Town Twinning Diplomacy

Katerina Arvanitaki
University of Piraeus, Athens

Abstract

As part of the ongoing upgrade of the decentralization system of central government bodies, in the light of the European acquis, the institution of twinning is observed in cities, municipalities, schools, chambers and associations (sports, cultural, educational etc.) The activation of civil society is an integral part and an indispensable prerequisite for any cultural exchanges resulting from twinning agreements. The oral presentation will briefly analyze the institutional framework in which this phenomenon is enshrined, identify the involvement of local stakeholders, and attempt to record the history and the course of cooperation areas since their first conclusion.

Furthermore, the research aims to highlight the principles of good governance, in relation to town twinning roadmap, nation-wide strategy on town twinning, capacity development of relevant institutions and monitor various evaluating mechanisms, as well as sustainability issues.

In addition, the research seeks to present best practices for promoting innovation and creativity in town twinning, improving the quality of twinning activities, facilitating local governance in the partnership and ensuring active participation of the local bodies.

The presentation will focus on strengths and weaknesses of town twinning, how progress can be measured and monitored, “success criteria” in town twinning partnerships, and indicators for sustainable town twinning.

Keywords: cultural policy, networking, mentor city, soft power, European integration