft Saxony-Anhalt e. V., Agnieszka Grzelak:
“Faces of our cities – development in dialogue“
 - Possible activities: conference “Economic life”, journey for citizens
“Cultural spirit of the city”, workshop “Cur society”

Delegation from Harbin:

- Return visit of 20 young persons from Harbin to Magdeburg in 2012
- Summer youth camp in Harbin; invitation for 2 to 3 financed places for young people from Magdeburg; but also invitation to attend for other cities, Radom has expressed interest to participate

City Youth Circle Magdeburg:

- Brunswick and Magdeburg intend to organise common professional events of qualified employees of youth work. Cooperation between children and youth centres of both cities is in the planning stage.

Telemann Conservatory Magdeburg:

- The successful partnership existing already between the Telemann Conservatory Magdeburg and the music school in Radom should be extended to a cooperation with the Arthur Honegger Conservatory in Le Havre

Topic “Magdeburg Law”:

- Exchanges and cooperation on the topic Magdeburg Law between Kateryna lesikova, manager of youth centre “Sammelsurium” in Zaporizhia and Prof Dr Matthias Puhle, director of the museum in Magdeburg

1.2. Topic II: Culture

Theme: “Nothing but theatre? – cultural exchanges as a key element and cornerstone in town twinning relationships”

Moderator: Sören Herbst

Presentation: Sören Herbst

Magdeburg Law:

- In 600 Polish cities the Magdeburg Law is used and serves a basis for a joint appearance
- Planning of a common exhibition in the museum in Magdeburg and Radom

European Voluntary Service:

- European Voluntary Service (EVS) conveys key social and intercultural competences among young people and offers fixed structures for 12 months
- Federation for cultural Education of Children and Youth in Saxony-Anhalt coordinates and organises the exchanges and the twin cities specify the deployment in the different cultural institutions

Music projects:

- Musicians act as “Ambassadors” of the twin cities
- Continuation of the experienced “Upgrade-Festival” in Magdeburg, Brunswick and two further twin cities at the end of Mai/beginning of June 2012; coordinated by KanTe e. V. Magdeburg and B58 e. V. Brunswick

Theatre and puppet theatre:

- Similar structures of puppet theatre in Magdeburg and Radom
- Planning of a theatre and figure theatre festival including international participation
- Youth exchange within the framework of the Children’s Days of Culture in 2012 (band performances, workshops)

Dancing and singing:

- Exchange of choirs, dance and ballet schools
- Continuation of already existing projects, e. g. Magdeburg Boys Choir and choir “Entasis“ from Le Havre
- Dance festivals organised by twin cities
- Audience exchange: “Visit cultural sites of the others”

“City packages”:

- Transfer of knowledge about twin cities and countries, consolidation of dialogue and personalization of contacts
- Actors such as theatres, museums, educational institutions (e.g. adult education centre) and City Marketing (e.g. MMKT) initiate audience exchanges, theatre and

museum visits, discussion groups, present highlights of the twin cities and plan a joint public relations work

And much more ...

- Exchanges between children and youth centres
- Exchange projects of Cultural Office with Radom and Nashville
- International artwork projects (France, Museum of Art)
- Magdeburg hemispheres installed in twin cities (e.g. Le Havre)
- Integration of symbols of twin cities in the urban space

1.3. Topic III: Urban planning

Theme: "Urban planning in Magdeburg"

Moderator: Olaf Czogalla

Presentation: Dr Rüdiger Koch

Exchange of ideas on the following topics:

Guidelines for urban development and urban redevelopment:

- Old town quarter: Tourist and cultural attractions, shopping malls, commerce and residential areas
- Historic urban expansion: 1st city circle, compact city living in multi-storey buildings
- Axes for private or public transport with connection to the city centre
- 2nd city circle, 1-2 storey buildings with local suppliers, rural local centres
- Waterfront of the river Elbe with architectural revaluated city's edge (skyline) and scenic green waterfront for relaxation, river access
- Development priorities: University/Science Port, Elbe Station, district "Buckau",...

