

AEHT - Newsletter

Dear AEHT Members

Another highly successful year draws to a close for the AEHT, which is attracting ever more member schools. 2009 saw a great wealth of activities, including the grandiose Annual Conference in Dubrovnik, the Christmas in Europe event in Poznan, and a host of high quality events and competitions organised by our member schools under the aegis of the AEHT. The year was also marked by the election of new National Representatives and a new Presidium, with the period of office being extended to four years. Furthermore the preparations for 2010 are well under way, and as you read this edition of the Newsletter you will see that the events calendar for next year looks very promising.

2009 Annual Conference in Dubrovnik

The 22nd Annual Conference, held from November 17th to November 22nd 2009, is now part of our history. Thanks to our hosts, the local hotel and tourism school and its director Antun Perušina, 700 delegates from 30 European countries experienced many emotional moments in this region which still bears the scars of the war of independence of the 90s.



Stari Most – the Old Bridge – bestrides the River Neretva – as a symbol of peace between the communities living in the town of Mostar

The Old Bridge - Stari Most – in Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina) was destroyed in 1993 and rebuilt ten years later to re-establish the link between the Croatian Catholic community to the Bosnian Muslim community; it was one of the historic sites visited by the delegates. In the same way the AEHT has successfully built a multitude of foot-bridges between the delegations arriving from the four corners of Europe, despite the differences by which you can tell them apart. It is very touching to see how our young students always manage to disregard all socio-cultural

prejudices and to form multinational teams to compete together in a programme of competitions.



Education – a much better way of using cartridges

The only 'bursts' allowed at the AEHT Conference are bursts of laughter

Numerous VIPs had come to the Conference to welcome this international gathering. We were treated to welcome speeches from the organiser Antun Perušina, from AEHT president Louis Robert, from Dubrovnik's mayor Andro Vlahušić, from Marija Vučković (deputy commissioner for the Dubrovnik-Neretva constituency), from Ivo Mujo (secretary of state), from the deputy of the Minister of Tourism Damir Bajš and from Prof. Dr. Radovan Fuchs (Minister for Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia); following their speeches they marked the official opening of the Conference by taking turns to ring their reception bells, as you can see in the photo below.



M. Radovan Fuchs
Minister of
Education

M. Ivo Mujo
Secretary of
State

Marija
Vučković
Deputy
Commissioner

Andro Vlahušić
Mayor of
Dubrovnik



The Conference is declared open as they take turns to ring the bells

Then came the moving entrance of the participating delegations wearing their schools' official uniforms and marching behind their national flag – looking rather like the presentation of the national delegations at the Olympic Games. And this Dubrovnik Annual Conference took place in the same Olympic spirit of fair-play, of tolerance, of respect, of sharing, of friendship and of excellence. One of our Association's most important priorities will always be the promotion of a better and peace-loving society through education and through international meetings.



The splendid conference hall in the Valamar Lacroma Resort



Parade of the delegations from the 30 countries represented



We were swept off our feet by the Lindo Folk Group from Dubrovnik

Generally speaking arrangements for the competitions were excellent, though some problems were experienced in applying the competition rules, resulting in the judging panels being obliged to exclude several competitors. In this connection the outgoing President Louis Robert who is now the vice-president responsible for fixed events, would like to make an appeal to participating schools:

‘Our student competitions are still the highlight of our Annual Conference, and the AEHT is the only association of hotel and tourism schools to offer this showcase to its participants. By bringing together delegates from different schools located in the four corners of Europe, over a period of five days we succeed in creating fresh links between students from different cultures, we help them overcome linguistic barriers, and we let their creative spirits come together to produce, at the end of the contest, results and creations that surprise us all, the fruits of a few hours of intense and spontaneous collaboration.



Klaus Enengl encourages Georgia Ruocco from the Longarone school (I)

Valentina Pualetto (I) and Caroline Roussin (F)

Valentino Vuličević from Dubrovnik (HR)

We have drawn up rules to **provide a framework for these contests**, to ensure that they run fairly, and to enable the greatest possible number of students to participate. The AEHT's aim is not to identify the best young expert in such and such a professional field, but rather to offer the participants the opportunity to get together in multinational and multicultural teams to carry out a project in a spirit of friendship, and without the pressure to always 'do more' and 'do it better' to which they are constantly subjected in today's world.'

This is why we have articles in our competition rules which:

1. lay down a minimum level of competence in English or French in order to be able to communicate with other participants;
2. limit registrations to one candidate per school, for each contest;
3. do not allow the same candidate to register for another contest at the conference;
4. limit the number of competition places available to each participating country.

We have to plan, organise, supervise and evaluate eight competitions with 350 students who don't know each other, who don't have the same cultural background, nor the same levels of education nor the same language competence – and this is no easy task. The rules are certainly a vital means of managing these activities properly, but they become unenforceable and even superfluous if those who take part in the competitions and those responsible for selecting the candidates do not respect the rules, or in some cases even read them.



The Competitions Committee together with the different judging panel members

This is why, for the first time this year, we have implemented a stricter check on the registration lists – and we have discovered a surprising number of competitions entrants who do not meet the selection criteria set out in our rules. We felt the need to be fair towards all the other entrants and decided to disqualify several of them when the prizes were awarded: this decision pained us as much as it did those who were thus penalised.

