

What is City Twins Association?

In 2006

The City Twins association was established in December 2006 as a result of City Twins Cooperation Network project (2004 – 2006). The project and later, the association has concentrated on developing co-operation between the city twins especially in following sectors:

- Co-operation between the city administrations
- Local industrial development
- Promotion of labor mobility
- Social and health issues
- Border crossing
- Education and training
- Cultural co-operation
- Co-operation of the third sector / citizens
- Promotion of interests of the city twins in different political levels (national, EU-level)

Background

The member city twins of the City Twins Association (CTA) are situated in North East Europe on inner and outer borders of the European Union. City twins on many basis have grown together. Despite the nearness, there's always a border of two countries between them that affects relations between the cities.

In many city twins the obstacles preventing the mutual co-operation have actively been tried to remove but especially on the eastern border of the EU the situation appears to be quite difficult. On these regions the relations between the city twins and their inhabitants are made far more difficult by a sharp living standard gap. Different conditions and the ways of action on social, health and safety matters cause practical problems. Because of that the transferring across the border has to be limited and controlled quite tightly.

Wide co-operation and input are needed to disentangle the problem skein. Solving the cooperation problems between the city twins is most efficient when the city pairs that are in the different stage of development, build together as a wide network common ways of action that are based on well-found ways of action.

Tornio and Haparanda on the border of Finland and Sweden are the best example of successful co-operation and common development of a city pair. In these two cities many municipal services are carried out in co-operation between the cities from two different countries. In this concrete example the sustainable results were achieved, and proved that such type of cooperation and common development is extremely useful and mutually important for the city pairs.

Finding out the best practices and their implementation in real economic and social life are the most significant goals, which partners can obtain in the association. On the other hand, exposure of bad or useless practices will provide co-operation partners an excellent opportunity to avoid mistakes and time wasting while implementing new policies and instruments in their environment.

Members and city twins cooperating with the association

- Imatra - Svetogorsk (Finland - Russia)
- Narva - Ivangorod (Estonia - Russia)
- Frankfurt(Oder)-Slubice* (Germany – Poland)
- Görlitz- Zgorzelec* (Germany – Poland)
- Tornio- Haparanda (Finland-Sweden)
- Valka – Valga (Lithuania – Estonia)
- Cieszyn* - Cesky Tiesin* (Poland-Czech Republic)

**Polish partners are not yet members, because of Polish legislation. The Czech partner has not joined yet, but has expressed its will to cooperate with the network.*



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🚩 Objective

The main goal of the created association is, by developing co-operation and networking between the city twins, to exploit the experiences of different city pairs in joint operational activity and to develop the city twins into growing regions offering special solutions for inhabitants, businesses and other organizations establishing to the area. Such framework can in future be a multiform interaction channel as well as a joint forum for different sectors in local administration.

Themes of actions

The purpose of the association and cooperation network is:

- to raise problems typical of members on national and international level
- to promote interregional cooperation in Europe
- to level down differences in standards of living of the members
- to promote the active citizenship of members
- to promote neighborliness and multiculturalism between members
- to remove the barriers to cross-border cooperation between member associations
- to create networks between parties related to the association's activities
- to create and maintain good and close relationships between members
- to encourage youth, student, culture and other exchanges between member associations
- to promote mutual respect, cohesion and understanding amongst members and member associations
- to strengthen local identity of the members
- to lobby best practices of the members for different kinds of interesting groups
- to promote exchange of experiences, new ideas and views objectives

Objectives

In order to achieve this, the association shall:

- arrange joint meetings amongst representatives of the EU, other organizations, local governments, cultural life, the economic sector, etc.
- create a development and administration forum for multi-party projects as well as a forum for showcasing the best practices of those parties
- promote multi-year projects of member associations and the sharing of experiences with local projects amongst member associations
- administer and direct projects related to the association's mission
- engage in disseminating information and publishing
- clarify and analyze the actual problems of member towns
- to make initiatives in order to improve living circumstances of the citizens
- develop projects, coordinate them and search financing for them

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