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TWINNING  
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A Europe  
of citizens



Tomorrow's  
Europe





## A twinning...



### ... with whom?

The choice of the twin town is up to the town. However a certain number of criteria need to be taken into account to ensure the success of a twinning:

- the size of the town;
- the geographical situation;
- the main economic activity;
- the town's cultural and/or sports activities;
- local associations.

A certain similarity between the towns is called for. Twinning is also a means to build Europe on the basis of the differences which exist within it. For this reason, we also encourage twinings between towns with less similar cultures.

... "A twinning is the meeting between two municipalities to act together within a European perspective, confronting problems and developing increasingly closer and friendlier ties between one another".

In these words, Jean Bareth, one of the founding fathers of the CEMR, defined twinning after the Second World War in 1951. Today, with around 30.000 links between European municipalities, we know how twinning has contributed for over fifty years to assuring peace throughout our continent.

If we were to sum up the main aim of a twinning in the context of the construction of a united Europe, we could say the following:

- twinning to exchange;
- exchange to learn;
- learn to understand;
- understand to live together.

### ... with which actors?

A twinning is founded on a two-sided commitment: that of the town and that of its inhabitants. All categories of the population should be able to take part in the twinning.

The implementation of a local body in charge of running the twinning is very important, both local elected representatives and citizens of the town sit on this body. This structure is known as the twinning committee.

The twinning committee should ensure:

- the active participation of the population;
- the animation of activities;
- the representation of the town;
- the continuity of activities regardless of local political changes.

## ... how ?



Meeting a future twin town can take place by chance. But if you wish to twin and you are looking for your "soul-mate", the twinning service of your CEMR national association can help you find a partner. The twinning service of your CEMR national association is in regular contact with the twinning service of the other national associations. The service is able to seek out the town best adapted to your twinning needs.



The twinning is a commitment between two partners. As is the case in any union, the partners should agree on the objectives and the contents of their future life together.

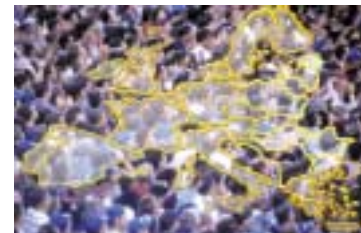
A twinning involves political decision makers and the citizens. If we want the twinning to address the entire population, the exchanges should involve as many inhabitants as possible. The official twinning ceremony is important as it marks the start of the history of the link between the two towns, which will go from strength to strength thanks to initiatives and joint actions.

## ... for what reason?

Twinning contributes to the development of European unity through building awareness among populations concerning the importance of European construction and through concrete forms of international co-operation.



A twinning can enable a town, its associations, its citizens, to exchange experiences, to confront problems, and to help each other in looking for solutions... Transport, protection of the environment, education, health, heritage protection, the fight against racism and xenophobia, equal opportunities, initiatives for employment... constitute themes that twin towns can work on together.



Twinning is a way of exchanging, of learning, and building knowledge. Through meetings of young people, the elderly, and professionals, twinings are the best opportunity of opening up to different cultures, languages and societies.

The twinning officers of the CEMR national associations are available to advise you throughout the life of your twinning.

# The community aid to twinning programme



*How to finance twinning actions? This has always proved a source of concern before and after the twinning.*

A programme for aid to twinning actions was established at European Union level in 1989, following a decision by the European Parliament and upon the initiative of CEMR.

The European Commission manages the programme. This programme gives financial assistance to the travelling municipality and organisational aid for the host town. It also enables the organisation of training seminars and conferences on themes concerning twinning and European citizenship. The programme's conditions are laid out in the call for proposals published each year by the European Commission.

*The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is at the origin of the twinning movement between European municipalities.*

## What does CEMR propose?

CEMR cooperates directly with the European Commission and the European Parliament to ensure the efficient implementation of the Community Aid to Twinning Programme.

The CEMR member national associations are available to help you in your search for a partner, in the preparation of an

action, in putting together your grant application to the European Commission for financial support... namely, at all stages of your twinning.

The CEMR is the largest European representative organisation of local and regional authorities in Europe, from Reykjavik to Malta, from Lisbon to Kiev.



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