We have learnt our lesson, and for the next Annual Conference in Lisbon (Portugal) we will help the organisers to do a computer check of certain criteria at the registration stage, in order to avoid placing the students in a difficult situation for which they are not even to blame. We also hope that the member schools will learn their lesson by being more careful in their choice of entrants for next year's contests. If both schools and organisers assume their responsibilities, we will contribute to the quality of our Annual Conference, and at the same time show our respect and our gratitude to those who organise them, those who contribute to their smooth running and those who go to a lot of trouble to make the competitions into a unique 'show' which brings satisfaction to all the participants.'



In the thick of it – students in the culinary arts and restaurant service competitions



Andrea Del Capitano and Lucie Marchand arrange the food on the plates

Antun Perušina and Ivica Miljković – director of the Nono de Slano restaurant – enjoy their meals

Another important part of this Annual Conference was the confirmation of the results of the **elections to the Executive Board**, whose members – the national representatives – now take up their posts for a period of four years (until October 2013). In almost all cases the national representatives for member countries were re-elected. In the case of two countries there were no volunteers to undertake this task. The final results are as follows:

| COUNTRY | Elected Candidate |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| ALBANIA | VAQARRI Flutura |
| GERMANY | WEBER-POHL Sibylle |
| AUSTRIA | ENENGL Klaus |
| BELGIUM | SIEBENS Herman |
| BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA | SPASOJEVIC Boris |
| BULGARIA | ZLATANOV Ivan |
| CROATIA | BARANASIC Vesna |
| CYPRUS | ANDILIOS Nicos |
| DENMARK | KÜHLWEIN KRISTIANSEN Soren |
| SPAIN | SOLA -MORALES Carmina |
| ESTONIA | RAND Neeme |
| FINLAND | NIEMINEN Marit |
| FRANCE | COLLINET Annie |
| GREECE | NIKOLAKOPOULOS G. Nikolaos |
| HUNGARY | SASVARI Akos |
| ICELAND | PEDERSEN Helene H. |
| IRELAND | O'HARA John |
| ITALY | MERLONE Rinaldo |
| LATVIA | OZOLINA Silva |
| LITHUANIA | STASIUNIENE Birute |
| LUXEMBOURG | ROBERT Louis |
| MACEDONIA | NIKOLOVSKI Zoran |
| MALTA | ABELA Reginald |
| MONACO | None – no candidates |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| MONTENEGRO | DUSKO Lucic |
| NETHERLANDS | RUTGERS J.H. Hans (to be confirmed) |
| NORWAY | ANDREASSEN Stig |
| POLAND | PIENKOWSKA Boguslawa |
| PORTUGAL | PAIS Ana Paula |
| ROUMANIA | PIRJOL Razvan |
| RUSSIA | VASILIEVICH IVANOV Evgeny |
| SERBIA | VICIC Slavoljub |
| SLOVAKIA | SENKO Jozef |
| SLOVENIA | SPEC Jana |
| SPAIN | SOLA -MORALES Carmina |
| SWEDEN | LARSSON Arne |
| SWITZERLAND | GARTMANN Marc |
| TURKEY | CELIKTAS Aydin |
| UKRAINE | PALCHUK Marina |
| UNITED KINGDOM | None – no candidates |

These elections were duly followed by elections for a new Presidium by a ballot of the new Executive Board held on November 19th 2009 – the voting was monitored by Jana Spec and Herman Siebens; the results were ratified the following day by the General Assembly. The results of the election were as follows:

- President : Klaus Enengl – Austria
- Vice-presidents :
 - Louis Robert - Luxembourg (outgoing president),
 - Bogusia Pienkowska - Poland,
 - Ana Paula Pais – Portugal,
 - Neeme Rand – Estonia,
 - Annie Collinet – France.

Rinaldo Merlone, the Italian national representative, was appointed as a consultant to the new Presidium while awaiting the outcome of deliberations taking into account the large number of Italian member schools.



Natalia Komanicka
interpreter

Rinaldo Merlone
consultant

Finally Nadine Schintgen from Luxembourg is confirmed in her post as General Secretary. After five

years of respite Hans Russegger from Austria succeeds Klaus Enengl as Treasurer, and Natalia Komanicka from Slovakia replaces John Rees Smith as interpreter – though John remains the AEHT's official translator.

When the Extraordinary General Assembly was reconvened on November 20th – the meeting called in October in Diekirch had not achieved the necessary quorum – several parts of the statutes were revised, notably the length of the mandates of members of the Presidium and the National Representatives. The proposed changes were unanimously approved, thus ratifying the proposal made by the outgoing Presidium and Executive Board to extend the length of the mandate to four years (instead of three years, as previously)



Smiles from the new and old presidents

The 2010 calendar of events was another vital item on the agenda of our Dubrovnik meetings. Again this year we have received a large number of proposals, and when it came to allocating the AEHT subsidies we had some trouble making our decisions. The organisers have now been informed of our decisions.

