

The significance of community and town twinning for good governance

Written interview with Dr. Olaf Kühl, Specialist Advisor for Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, South Caucasus and Central Asia in the Berlin Senate of International Affairs.

In the quick interview, Dr. Olaf Kühl, Specialist Advisor in the Berlin Senate Chancellery Department of International Affairs, describes his work, especially in relation to the arrangement of various town-twinning agreements he supports.



What comes to mind when you think about Kiev?

My research visit in 2012 – I spent three weeks in the city for my novel 'Der wahre Sohn'.

What value is attached to twinning agreements between European cities today?

Depending on the cities involved, the intensity of twinning agreements vary significantly. Going forward, Berlin will not enter any new formal partnerships, but focus on specific projects.

How can this cooperation and dialogue contribute to the promotion of good governance and the realisation of the reforms?

Kiev's young members of the parliament and the administration are curious about the experiences in Berlin. Berlin's lively example is the best vehicle for maintaining the momentum of the willingness to implement reforms in Kiev.

Can you give us specific examples or success stories of such twinning agreements based on the twin cities of Berlin and Kiev?

On 6th June 2017, the governing mayor Michael Müller and Lord Mayor Vitalij Klitschko signed a 'joint declaration' in Kiev on intensifying the cooperation. Based on this declaration, numerous delegation visits and seminars have already taken place.

As a member of the administration, how do you arrange cooperation with active civil society, industry and the media?

Through proven personal contacts consolidated over the years.

A successful partnership should always be managed on an equal footing. What can Berlin learn from Kiev? What is considered inspiration and a push for innovation?

What is inspiring is that people from Kiev look at all the things we consider set in stone from a totally new perspective and question it.

What are your aspirations for the future of the twin cities of Berlin and Kiev?

That – following successful reform and once the Ukrainian statehood is consolidated – both cities are able to plan creatively for the future.

© European Academy Berlin, 2018
This article reflects the personal opinion of the author.

Contact

Europäische Akademie Berlin e.V.
Bismarckallee 46/48
14193 Berlin
+49 30 8959510
eab@eab-berlin.eu
www.eab-berlin.eu