Housing and Construction:

- Decrease of population density, aging population -> changes in housing demand
- 1990s: construction boom for single family houses
- Tendency of migration into the surrounding areas
- Increasing development of areas covered by a binding land-use for constructions of new private residences
- Increasing suburbanisation and land-use for single family houses within the municipal borders since the mid-nineties
- High vacancy rates in large housing estates
- Redevelopment by demolition and dismantling with state subsidies
- Changing of flat outlines to meet the demand of one-person households
- Lifts, rebuilding meeting old-age and disabled living requirements

Traffic:

- Traffic planning aims to support efficiency (energy) in the traffic flow, preservation of mobility, security and environmental aspects

- Excellent national road connection: motorway A2, A14 and roads
- River Elbe as shipping route with inland, industrial and commercial port
- Train connection to Berlin, Hanover, Leipzig, ICE (Intercity Express)
- Small airport for business travellers
- Bus and tram line network, minimum distance 1,000 meters to next station
- Road network in good conditions
- Future large-scale projects
 - Road tunnel for railway underpass
 - Extension of the river bridge over the Old Elbe

Summary by presenter Olaf Czogalla:

There was an active exchange of experience, for instance about questions concerning land-use planning asked by Roman Taran from Zaporizhia. Personal contacts with the Deputy Dr Dieter Scheidemann were arranged by Mr Olaf Czogalla. A discussion between Mr Taran and Dr Scheidemann took place on 26th October 2011. Furthermore, issues concerning population development and the resulting urban redevelopment in Magdeburg were discussed.

There was a debate with Mr Jean-Pierre Niot from Le Havre on issues of the accommodation of students. Mr Andrzej Kosztowniak from Radom and all the other participating guests made the request of deepening these conversations involving partnership societies. This successful congress should be repeated.

2. Comment on German-Chinese finale programme



Fig. 34: Master Chen

Qiao Guo – Employee in the Liason Office Germany/China

We really enjoyed the final programme on Thursday 27th October 2011. I personally would be very pleased if I could meet again with master Chen next time. During the twinning congress in Magdeburg, all countries took the opportunity to present their own cultural talents. The mutual cultural understanding is a very important basis for intercultural communication. We hope that we awoke interest in Chinese Kung-Fu among the citizens of Magdeburg in this way.

VIII. Conclusion

On 27th October 2011, the congress ended with the reception in the Council Hall of the Old City Hall. In his closing speech Mayor Dr Rüdiger Koch praised the active involvement of about 120 committed national and international congress participants attending workshops, working visits and evening programmes spread over 4 days.

In the opinion of Lord Mayor Dr Lutz Trümper state capital's first twinning congress was a great success. "The response of the delegations from our twin cities was impressive", he assessed. "I'm convinced that the outcomes of the congress will not only have new impulses but result in specific projects and plans as well. I wish to thank all congress participants as well as city councillors, associations and initiative groups who have enriched the congress in particular and town twinning in general by their active participation. Furthermore, Dr Lutz Trümper indicated that it is especially important to implement the ideas and intended projects (*see point VII*) with the support of associations as well as by direct involvement of Magdeburg citizens.

Mrs Brigitte Dufour, Deputy Mayor of Le Havre, described her personal impressions of this event in a letter to Lord Mayor Trümper. "After my return form Magdeburg, I would like to thank your for the reception and congratulate you for a perfect organisation of your twinning congress." In cooperation with organisations in Le Havre Mrs Dufour would like to extend already existing projects and plan new activities.

During the congress, also citizens of Magdeburg had the opportunity to gather various information about the twin cities on the day of the citizens to which the municipal administration had invited. With coffee and cake many citizens looked for direct contact with representatives from the twin cities to ask their questions in a personal dialogue.

All participants and guests of the congress completely agreed in their evaluation that the congress was successful and produced many ideas, suggestions and propositions which will lead to an intensification and development of town twinning relationships.



Fig. 35: Final programme in the Council Hall

In case of general questions and suggestions, do not hesitate to contact the coordinator for town twinning in Magdeburg:

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IX. Imprint

Editor: State capital Magdeburg
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Photos: State capital Magdeburg: Cover; Fig. 2-19; 21; 24; 26-35

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Manfred Kunze: Fig. 20
Matthias Schenk: Fig. 22
Mike Teichler: Fig. 23
Manja Lorenz: Fig. 25

January 2012