Events advertised for 2010

| | |
|--|--|
| FEBRUARY | |
| February 19 th – 21 st | International Festival of Gastronomy: Sports & Health (Topic: Extrem sports), Faro (P) |
| MARCH | |
| March | Seminar on 'Dining with the population of Uragica - their gastronomy, culture, history, art and music, Oristano-Cabras, Sardinia (I) |
| March 4 th – 7 th | "In the West-Pomeranian land of fish flavours"- Seminar-workshop on Baltic fish, Kolobrzeg (PL) |
| March 25 th – 26 th | Competition 'Il Piatto Verde – Theme: The aromatic herbs of vitality', Riolo Terme (I) |
| March 25 th – 28 th | International Prize of Enogastronomy Gioacchino Rossini Gourmet, Loreto(I) |
| March 31 st | 5th edition of the Bartender G&T Cup Competition, Bled (SLO) |

| | |
|--|---|
| APRIL | |
| April 13 th – 15 th | Bartolomeo Scappi competition (Pastry – cooking – bar – sommelier competitions), Castel San Pietro Terme (I) |
| April 14 th – 18 th | 2 nd edition of the international competition on the typical gastronomy in the Teramo region, « Teramo in Tavola », Teramo (I) |
| MAY | |
| May | 5 th competition for Hotel Reception-ists & 3 rd competition in City tourism (Topic: mountains), Giulianova (I) |
| May | Gastronomy Competition «GASTRO 2010 » (HR) |
| JUNE or SEPTEMBER | |
| June or Sept. | AEHT Summer camp, Bad Ischl (A) |
| OCTOBER | |
| October 5 th – 10 th | AEHT Annual Conference, Lisbon (P) |
| October/ November | Eurocup 2010 - Junior bartenders competition (17 th edition), Prešov (SK) |
| DECEMBER | |
| December 3 rd – 9 th | 19th Christmas in Europe, Ponta Delgada, São Miguel Island, Azores (P) |

The Annual Conference concluded with an unforgettable breathtaking closing ceremony and gala evening. After the usual thanks to the organisers came the official handing of the flag to the future organiser - Turismo de Portugal; and then the winners were rewarded with thunderous applause et acclamations, all the schools getting carried away and offering their best wishes to the winning competitors.



Antun Perusina, director of the organising school, together with the winners of the 'Cocktail-Bar' competition



Winners of the 'Flambé' contest



Winners of the 'Reception' competition



AEHT Secretary General Nadine Schintgen applauds the winners of the 'Management' competition

Stijn Boonstra will certainly not forget his 23rd birthday for a long time: not only did he receive the gold medal in the Management competition, he was also lucky enough to be given a bouquet of flowers and a resounding chorus of 'Happy Birthday to You' sung by a room filled with 700 people.



Winners of the 'Culinary Arts' competition receive their prizes from Klaus Enengl

The complete list of the prize-winners in the eight competitions organised as part of the Dubrovnik Annual Conference has already been published on our website at www.aeht.lu.



Nedjeljko Jančić congratulates the gold-medal winners (above) and the bronze medal winners (below) of the 'Tourist Destination Presentation' competition



Ivan Karlić, Destination Manager of the 'Valamar Hotels & Resorts' group, presents the prizes to the 'Pastry' competition winners, and Louis Robert hands out the prizes to the winners of the 'Restaurant Service' contest.

At the gala evening marking the end of this amazing Conference, the AEHT was eager to show its solidarity with the L'Aquila hotel school in Italy, which had been ravaged by a terrible earthquake last spring. Little piggy-banks had been placed on each table, and enabled us to collect €520 in record time. This was part of the 'Gastronomy for Peace' initiative launched by Louis Robert several years ago, then re-launched on October 9th 2009 in favour of the L'Aquila school. .



The 'Kulturno umjetničko društvo Jedinstvo' group from Split

Gastronomy for Peace

We should like to take this opportunity to remind you of the arrangements for this third edition of the Gastronomy for Peace initiative. As for the previous versions, you are free to choose yourselves what action you wish to take. The important thing is that all the activities in connection with the project should be carried out with students, and that the young people are well informed of the objectives of the project.



The L'Aquila hotel school appeals to your generosity

The following list provides some ideas of what you could do:

- Organise a benevolent evening;
- Plan to sell food or other products produced by students;
- Organise conferences on subjects of your choice, and charge for entrance;
- Organise culinary arts lessons, with profits going to the project;
- Ask local hoteliers and restaurant owners to participate in the project by asking their clients to make a contribution to the project;
- Ask students to work for a day and to contribute their pay to the project.

The money collected should be paid into the account which we have opened for the purpose:

Account name: AEHT - Gastronomie pour la paix

Bank name: DEXIA-BIL

Account number: IBAN LU62 0024 1508 3338 8300

SWIFT Code: BILLULL

The money collected will be donated to the L'Aquila school in the spring of 2010. The Presidium plans to visit the school during its meeting at Teramo in June 2010, or at least to meet its director Domenico Evangelista.

If you have any equipment or utensils - on the list published on our website - which you could donate to the school, do not hesitate to contact them by e-mail (domenico.evangelista@istruzione.it) to agree on a delivery date and address. On behalf of the AEHT Presidium and the L'Aquila school, we should like to thank you in advance for responding to this good cause. As Domenico Evangelista put it so well in the e-mail he sent to thank us, 'We are truly grateful for so many gestures of solidarity. Our school is proud to be

part of the great AEHT European Family, and thanks you all for your efforts to help us through the Gastronomy for Peace initiative’.

Portugal has pride of place in 2010

During the closing ceremony of the Dubrovnik Annual Conference the AEHT flag once again began another journey. Antun Perusina, the Dubrovnik organiser, officially handed the flag to Ana Paula Pais, AEHT Vice-President and to Paulo Revés, Director of the department for coordination and management of the ‘Turismo de Portugal IP’ agency, since next year the 23rd Annual Conference will take place in Lisbon from October 5th to October 10th, and Christmas in Europe will be from December 3rd to December 9th in the Azores !



