

Translation of an article by Claudia Stehle published in our local newspaper "Darmstädter Echo" of January 03, 2023

## New Attempt for Town Twinning

### In January Alsbach-Hähnlein Will Make a New Attempt to Get On with the Planned Town Twinning with Sulmona

**Alsbach-Hähnlein.** The official conclusion of town twinning between Alsbach-Hähnlein and the Italian Community of Sulmona has still not advanced any further. For almost 10 years Alsbach-Hähnlein has been in contact with Sulmona and they already participated in various European projects such as recently the project "Solidarity – Key to Europe".

At first, it had seemed as if the treaty could be signed in both communities in 2022, however, this has not yet been possible to realize. During a recent visit to Sulmona of the Chairman of the partnership association, Mr. Hans Hermann discussed with the local mayor, Mr. Di Pietro, and the city's administrative staff further steps to be taken. "The Italian partners do not understand that we do not make any progress" says Mr. Hermann.

He points out that since 2018 an official letter of intent of both communities had been existing and that already in July 2021 the parliament of Alsbach-Hähnlein had agreed to the town twinning. A possible conclusion of the treaty of friendship last spring did not happen. "Originally, Sulmona wanted to invite us to the official signing for coming March, does, however, not want to forestall our mayor, Mr. Sebastian Bubenzer" says Mr. Hermann. Now people wait for Mr. Bubenzer to take up this subject in the beginning of this year.

During the most recent session of the community parliament Mr. Bubenzer declared on demand of Mr. Volker Steitz, floor leader of IUHAS, concerning the present state of affairs of the planned partnership that during the most recent phone conversation with his Italian colleague the latter had still asked for time due to pending topic subjects of his community. Nevertheless, the administration would make a new advance in January for a meeting with Mr. Di Piero for a personal meeting of both mayors. On this occasion, according to Mr. Bubenzer, it is also planned to discuss the further steps to be taken at both communities for the official sealing of the joint partnership.

"Pleasing is the positive termination of our European project 'Solidarity – Key to Europe' which our partnership association had organized lately for our and eight further European communities from various countries of Europe" explains Mr. Hermann. With a meeting of all participants in Summer at the Albanian capital town of Tirana this project ended which had met at these communities with such positive echo that they now asked the partnership association of Alsbach-Hähnlein to organize a further European project. "Due to the high level of work involved we will, however, not be able to manage this on an honorary basis" replied Mr. Hermann. However, the association and the community will gladly join such project, if it is led by a different community.

In the meantime, continued Mr. Hermann, the accounts for the expenses amounting to 150,000 Euro for all nine communities had finally been settled with Brussels who previously had made a down payment of 60 percent and the final 40 percent to be passed on to the participants.

Text under picture: the ancient poet Ovid who was born in Sulmona in the year 43 b.C. is still today the most important citizen of the town and was honoured by a monument.