



## Douzelage 48th General Meeting: Youth Workshop Conclusions

Dear Douzelage Friends,

I am pleased to present the conclusions drawn from the YM workshops held during the 48th Douzelage General Meeting in Sherbone, United Kingdom. Our focus revolved around the theme of "Wellbeing through Nature and Music," addressing crucial aspects concerning the youth and their connection to these elements.

### **Expert Insights on Children's Wellbeing:**

During our discussions, we had the privilege of engaging with Peter Littlewood, an expert on the theme. It was emphasized that prolonged indoor activities, such as excessive screen time and video gaming, contribute to heightened stress levels among children. In severe cases, this may even lead to the development of anger issues, manifesting in harmful behavior towards parents. However, Mr. Littlewood highlighted the significant positive impact of exposing children to nature. Outdoor activities not only alleviate stress but also foster social skills through collaborative tasks, such as building tents, necessitating communication and cooperation among peers. Despite these benefits, various barriers, including urban environments, limited green spaces, socioeconomic factors, and parental constraints, impede children's access to nature.

### **Insights from Youth Workshops (Ages 18-26):**

Our workshops with young adults delved into diverse perspectives on nature and mental wellbeing. Key points raised include:

***Nature's accessibility:*** Participants affirmed that nature is inherently accessible to most individuals, whether through forests, parks, or beaches, highlighting the importance of utilizing these resources.

***Growing awareness of mental health:*** There is a gradual shift towards acknowledging the vital role of nature in promoting mental wellbeing, signaling a collective return to nature-driven lifestyles.

***Acceptance of man-made interventions:*** While nature enthusiasts often prioritize natural environments, there is recognition that man-made enhancements can facilitate accessibility, prompting a more inclusive approach.

***Impact of tourism on nature:*** Discussions underscored the significant influence of tourism on natural ecosystems, advocating for sustainable practices to preserve environmental integrity.

***Influence of social media:*** Participants noted the pervasive consumer-oriented culture propagated by social media influencers, often neglecting the importance of nature and wellbeing in lifestyle promotion.

**Interesting Facts from Member Towns:**

As a delightful addition to our discussions, we shared two intriguing insights from our member towns:

***Assikala, Finland:*** The town boasts an innovative app dedicated to nature and music, providing comprehensive information and organizing outdoor challenges to encourage community engagement.

***Koszeg, Hungary:*** A weekly musical gathering in a designated area near Koszeg unites residents every Friday evening, fostering a sense of community through shared musical experiences.

In conclusion, the workshops underscored the intrinsic link between nature, music, and youth wellbeing. By addressing barriers and embracing collaborative solutions, we can cultivate environments that nurture the holistic development of our youth, fostering healthier communities.

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to further collaboration towards our shared goals.

Warm regards,

Zino Vreysen  
Youth President