Paulo Revés and Ana Paula Pais await your visit in Lisbon in October 2010 for the next edition of the AEHT Annual Conference

Many thanks to Portugal for taking up the challenge of bringing forward by a year their Annual Conference, following the technical difficulties experienced by Poznan for 2010. The organising agency, ‘Turismo de Portugal I.P.’ is part of the Ministry for Economy and Innovation and is the national central tourism authority responsible for the promotion, improvement and sustainable development of tourism activity in Portugal. Its remit includes:

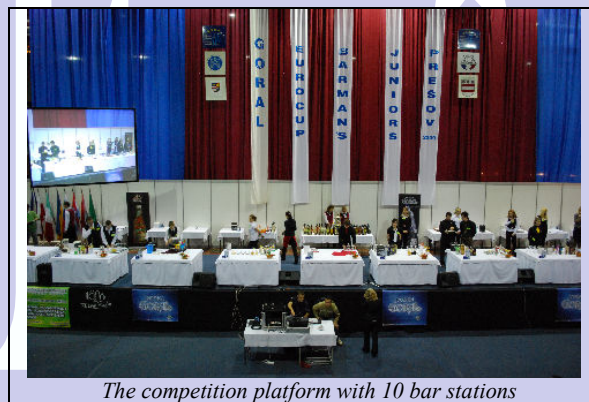
- Improving and developing tourism infrastructures;
- Developing training of human resources;
- Providing subsidies to the sector;
- Coordination of national and international campaigns to promote Portugal as a tourist destination;
- Regulation and inspection of betting activity.

To find out more please visit <http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/english> . Further information about the 2010 Annual Conference will be

available within a few weeks. The AEHT Head Office will keep you informed via e-mail.

EUROCUP 2009

At the end of October 2009 the 17th edition of Eurocup, the International Competition for Junior Bartenders, took place in Presov, a city in the eastern part of Slovakia. The Presov region is famous for its natural beauty (High Tatras Mountains and spa resorts) and cultural sights and monuments, like unique wooden churches, medieval town centres in Bardejov, Kežmarok, Levoča, Prešov, St. James church in Levoča with the highest wooden altar in the world, or Spiš Castle which is the largest castle in Central Europe. Some of these wonders are on the UNESCO list of world cultural heritage.



The competition platform with 10 bar stations

The competition was organised by Hotel Academy Presov and it was open to 2-membered teams from vocational schools and colleges. It consisted of two independent parts, classic and flair bartending. The task of the classic part was to prepare 3 portions of a short after dinner drink and 3 portions of a soft drink. The competitors had to use obligatory ingredients and one of the conditions was that the recipes registered for the competition had to be unique. Basically, the rules for the competition were those of the IBA-WCC, though they were adapted for the particular event. In flair bartending the competitors were supposed to prepare within a time limit of 5 minutes 3 portions of a drink of any category using any mixing methods. They were encouraged to dress in a theme costume to enhance their routine.

The programme started on Monday 26 October. After arrival there was a registration of all participants on the premises of the Hotel Academy followed by a meeting of team leaders with the organisers and the vice-president of the Slovak Bartender Association whose members along with

members of Polish Bartender Association were assigned as members of the judging panel. The first day began with the opening ceremony that was held in the historic building of Jonáš Záborský Theatre. The director of the Hotel Academy Jozef Šenko and the Mayor of Prešov Pavol Hagyari welcomed all the participants, who arrived from 9 different countries, namely Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Ukraine. The team that travelled the longest distance was that from Mexico. The audience applauded the programme performed by students of a local school that can also be proud of having excellent singers and dancers. The evening finished with a cocktail party on the premises of the theatre.



View of the audience

Excited supporters

The fantastic atmosphere, full of beautiful colours and fragrances culminated at 5 pm, when the award ceremony started. One of good things about the Eurocup competition is that all participants receive an award, as all of them are divided into one of three levels, golden, silver, or bronze. You can find final results of the competition at www.aeht.eu. The award ceremony was followed by a reception on the premises of the Hotel Academy with a wide variety of cold and hot buffets, accompanied by excellent wines and mixed drinks.



Highly rhythmic dances beguiled the audience during the opening ceremony



Martin Hudak busy preparing his 'soft drink'

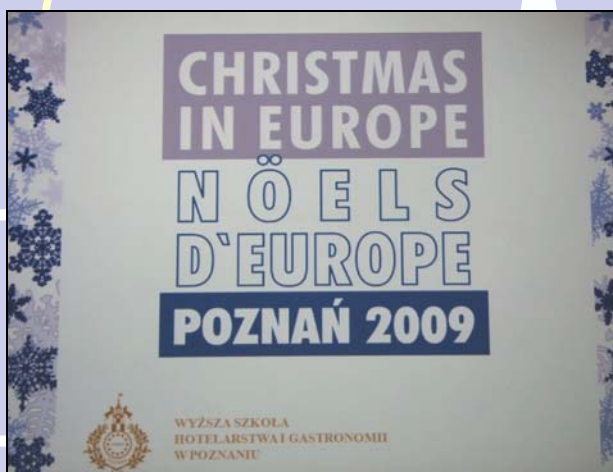
The competition itself took place on Tuesday, 29 October. As every year it attracts more and more participants and spectators, the organisers were forced to transfer the event from the Jonáš Záborský Theatre to the Town Sports Hall that offers more space for both the participants and the spectators. The Hall seems to be the right place as this year's edition of Eurocup hosted 44 teams with 92 competitors and about 1500 visitors came to watch the competition that is probably the biggest event for junior bartenders in Europe. There were 10 bars on the stage with 5 bartenders mixing their drinks while another group of 5 bartenders was getting ready for their performance. Dynamic music and support from the audience - most of them were students of Slovak hotel schools supporting their team - was a perfect background for the show going on on the stage.

