



Minutes from the Presidium
of the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize
01 December 2020 r. - on-line meeting

The session was open by Mr. **Krzysztof Matyjaszczyk**, Mayor of the City of Częstochowa, President of the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize. The Mayor welcomed all invited guests and thanked everyone for the participation in the virtual event the form of which was forced by the pandemic of Covid-19.

Then, the Mayor gave the floor to Mr. **Jochen Partsch**, Mayor of the City of Darmstadt, who this year acted as virtual host for the Presidium. Mr Jochen Partsch welcomed the audience and emphasised the importance of cohesion and solidarity in Europe. After Mr Jochen Partsch's speech, a promotional film introducing Darmstadt was shown.

The next speaker was Mr Dierk Molter, city councillor of Darmstadt, who welcoming the audience expressed his regret that only in virtual form can be shown the advantages and charms of the city.

Ater that, the President **Krzysztof Matyjaszczyk**, presented a report of the last General Assembly of the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize, indicating the most important issues and findings of the meeting. He also presented a report of the work of the President and the activities undertaken for the Association in the last three months, inter alia to organise the General Assembly of the Association in 2021 at the seat of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

The President then moved on to the next point on the agenda, namely the choice of topics for the Conference of Mayors and the accompanying Youth Forum, to be held as part of the General Assembly in 2021. He suggested that the topics of the two conferences should be the same, or at least convergent, because then it would be possible to look at an issue from two points of view while reaching common conclusions.

Mr. **Krzysztof Matyjaszczyk** proposed three topics for the Conference of Mayors:

1. Local and governmental support for residents in times of pandemic.



2. The economic and social impact of the pandemic on local governments.

3. What have we learned from the pandemic?

Then he opened the discussion and asked the audience for their opinions and any suggestions

Mr. **Herbert Hofauer**, former President of Altötting, was the first to speak in the discussion. He emphasised that the topic of Covid-19 would probably still be relevant in the middle of next year, and therefore such a theme for the conference was legitimated. He proposed that all three topics should be discussed.

A representative of the City of Ankara agreed with Mr Hofauer's statement. He added that it would be useful to draw attention to the issue of actions that local governments can implement when the pandemic has passed.

The next speaker was Mr. **Viktor Shynyshyn**, Mayor of Ivano-Frankivsk (the city will host the General Assembly of the Association in 2021, in case it is not possible to organise the event at the seat of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in the first half of 2021). Mr Shynyshyn emphasised that meetings of the Association members, even online, are very important. He suggested that the future conference of mayors should focus on energy and ecology. These are very important issues in terms of future development and environmental degradation. He proposed the topic "Energy efficiency for sustainable development of local government".

Mr. **Dierk Molter**, in his speech, pointed out that both topics are very important for the development of Europe. He suggested that the broader topic of the Covid-19 pandemic should include the issue of digitalisation, as especially in recent times our lives have been highly digitised. At the same time, he said that the topic of energy efficiency could be interesting for young people.

St. Pölten City Councillor, Mrs. **Ingrid Heihs**, expressed the opinion that the topic of the pandemic was worth discussing and suggested combining all three topics proposed by President Matyjaszczyk. This combination would allow us to discuss a number of issues related to the topic of the Covid-19 pandemic itself and its impact on different social groups and urban areas.

Mr. **Krzysztof Matyjaszczyk**, President of the Association, summing up the discussion, underlined that both proposed theme blocks are interesting and very up-to-date. He suggested



that the subject of the conference should depend on the place where the General Assembly will be held, i.e.: if the General Assembly will be held in Strasbourg, the conference will be dedicated to the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects, and if it will be held in Ivano-Frnakivsk, then it will be dedicated to energy efficiency.

The attendees at the meeting agreed to this solution.

Regarding the proposal that the three previously proposed topics on Covid-19 should be combined into one, the President proposed the topic as follows: "The impact of the pandemic on different areas of urban functioning".

The attendees at the meeting agreed the topic: "The impact of the pandemic on different areas of urban functioning".

It was agreed unanimously that the theme of the Conference of Mayors to be held during the General Assembly of the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize in 2021 would be, depending on the location of the meeting:

Strasbourg - "The impact of the pandemic on different areas of urban functioning"

or

Iwano-Frankiwsk - "Energy efficiency for sustainable development of local government"

At the same time it was decided that the accompanying Youth Forum would be held under the same topic as the Conference of Mayors, also depending on the location of the meeting:

Strasbourg - "The impact of the pandemic on different areas of urban functioning"

or

Iwano-Frankiwsk - "Energy efficiency for sustainable development of local government"

This concluded the discussion.

At the end of the meeting, another promotional film from Darmstadt was screened. This film was intended to take the participants into the festive scenery of the city.

Afterwards Mr Krzysztof Matyjaszczyk - President of the Association summed up the discussion and closed the meeting of the Presidium of the Association.