

Twin Towns

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Timisoara is twinned with 9 European cities: Faenza, Rueil-Malmaison, Mulhouse, Karlsruhe, Gera, Szeged, Treviso, Palermo, and Novi Sad and has relationships with many other cities or regions: Arezzo, Udine, Naples, Genoa, Florence, Forli, Verona, Bologna, Ravenna, Piedmont, Veneto and Novi Sad. Also there is a regular exchange of visits with the cities: Zrenjanin, Vr^lac, Kikinda, Panèvo, and Cincinnati.

Together with the cities of Panèvo and Cincinnati, Timisoara has developed a trilateral joint program within the 'Resource Cities Program'.

Collaborations

? Strasbourg

In May 2003, at the initiative of this city, 'The Strasbourg Club' was created.

The main pursued objectives are to promote and strengthen links between the main cities of the present and future states of the European Union and its parliamentary capital.

Within this initiative, during May 13th and 14th 2003, Mayor Gheorghe Ciuhandu attended the first Meeting of Strasbourg, during which the mayors present have initialed a joint Declaration of cooperation.

During May 4th and 5th 2004, the 2nd meeting of the member cities' Mayors of 'The Strasbourg Club' took place, when they took an opportunity to outline four practical measures of cooperation:

- ? the circulation of better knowledge concerning European Structural Funds - in this project, an official of the European Development and Integration Service took part, from September 21st to 23rd 2004, at the training seminar 'Structural Funds and the Local Authorities.'

- ? creating a reflection group regarding the issue of urban public transport - Bulgaria and Romania's participation in this second project was impossible since the program under which the project was meant only for Member States of the European Union.

- ? encouraging cultural exchanges through a grant program for artists; this project is in its first phase - identifying partners.

- ? encouraging academic exchanges between the cities of Club and the City of Strasbourg through a

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scholarship program for students; this project is in its first phase - identifying partners.

From May 9th to 11th 2005, Mayor Gheorghe Ciuhandu took part in the 3rd meeting of member cities' Mayors of the 'Strasbourg Club', which had as a main objective the assessment of actions and projects within the Club. On this occasion, an exhibition of photography representative of the member cities of the Club was also held.

From July 1st to September 30th 2005, Hadrien Gras, an artist from Strasbourg, made in Timisoara a practice course in the 'Creating scholarships for artists from within the 'Strasbourg Club' 'cultural exchanges' project. The course concluded with an exhibition of works made by the artist during his stay in Timisoara.

From September 1st to November 30th 2005, Ciprian Bodea, an artist from Timisoara, made in Strasbourg a practice course in the 'Creating scholarships for artists from within the 'Strasbourg Club' "cultural exchanges' project. The course concluded with an exhibition of works made by the artist during his stay in Strasbourg.

? Eurocities

The Eurocities network is a European NGO, to which the Municipality of Timisoara adhered as an associate member in 2000. The network has its headquarters in Brussels and is made of 95 metropolitan cities, coming from 26 European countries. Eurocities helps facilitate cooperation and exchanges between different State Members, promotes European transnational projects concerning vast economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc. issues by facilitating coordination and granting access to European funding, and is lobbying by EU institutions and national governments in order to influence policies affecting the cities.

In this context, during 2005, procedures for Timisoara's adherence to 'The European Charter for Road Safety' established by the European Commission were initiated. The subscriber cities of the Charter are committed to improving road safety by developing and implementing specific measures in this field at a European level.

? Balcinet - Balkan Cities Network

Balcinet - Balkan Cities Network is a partnership between the most important cities of the Balkan Peninsula, to which the Municipality of Timisoara adhered in 2001. The areas of cooperation established in the network are: local government, environment, infrastructure, urban development, education, transport, social, cultural, economic development, trade, health, technological research and development, energy and industry, telecommunications and informatics.

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In this context, from September 30th to October 2nd 2005, Mayor Gheorghe Ciuhandu and Vice-Mayor Adrian Orza took part in the '6th International Meeting of Friendship, Cooperation and Development of Mayors of the Major Balkan Cities' in Craiova.

? Budapest

During March 17th and 18th 2005, a statement of intent was signed in Budapest for the concluding of 'The Alliance of Cities which have within a Iosefin neighborhood' - 'Alliance of Josef Cities'. Subscribers to the declaration are: Budapest, Vienna, Prague and Timisoara. The Alliance aims at creating a better cooperation between the subscriber cities and neighborhoods through: exchange of experience between institutions, civil organizations and citizens, cultural exchanges, implementation of projects having a European partnership financing, etc.

? Milan-Lecco

In the field of architecture, a new collaboration direction was initiated with the Faculty of Architecture of Lecco, from the Polytechnic University of Milan.

From September 10th to 24th 2005, a biannual workshop was held in Lecco. On this occasion, over a two week period, researchers, professionals and teachers from around the world gathered addressing an actual design theme, defined by mutual agreement with institutional players, administration and governance structures.

At Guido Podesta's suggestion - Head of the EU-Romania Joint Parliamentary Committee - the city chosen the design theme of that year was Timisoara. A student of our city's Faculty of Architecture also attended the workshop. The official inauguration ceremony of the workshop was held on September 12th 2005 with a videoconference that brought together the two university centers. On September 13th 2005, there also took place an official urban aspects presentation of the city on Bega River. The closing ceremony of the project took place on September 24th 2005.

The results of the workshop conducted in September at Lecco were presented in Timisoara on November 19th, in an event entitled 'Infrastructure for mobility in the contemporary city.' The delegation was led by Guido Podesta, a European Parliamentary, and Head of EU-Romania Joint Parliamentary Committee.

The delegation was also comprised of the following: Prof. Massimo Tadi, Prof. Frank Nolesini, and assistant architect Nadia Merone, all part of the Polytechnic University of Milan, Faculty of Architecture of Lecco.

From the Romanian side, representatives of local Timisoara government, university professors, architects,

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builders, students, journalists, and other interested persons attended the event.

The whole conference was transmitted live on the Timisoara City Hall website.

? Venice

, Italy

The Veneto Region coordinated the 'MIGREST - Management of Migration Flows and the Role of Officials Responsible for Matters of Migrations' project, co-financed by the European Commission, to which the Municipality of Timisoara was a partner.

Under this project, the local government had provided information regarding the migrations situation in the Timisoara area, both statistically and concerning the provisions of domestic and international laws, in force in Romania.

More information about the project and its course of action can be found at www.migrest.net.

? Taizhou

, China

From October 10th to 13th 2002, a visit to Taizhou, China was undertaken as a result of an invitation received from Taizhou City Hall to participate at the manifestation called 'Meeting of City Mayors Friendly towards Taizhou in the Golden Autumn'. The purpose of the visit was to exchange ideas on ways to intensify relations and cooperation in the economic, scientific, educational, cultural, and health related fields.

Due to its history and its inhabitants, Timisoara is a true city of interethnic concordance, which promotes the most progressive ideas, being a real symbol of democracy, tolerance and development for other cities in Romania.