Toolkit for town twinning

Limassol, Cyprus, 18 May 2010
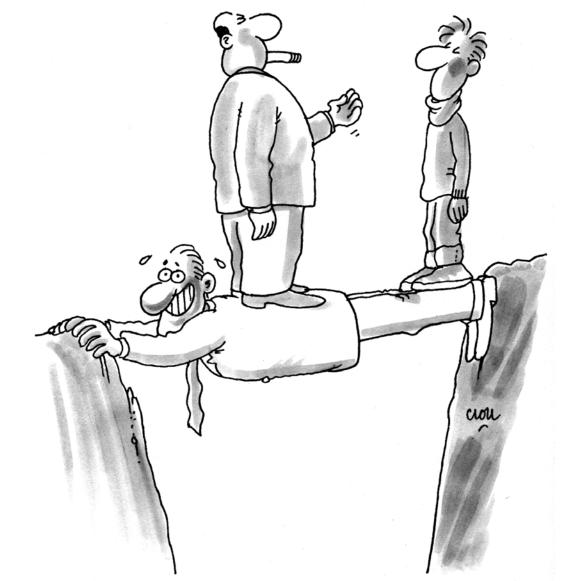Anne Geens

1. A little history

- Reconciliation after World War II
  - Initiative of French and German mayors
  - Example was followed very fast by all western countries

- New boost after the fall of the Berlin Wall with countries in Eastern Europe

- Bringing people together / Make friendships across borders

2. European movement

- More than 30 000 twinning links in Europe

- A unique instrument to promote European citizenship and European integration

- European support since 1989
  - Now 'Europe for Citizens' programme

- Europe from bottum up
  - Official twinning agreement
  - Involvement of citizens
  - Long term perspective

KOKSIJDE OOSTDUINKERKE

EUROPESE GEMEENTE
verbroederd met

Bad Schallerbach (O - 1955)

Biedenkopf an der Lahn (D - 1966)

La Charité sur Loire (F - 1972)

Konz (D - 1972)

Wépion sur Meuse (B - 1974)

Antheit (Wanze) (B - 1997)

Neustadt an der Orla (D - 1999)

3. Toolkit for twinning

- Analysis of the starting situation
  - Vision
  - Obstacles
  - What to offer
  - Budget
  - Responsibility for the execution of projects

- Identification of the target groups
  - Youth / Disabled / Elderly / schools / policy makers…

- Identification of objectives

- Methodology
  - City administration takes all responsibility
  - City administration does practical organisation and execution – content and ideas come from civil society organisations
  - Twinning committee has all responsibility – strong ties with city governance needed

- Communication -'marketing' strategy
  - Use of town newsletter – website – local radio

4. Do's and don'ts of town twinning committees

- Advantages
  - Accessible intiative
  - Decrease costs administration
  - More flexible
  - Fundraising
  - Continuity
  - Independant

- Disadvantages
  - Communication with twintown
  - Involvement city council

- Composition of the twinning committee
  - Representatives local civil society organisations
  - Representatives city council and administration
  - Active citizens
  - Number?
- Legal framework
- Possible tasks – responsibilities
  - Content
  - Framework
  - Relation with city council
  - Contact with twinning partner
- Relationship committee – city council

5. Future challenges

- Keeping the twinning alive and dynamic
- Involving young (new) people
- Putting new themes on the twinning agenda
  - Priority themes of the Europe for Citizens Programme
    - Permanent themes: Future of EU and its basic values, Participation and democracy in Europe, Inter-cultural dialogue, employment, social cohesion and sustainable development, Impact of EU policies in societies
    - Yearly themes: European year for combatting poverty and social exclusion (2010) European year of volunteering (2011) European year for Active Ageing and intergenerational Solidarity
- Beneficial to citizens and to the local authorities
- Multilateral twinnings

Thank you for your attention