

International Exchange of Experience of European Officers 27-28th November 2000 in Stuttgart

TOPIC A: Mainstreaming European subjects into local governments
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- ◆ The tasks of European officers
 - To create general awareness about European policy, this means:
 - *good information*
 - *participating in international conferences*
 - *participating in international organisations and networks*
 - *participating in projects*
 - *support of national associations and CEMR*
 - *show success stories*
 - EU-Funds
 - Information of the citizens
 - Networking within the city to bring all relevant actors together
 - Information of the administration and analysis of information
 - Training / Educating the municipal staff in EU-Affairs
 - Monitoring of EU-Legislation
 - Giving the city a European profile (events)
 - Filters and gateways of information

- ◆ European officers are catalysts to make the city more European minded, they have the experience, contacts, connections, they know the „European culture.“

- ◆ EU-Funds may serve as an „entrance,, to European work. But European work in cities /towns needs a political foundation (strategy), needs to become part of a „wider European thinking“ to be sustainable. It is necessary to have political support and support of the top-management.

- ◆ The basis for a successful co-operation between the EU-Officer and the administration is a „European culture,, in the administration. To create this „European culture,, training / European education is an important tool.

TOPIC B: EU-Programmes

- ◆ Finding partners is not a major problem. Existing twinnings can be a helpful tool. But the search for partners is not limited to twin-cities.
- ◆ Money (co-financing) is of course a topic. But it does not need to be a stumbling bloc if a „climate for co-financing,, is build up.

This can be done:

- by successful projects (projects as selling points)
- by adjusting the international European work to the daily work (don't create projects for (existing) programmes, find programmes for projects).

- ◆ Small cities /Towns can participate in EU-programmes, although it can be a problem for individual communes.

The following solutions may be used:

- co-operation between several small cities/towns within an area/region
- using existing co-operations between cities and towns on the national level for EU-programme participation
- regional co-operation between cities and towns

- ◆ Lobbying is an important feature in EU-programmes. A personal presence is necessary for successful applications. But this presence needs not necessarily to be through an office. What counts is the personal contact.
- ◆ Projects stimulate another kind of working
 - contracted deadlines
 - calculations
 - intercultural co-operation
- ◆ Projects help finding different solutions for common problems
- ◆ Projects give incentives to improve the quality of the administration (learning from each other)
- ◆ Projects help to find a position of the municipality in the globalisation
- ◆ It is much better to be pro-active than re-active
- ◆ Negative problems
 - administration work bad, it can even prohibit to participate in programmes
 - language problems (programmes are not always translated)
 - late payments
- ◆ Changing partners often is not a problem, the problem is, that you need to be able to rely on them -that the partners can and will deliver their work at the right time. It takes time to build trust
- ◆ Bringing in consultants can be a useful tool - but check them first - their past record. It takes time to build trust.

1. Municipalities can play a role in bringing Europe closer to the citizens. As the level which is closest to the citizens they can act as an information broker, who delivers factual information. They are best equipped to „translate“ Europe into the daily life of the citizens. Thus Municipalities have their own role, which is different from the information and „advertising“ needs of the EU-Institutions and national governments.
2. SME's can be part of the local information policy. As their information needs are very special, their organisations (for example Chamber of Commerce) play an important role as well.
3. Bringing the EU closer to citizens is not just a question of idealism, it is
 - part of marketing the city as having an international profile
 - preparing the ground for participation in EU-projects
4. If this factual information is not available or not known, there is a role for national associations
5. Financial sources of the EC and EP have to be used or have to be created
6. EU-officers are brokers between the supply and demand of information
7. Stories on „social tourism“ can be a problem. Hiding from the press does not help. Feed the journalists instead. Invite them along on trips too.