Once the competition was over, everybody felt relaxed, so Wednesday 30 October was just the right time to get to know the city of Prešov and the surrounding region. After interesting guided walking tour presenting the history and some of the sights of Prešov there was a bus tour to the town of Stará Ľubovňa prepared for the participants. The local castle is one of the best preserved and the most beautiful castles in Slovakia with many attractive exhibitions. As it was rather windy up there on the hill, the tour continued with a visit to a huge liquor factory Gas Familia, which was the main sponsor of this year's Eurocup, where there was a welcome shot and presentation on the process of vodka production. The local factory is one of the biggest European companies producing alcohol that is subsequently used by many famous companies to produce different brands of hard liquors. On the way back to Prešov there was a stop in a typical Slovak salaš - wooden cottage - restaurant with typical Slovak food, local Šariš beer tasting (they say that Šariš beer is the best Slovak beer and it has achieved many international awards) and Slovak

folk music. The day finally wound up in the Cuba Libre Coffee&Cocktail Bar with music, mixing drinks and bar games which was a perfect and symbolic finish of a great event.

Christmas in Europe 2009 in Poznan
Yet another fine edition ...

The 18th edition of Christmas in Europe took place this year in Poznan in Poland. It was organised for the second time by the private 'Wyzsza Szkola Hotelarstwa I gastronomi' school, reputed to be one of the best in the country.



As always since the beginnings of Christmas in Europe, the concept of the event rests on the three pillars: the **exhibition** of table decoration and the Christmas traditions of each participating school; a **European buffet** for which everyone brings or prepares Christmas specialities; and final the **cultural part**, in which each school presents a show intended to be connected to the traditions of Christmas.

This year in Poznan there were 24 schools from right across Europe (AT, AL, BY, CZ, EE, FI, FR, GR, HU, IT, KZ, LT, LU, PL, PT, RU, SE, UA) who had replied to the Poznan school's invitation to be present from December 3rd to December 8th. The school's team, headed by the admirable Danuta Przybylak, ensured that the conditions were perfect in every respect for hosting the delegations. As well as the pleasingly frenzied activity surrounding the installation of the exhibition stands, the opening ceremony of December 4th was a suitably solemn affair, as befits a country steeped in religious tradition. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by representatives of the city government, the church and the military. After the speeches came the imposing arrival of a large European flag accompanied by the European anthem; and then we

proceeded to visit the stands, decorated with taste and skill.



Inauguration of the exhibition hall with the traditional cutting of the ribbon

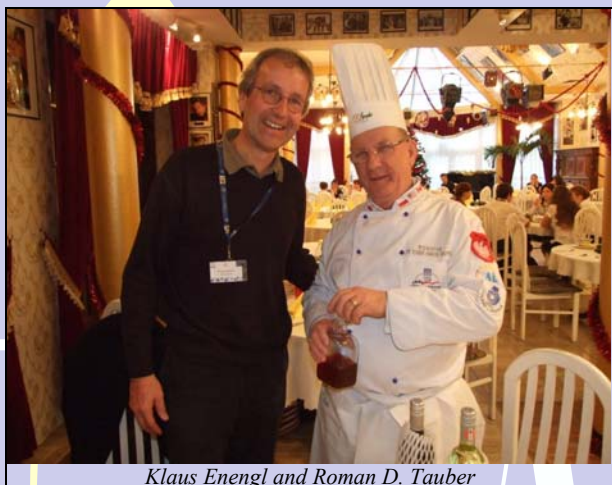
Another tradition was respected, that of the colourful inaugural parade through the town, which involved a police escort, trumpeters, guards dressed in costumes, and an official carriage containing Roman D. Tauber, Rector of the Poznan school, Christiane Keller (Mother Christmas) and Klaus Enengl, the new AEHT President accompanied by his wife. The parade was followed by a solemn mass in the St Stanislas church, during which the celebrating priest emphasised the traditional Christmas values of sharing – and wished the participants in the congregation a pleasant stay in the city.



Roman D. Tauber, Klaus Enengl, accompanied by his wife, and Christiane Keller get ready for the inaugural parade through the city

The European buffet, always much appreciated, handsomely repaid the effort invested by the 24 schools present – and justice was certainly done to the food as the guests and delegations descended on it with good-humoured enthusiasm. The cultural part of the event saw fifteen schools performing in turn in a variety of

styles: dances, more or less successful sketches, and finally a highly frenzied and physical display from Belarus and the Ukraine.



