

Bremen

Europe from the perspective of young people

Helping young people to understand the role of town twinning and learn how the EU works was the objective, when Bremen together with Szczecin and Gdansk, in Poland, and Riga, in Latvia, organised a special event in Gdansk at the end of June 2002. 'We have had a very special relationship with Gdansk for more than 20 years. We are both part of the Hanseatic Rim, a history we also share with Riga, which joined us later in the town twinning project', explains Gunther Feldhaus, who is responsible for town twinning for the City of Bremen.

The young participants spent a week involved in intensive seminars, discussions and carefully planned role-plays to explore crucial aspects of the EU, its enlargement, citizenship and security. Topics ranged from the legal and economic basis of Europe to its social aspects. The conference was able to provide the young people with a wealth of information about Europe and the process of enlargement so as to allay their fears and give them an opportunity to discuss vital issues. It also covered European action programmes and the regional support centre for non-governmental organisations.

The entire event was an intensive learning experience for the young people who certainly realised that for the EU of the future to work well on behalf of all its citizens, individuals must take an active role.

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