

Newbury Twin Town Association



Newbury



Braunfels



Bagnols-sur-Cèze



Eeklo



Feltre

Patron: The Town Mayor of Newbury

The Future of Europe

Discussion between members of the 7 Twin Towns

9th September 2016



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors. The Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

The Newbury Twin Town Committee set out to make the debate on the Future of Europe an active session involving all participants. As always the language barrier was the major issue to overcome. Similar sessions at past events often took the form of lectures from politicians or academics, sometimes illustrated, sometimes, but not always, translated. We decided to do away with this approach, to maximise the time available for participation and to avoid lengthy translations.



However, we did need to 'set the scene' so it was decided that a short 10 minute illustrated presentation in English would be delivered by the chair of the association, on the subject of 'why the UK had voted to leave the EU'.

This picture shows Ian Haslam, the Newbury Twin Town Association Chairman delivering his presentation to people from the seven towns at the Methodist Church in Newbury on Friday 9th September 2016.

Attendees from the seven participating countries: Britain, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy and Hungary, were then split into their language groups.



Each group was facilitated by a member of the Newbury Association who handed out a questionnaire (translated) to all present and instructed everyone to answer the 10 questions. Following this each group spent approximately 5 minutes discussing and debating each question, before coming back together to find out the results.

Participants from Bagnols-sur-Ceze taking part in the discussion.

With everyone back in the main auditorium, a representative from each country was handed a large colourful swingometer, with the national flag in the top right-hand corner, and the seven representatives stood in front of the audience. An eighth swingometer was also provided, which was used to display the average response from all seven countries. Each question was read out in turn, and each country's result was declared, shown visually by the swingometer. This ensured that everyone present could understand the results of the discussion, and kept the attention of those present right to the end.



The data obtained from the discussion has been further analysed in the attached in appendix A. Some of the interesting results include:

- The majority from all countries agreed/strongly agreed that they felt equally citizens of the EU and their country; that there should be free movement of people within the EU, and that the vote for Brexit had stimulated debate on the future of Europe.
- There was general agreement that the EU would still exist in 10 years time.
- The British and Hungarians strongly disagreed that the UK should make a quick exit from the EU, but the Belgians, French and Italians felt the UK should leave the EU quickly.
- The Belgians agreed with the British, that the Brexit vote had changed the way they perceived British people, but the vote to leave hadn't changed the opinions of the Hungarians and Spanish.

Appendix A

Graphical results for the questionnaires.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| | British |
| | German |
| | Belgium |
| | Spanish |
| | French |
| | Hungarian |
| | Italian |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Disagree |
| 2 | Disagree |
| 3 | Neutral |
| 4 | Agree |
| 5 | Strongly Agree |