Klaus Enengl and Roman D. Tauber

The gala evening and the farewell ceremony were also sumptuous, taking place in a lecture hall which had been converted into a dining hall, the exhibition stands having been totally dismantled. The diners enjoyed speeches by various VIPs, including the speech by Klaus Enengl thanking our Polish hosts on behalf of the AEHT, the presentation of individual and collective gifts to the participating schools, and finally the handing over of the AEHT flag from Poland to Portugal and to the Azores, with another rendition of the European anthem to close the official part of the proceedings. The gala dinner, served with attention to every detail by the restaurant team, did nothing to dint the reputation of this Poznan school, which is already lined up to run the Annual Conference in 2011.



The torch (or flag!) is passed to Filipe Rocha – organiser of the next Christmas in Europe

Don't miss Jo Laengy's detailed reports on Christmas in Europe in Poznan as well as on the Dubrovnik Annual Conference, which you can read at www.aeht.eu/

Here is the calendar of future editions of **Christmas in Europe**:

- 2010: Azores, Portugal
- 2011: Semmering, Austria
- 2012: Bled, Slovenia
- 2013: Marseilles, France

Virtex4all vient de se réunir en République tchèque

The latest meeting of the Virtex4all 'transfer of innovation' project, in which the AEHT is a represented by John Rees Smith, took place on December 4th and 5th at the Poděbrady hotel school in the Czech Republic, where their host was the deputy principal Eva Svobodová. The school is very centrally located – the building used to be the police station – and has its own commodious training hotel. The meeting was arranged by the Colorez agency, run by Corine Horstra and Elzemien Warnink; the project partners travelled from Estonia, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom to meet in this charming spa town a couple of hours drive from Prague.



The project team hard at work

Poděbrady has a castle perched above the river Elbe, and an attractive market square with a bustling Christmas market; its pride and joy is the statue of George of Poderbrady (Jiří z Poděbrad), King of Bohemia – one of the very first Europeans, who proposed a pan-European peace treaty way back in 1464.

On their first evening the partners were welcomed by the School's principal, Dr Jana Podoláková who joined them for a welcome drink and a sumptuous dinner served by the students. Jana is the Czech Republic's AEHT national representative and a passionate advocate of student and teacher exchanges, as she told her guests in her welcome speech – before they moved on to the serious business of getting acquainted with the wide variety of

dumplings and beer to which the Czechs are so partial.

The main tasks at this third meeting were to continue the work on clarifying the levels offered in Virtex using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEF), and to introduce an element of 'intercultural communication' into the materials. Colorez had invited to the meeting two distinguished Dutch academics who were experts in these two fields: Ellie Liemberg who is well known for her work on the implementation of the CEF, and Barbara Schouten, a lecturer in Intercultural Communication at the University of Amsterdam.



The team relaxing in the Polabske Open Air Museum

After the final business meeting on the Saturday morning, it was time for the cultural part of the meeting: Eva gave the group a lightening guided tour of Poděbrady, then they headed for the Polabske Open Air Museum – a collection of traditional Czech rural dwellings, complete with furniture and domestic implements as well as tools used on the farms. On the way back they called in at an artists' colony in the forest at Kerskov, where they bought artefacts and drank potent punch at tables in the garden.

The gastronomic apogee of the stay in Bohemia came on the last night, at the Lovas & Lovas restaurant, a prestigious establishment run by two brothers who studied at the Poděbrady hotel school.

On Sunday morning the delegates said our farewells, promising to meet again in Estonia in June, and again in Zaragoza in September.

THIS AND THAT

News from our AEHT Members

1. Déglon S.A.S - Excellent Cutlery from Thiers, France

Moïse Déglon is the son of the present Mayor of Thiers and Chairman of DÉGLON S.A.S., a French cutlery maker located in Thiers, France; the company has been a professional member of the AEHT since 2004. Moïse studied political science in Paris before working in the fields of diplomacy and international cooperation in Central America, Africa and Europe. He joined the family firm in 2008 as a sales executive. At his company's display stand at the AEHT Annual Conference in Dubrovnik he had the opportunity to present a broad range of the firm's products.



Moïse Déglon represented DÉGLON S.A.S. for the first time at the AEHT Annual Conference

Moïse Déglon told us that Thiers, a town of 13,353 inhabitants in the Auvergne, has been the cradle of French knife-making for six centuries. Even today more than a thousand people in Thiers are employed in knife-making. Moïse's great-grandfather, originally from the Vaud canton in Switzerland, came here to settle in France.

'In 1921 my great grandfather Jean Déglon, a Swiss engineer, came to join a community of Swiss Huguenot engineers who had come to settle at Les Sarraix, a little village in the mountains above Thiers. The main activity in the region was cutlery making, and he set up a small craft workshop, which quickly became an industrial operation'.



Moïse Déglon presenting his products to the outgoing president

❖ **How has the company changed over time?**

For centuries the cutlery industry in Thiers depended on the water power of its river, the Durolle, which also provided water for quenching or tempering the steel. With the arrival of electricity and more modern techniques, the industry moved out of the upper town to establish itself gradually on the plain. Our company followed this trend when it moved into new premises in the 1970s.

Since then the firm has taken on a radically new shape and adopted industrial processes. The present managing director Thierry Déglon increased the firm's output more than five-fold in the 70s and 80s, giving the company an international dimension.

At present we have two companies: DÉGLON, which concentrates on professional equipment, with around 50 employees, and ALBERT DE THIERS, which makes consumer products with around 20 employees.

