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Friendship Manifesto between the Municipality of Fossombrone and the Municipality of Middelburg



TOWN TWINNING
MIDDELBURG
FOSSOMBRONE
2026

Considering that:

- Fossombrone is an Italian town with 9,063 inhabitants, located in the province of Pesaro and Urbino in the Marche Region. The town of Fossombrone is the main center of the middle Metauro Valley and is characterised by a mediaeval-style spread across the slope of a hill, dominated by a Citadel and the ruins of the Malatesta Fortress. The modern part of the town extends on the plain on both sides of the Metauro River, while the industrial area is located along the Via Flaminia, after the locality of San Martino del Piano in the direction of Fano, where 2000 years ago stood the ancient Roman city of Forum Sempronii, of which the magnificent Archaeological Park remains today, with its Via Flaminia still intact;
- Middelburg, located in the southwest of the Netherlands, is the capital of Zeeland on the Walcheren peninsula with a population of around 50.000. It was a significant trading hub during the Middle Ages and later a key center for the Dutch East India Company. Much of its city center was destroyed during World War II but was later restored, blending modernity with its historical character;
- both cities are connected through the cultural figure of Paul of Middelburg (1445–1533), who embodied European unity long before the term existed. Born in Middelburg and living most of his life in Italy, Paolo was Bishop of Fossombrone and a key Renaissance intellectual. His work as a scientist, mathematician, and astrologer linked these cities through his travels and contributions, including his role in reforming the Julian calendar. He was a “European citizen” even before the term existed. He travelled throughout Europe for study and research, constantly interacting with many intellectuals of his time. Fossombrone and Middelburg are united by an example of “Contemporary Europe from the Renaissance”, where science, astrology, and religion coexist harmoniously without prejudices or stereotypes. It is, therefore, a meeting of communities free from preconceived notions, both then and now;
- the project - named PRomoting Excellences of Renaissance Glorious TwinEd towns (PRESAGE) - general objective is to promote solidarity and a sense of European belonging through the enhancement of the cultural, historical, and gastronomic heritage of the cities of Fossombrone and Middelburg, inspired by the figure of Paul of Middelburg as a symbol of union and intercultural exchange, contributing to a greater awareness of the cultural diversity of the European Union.



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With the aim of achieving the following objectives:

- to establish closer ties between the two cities in a spirit of friendship and collaboration, with the intention of transforming an effective and supportive collaboration between the two communities in various areas of civic life.
- to reinforce the idea that an effective and fruitful collaboration is a fundamental prerequisite for a mutual understanding;
- to strengthen ties between inhabitants and organisations in the community, exchange best practices, promote tourism, preservation of cultural heritage, food and wine sector and develop local culture and history.

Now therefore, this manifesto stipulates the following:

Art.1

The premises are a substantial and integral part of this document.

Art.2

Municipalities involved will pursue knowledge and development objectives in the following areas:

- exchange of experiences and information between institutions operating in the fields of art and education, promoting and developing institutional relationships in the educational and cultural fields;
- exchange of best practices to promote tourism in their respective territories, considering their distinctive characteristics and shared historical ties;
- exchange of experiences in various economic sectors;
- exchange of experiences in the social services sector;
- exchange of experiences between administrative staff of the two institutions.

Art.3

In order to achieve the above objectives, Municipalities will use the following tools:

- exchanges between cultural institutions to introduce their communities to the history and culture of the region with which a friendly relationship is being established;
- exchanges between cultural associations operating in the arts and entertainment fields to foster understanding of their respective cultural contexts;
- comparisons between economic sectors, particularly aimed at understanding local products and their specific characteristics;
- comparisons between delegations from the two municipalities to compare problems and solutions in the organization of social life in their respective communities.

Art.4



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A specific program of socio-cultural, economic, and professional exchange Initiatives will be implemented between the two communities, as described in Art. 2.

Art.5

The measures resulting from the above program, which will be brought to the attention of all members of the local community, will be implemented by the relevant sectors, overall coordinated by specific representatives of both entities.

Art.6

It is reiterated that this friendship manifesto is preparatory to a potential future Friendship Manifesto between the two cities, once all the cultural and social aspects underlying this document will be confirmed and elaborated.

**For the Municipality of
Fossombrone**



Massimo Berloni

Mayor

**For the Municipality of
Middelburg**



Carla Doorn

Deputy mayor



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