❖ **How are your products different from those of your competitors?**

DÉGLON enjoys a solid reputation based on the robustness and practicability of its products and on their innovative design. Every year we think hard about ergonomic innovations, better steel quality and new uses for our products. Our 'Grand Prix DÉGLON for Innovation' is a way of feeding in new ideas from our end-users, and these ideas can result in new ranges. A considerable portion of our annual budget is spent on development and innovation, resulting in around 30 patent registrations and registered designs, demonstrating our company's dynamism. So in 2009 DÉGLON won the Regional Innovation Trophy, presented by the National Institute for Industrial Property (INPI). This prize recognises the success of companies at regional and national level, and it is rare for an industrial SME to be awarded it. At national level the winners might include for example pharmaceutical or biotechnology research laboratories, or cutting-edge companies in engineering or new technologies.

❖ **Why should we buy your products rather than those of your competitors?**

All of our products are **guaranteed for life** because they are very robust and made from the finest possible materials. All our skill, all our drive for innovation, all our client responsiveness are directed towards finding the best way of fulfilling the needs of our users, with whom we have a very close relationship; indeed, it is through our contacts with the users of our products that we are able to improve the products.

Furthermore we offer a **very broad range of products**. We can supply cutlery which is excellent value for money to large institutions for example, while at the same time producing up-market products which are the result of high-level manufacturing skills.

In addition we have set up a **wide-reaching network of distributors dealing with professionals**, both in France, Europe and the whole world, thus making our products available almost everywhere. Our lifetime guarantee enables clients to exchange products in case of problems, whether it be in Europe, Japan or Australia. In fact we export around a third of our production, mostly to the United States, to the United Kingdom, to Japan and to the rest of Europe. We have a presence in around 30 countries.



The famous DEGLON knife case

❖ **What materials do you use for your knives?**

All our knives are made from stainless steel. We use different processes for making the blades: forging or cutting. For some of our ranges (Silex Premium®, Silex®, Pro N515®) we use Stainless N515®, a very new type of steel usually used in the aeronautical industry and in making surgical instruments. This steel undergoes a double fusion in a nitrogen environment in the factory of our specialist steel supplier, and is then subjected to a double heat-treatment with nitrogen in our own workshops at the 'tempering' stage. Taking the blade very rapidly down to a very low temperature enables us to fix the steel's

molecular structure and to thus obtain a finer and more even grain in the steel – giving it cutting properties that are considerably better than standard steel, especially in terms of enduring sharpness.



The 'honeycombed' Santokuknife made from Silix Prémium steel

Steels generally used for European cutlery are very different from those found in Japanese knives for example. Stainless consists mostly of steel, then carbon and other ingredients such as vanadium, chrome or molybdenum, used for their properties which improve rust-prevention and cutting performance. In Japan they traditionally use steels containing a high proportion of carbon (1% in general) while in Europe a traditional slicing knife will be made from steel containing a lower proportion (0.5% in general). The higher the proportion of carbon in the steel, the better its cutting properties the first few times it is used. But it will be more susceptible to rust, and more difficult to maintain: the knife's cutting edge will be less hard-wearing (because it is harder, like glass) and you cannot sharpen it with a sharpening steel. That is why we prefer the European tradition, and why we are constantly in search of ways of improving the **cutting properties of our knives**. N515 Stainless is one solution, as is the research carried out on the resilience of the blades or the sharpening angle – a very important consideration in the longevity of a cutting edge.

❖ What are the different products that you design?

Starting from the knife per se, we have developed other **utensils for the different food-related trades**: butchery and cooked meats, bakery and cake-making, cheese-making, fish preparation etc. So we make flexible stainless spatulas and other utensils for cake-making such as pastry-cutters, pastry pincers, and our patented 'pelles-rondes®' round cake slices. Moreover, we have also invented the patented Stop-Glisse® slip-prevention system used for serving food in institutional canteens: the handles of the utensils (serving spoons and ladles, forks, angled slices, etc) have a small notch which prevents them from slipping

into the food tray or the saucepan. It's a very simple idea, which we have patented and which is of enormous advantage to the professionals.



Utensils with the slip-preventing notch

Ambiance V-shaped knife

We also manufacture utensils for preparing and decorating fruit and vegetables (peelers, apple-corers, etc). 20 years or so ago there were only three manufacturers of this type of utensil in Europe. We have kept our traditions while inventing new models such as the patented 'Cuillère d'amour®' (love spoon) which is a heart shaped apple mould, or the 'décozest' (a zest-peeler and flute-cutter all in one, invented by my father in the 80s and since then copied by a lot of other manufacturers). We stay tuned to the professional market and **combine innovation with tradition to make products which last for decades**. The tomato knife which was presented to the Conference delegates is a design produced by my great grand father in the 40s – and it has withstood the test of time since then.



Very stylish knife designed by Mia Schmallenbach

Recently we designed a **range of highly original knives, the Meeting®**, based on an idea by Mia Schmallenbach, a young German designer. It consists of a set of four knives entirely cut out by laser, which fit into each other in a stainless steel base. Obviously this does not have a purely professional application, but the creation has won several prizes and enables us to demonstrate our aptitude for skilful innovation.

❖ Please could you describe your first contact with the AEHT, and especially your first contacts with our member schools

This first contact has been a very positive experience. We have been members of the AEHT for a number of years, but this is the first time that we have taken part in the Annual Conference. DÉGLON has **considerable**

experience of working with French hotel schools. The attraction for us was the opportunity to make contact with the schools from other European countries so that we could look at how they operate. In France the students usually have their own knife case in their first year. Over the years we have perfected several ways in which students and teachers can **pack and carry their knives**. Thus our cases have storage systems designed to meet **safety and hygiene concerns**, such as the Fix-Class® system. This is something which we should like to offer to the other schools in Europe.



The DEGLON 'Classe 4' knife case with 31 pieces, stowed using a carefully designed storage system

Thanks to my various conversations with teachers and students from countries ranging from Iceland to Italy and from Portugal to Poland, I have noticed a wide variety of practices: some students have very little equipment, others make do with the four or five indispensable items, while yet others have the advantage of a broad selection of utensils. So there are many different scenarios and opportunities to be investigated, and good practices to be shared between countries. This is one of the great advantages of working with the AEHT: each member **will share their experiences** with the other countries, and **this type of imitation can only be a positive thing**.

DEGLON is fortunate in being well able to adapt, not least because of its well-qualified and responsive staff. This enables us to offer **sets of equipment at the schools' request**. As soon as I get back, we will follow up the contacts which I have made with a view to establishing medium and long-term relationships and exchanges of ideas. So I'll be making proposals in accordance with the needs communicated to me by the teachers and heads of department whom I have met. I should make it clear that our sales policy with schools is different from the relationship they may have with our usual suppliers, in that we charge **special prices for schools**, given that the procurement of equipment is financed either through public funds or directly by the students themselves. What we want above all is to

establish **long-term relations with future professionals**.

❖ **How should schools go about placing an order?**

The best way is to contact us, either myself (moise.deglon@deglon.fr) or the company (www.deglon.com), so that we can determine precisely **what the need is, and make a specific offer**. Following that, we prefer to work through our local distributors, especially because our products carry a life-time guarantee. We want to have a local point of contact for the equipment and for the follow-up. There are some countries where we have no local distributor, and in these cases we would certainly take the opportunity of working directly with the school. However, we refuse to sell directly over the internet, unless it is through partner sites. This is not in keeping with our sales strategy, because it would be cutting the ground from under the feet of our distributors, with whom we wish to maintain a relationship based on confidence.

❖ **Do you plan to come back to the Lisbon Annual Conference next year?**

I would very much like to. The atmosphere, the interesting discussions and the high level of the competitions make this Conference an event with which we would wish to associate ourselves for the long term.

To find out more about the activities of DÉGLON S.A.S, please visit their website at <http://www.deglon.com>.

2. Restolingua - a highly effective tool for translating menus



Mises en bouche Ragusa/
Ragusa appetisers

Crêpes méditerranéenne/
Mediterranean Pancakes

In this article we should like to give you an example of how to use the Restolingua programme. You will find below the French menu of the gala dinner organised at the Dubrovnik Annual Conference in function room of the Valamar Lacroma Resort – superbly set out and decorated for the occasion. This delicious dinner was

prepared by the students from the Dubrovnik hotel school, with the help of the staff from the above-mentioned hotel. In all aspects of their culinary arts, food service and hospitality operations, the Dubrovnik team, including staff from the Valamar Lacroma Resort, Argosy and President hotels, thoroughly surpassed themselves. Try out the programme for yourself!

Mises en bouche Ragusa:

Brochette de thon mariné, anchois à la sauce citron, pâté de poisson

Entrée :

Soupe aux pois chiches préparé au Prošek

1^{er} Plat :

Crêpes méditerranéennes servies avec une sauce aux tomates dalmate

2^e Plat :

Médallions de bœuf et de veau Accompagnés d'une pyramide de légumes grillés, d'un gratin dauphinois et d'une sauce aux pignons

Dessert :

Gâteau de fromage aux poires fait maison Servi avec un coulis aux cerises Amaréna

Café

If you would like to translate this menu from French, or any other menu, into one of the following languages: Chinese, Dutch, English, French, Italian, Japanese or Spanish, then please visit the website of our partner Restolingua at www.restolingua.com.



Médallions de bœuf et de veau / Medallions of beef and veal
Gâteau au fromage et Amaréna / Cheese and Amaréna cake

Restolingua is currently looking for coordinating schools to carry out two tasks: first to translate the 22,000 expressions in the system into all the languages of the AEHT's member countries which are not yet online, and secondly to add expressions relating to regional specialities, dishes and ingredients. Anyone interested should contact directly the company chairman Paul R.A.J. Van den Heuvel or his wife and head of operations Arike Vermazen (email: arike.vermazen@gmail.com). The rates of pay, the cost of using the system and the agreement signed by the AEHT and Restolingua are available at www.aeht.eu.



All that remains is for us to wish you a pleasant festive season. Wherever you tread in 2010, the friends of the AEHT will always find a welcome, they will always find a new road to take, strewn with marvellous surprises, new people to meet, new acquaintances, knowledge and exchanges. This is how the AEHT will remain forever strong.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Nadine SCHINTGEN
AEHT General Secretary

Text : N. Schintgen with contributions from J. Laengy, J. Rees Smith, L. Robert, M. Sotak

Photos: N. Schintgen, J. Laengy, the organisers of AEHT events and projects

English translation: J. Rees Smith

French translation: N. Schintgen

Our professional partners:

