

Municipal Foreign Affairs

A Study of the Offices of International Affairs in Europe and the USA

Aaron Fishbone

2014-2015 Robert Bosch Foundation Fellow

September 2015

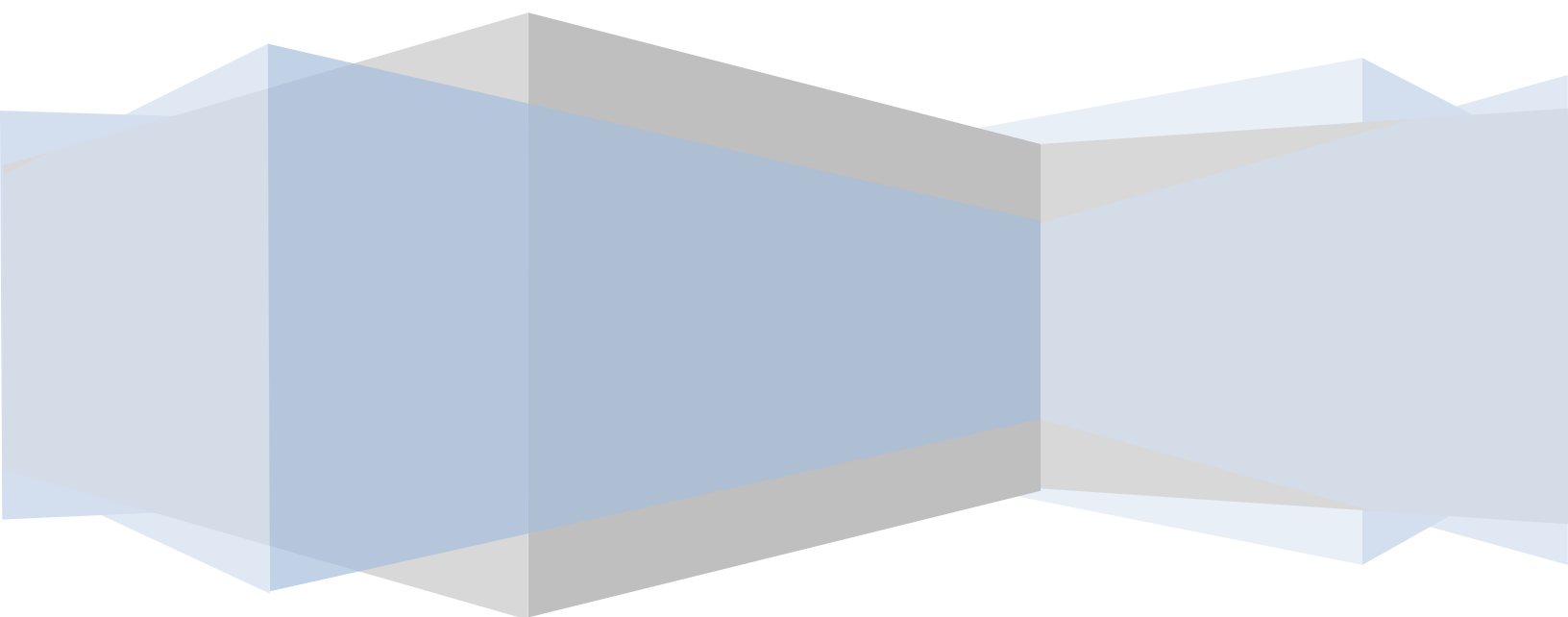


Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
THE EVOLUTION OF MUNICIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS.....	5
WHY ARE MUNICIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS SO IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT NOW?	7
MY PROJECT.....	9
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
<i>CITY DIPLOMACY</i>	10
<i>DIPLOMACITY</i>	11
<i>PARA-DIPLOMACY</i>	11
<i>FEDERATIVE DIPLOMACY</i>	12
<i>URBAN DIPLOMACY</i>	12
<i>INTERMESTIC AFFAIRS</i>	13
WHY DO CITIES CONDUCT FOREIGN AFFAIRS?.....	13
HOW A CITY INTERNATIONALIZES	14
TYPES OF PARADIPOMACY	15
WHITHER THE NATION-STATE?	16
WHAT ARE MUNICIPAL OFFICES OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS?	19
DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES ON MUNICIPAL INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IN EUROPE AND THE USA	20
RECOMMENDATIONS	22
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND AUDIT.....	22
ORGANIZATIONAL & STAFFING.....	23
BUDGETING.....	24
PARTNER CITIES	24
COMMUNITY GROUPS.....	26
PUBLIC EDUCATION & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS	27
INVESTMENT, BUSINESS & TRADE	27
RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS - HOW TO ADD VALUE	27
CITY AMBASSADORS.....	28
ROUNDTABLES & ADVISORY GROUPS.....	29
DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION	29
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & NETWORKS.....	30

CONCLUSION	31
City Snapshot: Birmingham	33
City Snapshot: Düsseldorf	38
City Snapshot: Frankfurt	42
City Snapshot: Hamburg	46
City Snapshot: Köln	49
City Snapshot: Stuttgart	53
Appendix I: Interview Questions	56

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cities were the original mass human settlement, and, despite the 20th Century being 'the age of the nation-state', cities have reemerged as a central actor in world affairs. Driven by many factors, most notably urbanization, the role of the city in a regional metropolitan economy and the willingness of mayor's and municipal governments to innovate to address their (and the world's) problems, cities are back in the spotlight. As the world economy globalizes still further and continues to change, cities are increasingly forced to 'go it alone' to carve out their niche in the global economy and attract business, talent, and opportunities.

Our world continues to change and connections between people and places which share similar challenges are increasingly important to helping them each overcome those challenges. There is an ever greater need for cities to share knowledge, experiences and expertise, and to work together to solve local and global problems. Municipal international affairs offices and staff are commonly the ones making these connections doing the day to day work of maintaining the international connections of their city.

Municipal international affairs professionals do everything from forging and maintaining relationships with other cities to welcoming incoming delegations and organizing international trips, preparing their elected leadership for international meetings, to maintaining their city's involvement in international networks.

Very little has been written about this group of people or this body of work, especially from the practical or practitioner perspective. That is a gap that this paper seeks to fill. Drawing on my own professional experiences and a series of in-depth interviews with colleagues in German and British municipal Offices for International Affairs (OIAs), I examine in detail what these offices do and how they do it, concluding with some recommendations for cities considering establishing such an office or reinventing one that already exists so that it can be more effective.

As cities reemerge as international actors with growing influence, capacity, and need to act, it is important to look at the people and offices which actually do the work day to day, how it is done, and how it can be done even better.

THE EVOLUTION OF MUNICIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS

To appreciate the role of the city in the 21st century, we must remember that cities are humanity's first and most permanent fixed settlements, and arguably oldest diplomatic actors. Ancient Mesopotamian and Anatolian cities engaged in regular exchange of envoys to establish mutual recognition and merchants who conducted trade missions. Medieval and Renaissance diplomacy was similarly dominated by city-states, particularly in Italy and northern Europe with the Hanseatic League, whose intense diplomatic competition and interactions helped undermine the Holy Roman Empire, while fueling the commercial revolution and voyages of exploration across the Atlantic to Asia. Even after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, widely marked as the transition to sovereign nation-states, diplomacy remained a heterogenous affair all the way until the post-Napoleonic Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations in 1815. From a "city" viewpoint, nation-states have only been the (nearly) exclusive diplomatic actors for less than two centuries.¹

After World War II, there was a great and urgent need to break down the enmity and rebuild trust between the former combatants. The death and destruction was so widespread that everyone was affected. Countries began encouraging their communities to 'twin' with those of their former combatants, such as between the UK, Germany, France, and Italy (though the first official 'twinning' relationship came in 1920 after WWI², this project did not begin in earnest until after WWII).

Exchanges started slowly between the newly 'twinned' cities, often with an initial, sometimes cautious visit between city officials, followed by a culture or sports exchange between community members, church congregations, or youth groups. Observing this movement taking place in Europe, President Dwight Eisenhower launched the counterpart 'sister city' movement in the United States in 1956 at the White House Conference on Citizen Diplomacy³, and, like in Europe, the early American sister cities were also with former combatants, most commonly Japanese cities. This early phase of postwar partnering between cities could be called the 'first generation'⁴ of city partnerships and of the new era of municipal foreign affairs.

During the era of decolonization and simultaneously with the idea of an 'ever closer European Union' growing, European cities began developing some partnerships with cities in their former colonies and extensively with other cities throughout Europe, as a way of localizing the move towards European integration. This was the 'second generation' of city partnerships.

The 'third generation' of city partnerships took place after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, between cities in Western European countries (and Western Germany) and Eastern Europe (and East Germany and East Berlin). This was a way of speeding the integration of the former Communist communities into the west, and another example of European cities taking a local role in helping to achieve larger, geopolitical and developmental goals.

¹ Acuto, Michele and Paragh Khanna. "Nations are no longer driving globalization – cities are." May 13, 2013.

<http://qz.com/80657/the-return-of-the-city-state/>

² Handley, Susan. *Take Your Partners: The Local Authority Handbook on International Partnerships*. LGIB International Reports Number 10. London: Local Government International Bureau, 2006. P4.

http://lymingtontwinning.weebly.com/uploads/6/7/5/2/6752968/take_your_partners.pdf

³ Sister Cities International: <http://sister-cities.org/mission-and-history>

⁴ <http://www.stuttgart.de/item/show/266436/1>

Concurrently, the institutions of the European Union grew in strength and scope. Eurocities, the membership association of European cities, was incorporated in 1990⁵. The Committee of Regions was established in 1994⁶. The EU started offering grants based on communal partnerships and regional identities which galvanized the communities of Europe to develop new partnerships with other European cities and deepen existing relationships to form the basis for strong and effective working relationships and to win grant funding with.

For Euro-American cities, the current 'fourth generation' of city partnerships most often involves ties with cities in emerging market countries like India, Brazil and China, and have a decidedly economic rationale.

Over the course of the post-WWII period other trends have significantly influenced the role that cities play and the powers that they have accrued. Even as supranational organizations, from the United Nations to the European Union, have multiplied and grown in strength, there has been a simultaneous decentralization and devolution of authority onto more local jurisdictions. Urbanization has put increasing pressure on municipal authorities and required ever more from them to cope with the strains they face from exploding populations. The 2008 global financial crisis and subsequent dwindling of national funds to municipalities and the weakening of municipal tax bases and revenue streams forced cities to seriously consider how to survive in this new, globalized world, which for many meant looking internationally for investment and competing against one another for companies and talent. Lack of effective national action, especially in the United States, has also forced cities to innovate and try new things, galvanizing renewed interest in municipal technical exchange and the sharing of promising practices. Finally, cities are increasingly shouldering the brunt of transnational forces such as migration, international crime and climate change. Out of sheer necessity cities are taking steps to address them.

The emergence during this same time of the expertise and institutions needed to conduct municipal foreign affairs reflects the evolution and growing importance of foreign affairs to the German and British cities that I looked at. The history and development of their offices for international affairs was strikingly similar. Years ago responsibility for partner cities was with one or two people in an office in the protocol or cultural affairs department. As European affairs emerged as a distinct body of work it too required staffing and came to occupy space in the cultural affairs or economic development departments. From the mid 1990's to the early to mid 2000's these offices were identified by the mayors of their respective cities as being vital to achieving certain priorities. This aligned with the localization of the Millennium Development Goals and Fair Trade movements in Europe. Thus, the new, modern, municipal Office for International Affairs (OIA) was born, combining international affairs, European affairs, and international development and relocated (organizationally, if not physically) into the mayor's office, where many are today.

⁵Eurocities: http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/about_us/history

⁶ Committee of Regions: <http://cor.europa.eu/en/about/Pages/key-facts.aspx>

WHY ARE MUNICIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS SO IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT NOW?

“More than ever cities are the lifeblood of the global economy. Their competitiveness increasingly determines the wealth and poverty of nations, regions, and the world. Hence, what makes cities successful must be one of the most important questions of 21st -century political economy.”⁷

The McKinsey Global Institute has declared the present wave of urbanization “the most significant shift in the earth’s economic center of gravity in history.”⁸ While most of this urbanization will be to the largest 600 cities in the world, the “emerging 440” (with populations between 200,000 and ten million) “will account for close to half (47%) of expected global GDP growth between 2010 and 2025.”⁹ New cities are being incorporated, smaller cities are growing ever larger, and large cities are becoming megacities.

Regarding Europe specifically, Greg Clark, the noted city scholar and advisor, writes:

There are over 80 European metropolitan areas with a population greater than 500,000. Each of them participates in globalization because they possess distinctive specializations and positions in complex global supply chains. But their future productivity and wealth creation rests partly on taking steps to improve their investment credentials and export capability, not simply to other regions in Europe, but beyond into wider and growing global markets.¹⁰

He continues,

For European Cities, openness to international trade, and in its production, is more important than ever...Many require new strategies and pathways towards internationalization that may involve better relationships with neighboring cities and a new assessment of how to compete in global markets....Most possess elements of international engagement notably tourism, design, and culture – but need to grasp and embed other traits of global fluency.¹¹

This is not limited to Europe, with its long history of internationally engaged cities. A recent report from the Metropolitan Policy Program of the Brookings Institution, declared that for American cities, “global engagement must be a demonstrated priority” and “global commerce is driven by relationships and networks.”¹²

⁷ World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Competitiveness. *The Competitiveness of Cities*. August 2014. P8. <http://www.weforum.org/content/global-agenda-council-competitiveness-2014-2016-0>

⁸ McKinsey Global Institute. *Urban World: Cities and the rise of the consuming class*. June 2012. P1. http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/urbanization/urban_world_cities_and_the_rise_of_the_consuming_class

⁹ Ibid, P5.

¹⁰ Clark, Greg and Tim Moonen. *Europe’s Cities in A Global Economy: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities*. Presented at the Global Cities Initiative London Conference, October 29, 2013. P3. <http://centreforlondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Europes-Cities-in-a-Global-Economy-Clark-Moonen-Oct-2013.pdf>

¹¹ Ibid, P2.

¹² McDearman, Brad and Ryan Donahue. “The 10 lessons from global trade and investment planning in U.S. metro areas.” *The Brookings Institution*: May 27, 2015. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2015/04/21-global-trade-investment-planning-us-metro-areas-mcdearman-donahue>

Thus, with the center of gravity swinging so strongly towards cities, as places where very soon nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the world population will live, cities will need to continue to develop strategies for coping with their growth, harnessing it, and flourishing. Internationalization is a vital component of any strategy, and not just in terms of economics. Internationalization helps cities connect with each other and share technical knowledge¹³, success and failure stories, and to linkup together to tackle global problems that are larger than any one community but affect all.

This paper seeks to contribute to the discussion of the internationalization of cities by looking at the offices that cities set up to lead and facilitate their international partnerships and engagements.

¹³ Einstein, Katherine Levine and David M. Glick. *Mayoral Policy Making: Results from the 21st Century Mayor's Leadership Survey*. Boston University Initiative on Cities: October 2014. See especially pages 5, 27-29, and 34.
http://www.bu.edu/ioc/files/2015/01/BUIOC_Mayors-Leadership-Survey_2014.pdf

MY PROJECT

“You probably do more actual diplomacy in a day than I do in a week!”¹⁴

My project emerged out of my personal experience conducting foreign affairs for the city of Seattle, Washington, USA from 2011-2013. Serving as a Robert Bosch Fellow provided me the opportunity to also serve in the Mayor’s Office for International Affairs of the City of Düsseldorf, Germany from February-May 2015 and develop a comparative, transatlantic perspective on the topic.

Düsseldorf has a relatively new mayor – ten months into a six year term, as of this writing – and a new director of a recently reorganized Office for International Affairs (*Büro für International Angelegenheiten*, or OIA for the rest of this paper). Given my experience and interests, we decided that I should examine other OIAs around Germany and Europe, to develop ideas for how Düsseldorf could organize its international office, priorities and activities going forward.

I conducted site visits to interview colleagues in the municipal OIAs in the German cities of Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Stuttgart (in addition to interviewing my colleagues and being embedded in the office in Düsseldorf) and also Birmingham, UK. I used a structured interview format, but with open ended questions (See Interview in Appendix I). I read their websites and the other documentation that they provided to me, such as project and annual reports. Finally, I conducted a literature review on the topic of sub-national diplomacy and foreign affairs to see what other ideas are out there.

My goal was to develop a set of recommendations – or menu of ala carte options – for Düsseldorf and other cities looking to develop an OIA or reprioritize or restructure their existing one. I sought to answer the following questions:

- What are your priorities/focuses?
- What are your bodies of work?
- How did you develop these priorities?
- How do you carry out your work – organizationally, financially, methodologically?
- The cultural/historical context of this work in Europe

¹⁴ Unnamed quote from a Foreign Ministry colleague to one of my interviewees. April 2015.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Subnational diplomacy is a niche academic topic. What analysis there is has been conducted by political scientists, geographers and international relations scholars, especially ones looking at diplomacy, peace or development studies. There is also a literature base of 'think tank' and corporate analysis out there about the economics of cities.

Through an iterative process of reading articles, identifying new terms and authors, and then conducting further research, I developed a list of terms that dealt either directly with this topic or are related enough that their discussions merited reading and consideration.

One result of this literature review was to discover how much of this work is about international relations theory, such as how the assertiveness of sub-national actors is changing the role of the nation-state. There is a dearth of literature written by practitioners or looking at the practical mechanics of city level foreign affairs, a gap that this paper seeks to fill.

Discussion of municipal foreign affairs fell under the terms "city diplomacy", "diplomacity", "paradiplomacy", "intermestic affairs", "intergovernmental affairs", "federative diplomacy", and "urban diplomacy". By far the richest discussions and deepest analysis were around the terms "city diplomacy" and "paradiplomacy".

The broad idea of sub-national diplomacy is that competing forces are at work in the world today which are breaking down the monopoly of the nation state in conducting foreign affairs, leading to the rise of different types and degrees of sub-national diplomacy and foreign affairs.

A number of articles came out of the Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations. This institute appears to have had a rather intensive focus on this topic for a while in the mid 2000's, as part of their program on diplomacy. Netherlands communities, like German ones, are very active in municipal development cooperation and the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG International; the German counterpart is called *Servicestelle Kommunen in der einer Welt*) operates projects in countries around the world. The Hague was also the site of the United Cities & Local Governments (UCLG) Conference on City Diplomacy in 2008.

CITY DIPLOMACY

In the landscape of the history of the late 20th/early 21st Centuries, cities have gone back to practicing their own diplomacy. According to Rogier van der Pluijm, "...city diplomacy could be defined as the institutions and processes by which cities engage in relations with actors on an international political stage with the aim of representing themselves and their interests to one another."¹⁵ He goes on to note that this is formal representation of the city and not any civic or business representatives.

Emmy Wijnen disagrees, labeling that 'decentralized cooperation'. According to her, "Decentralized cooperation started with city-to-city programs after the Second World War between cities that suffered from the war. It was aimed at (re)creating trust and respect between

¹⁵ Van der Pluijm, Rogier with Jan Melissen. *City Diplomacy: The Expanding Role of Cities in International Politics*. Clingendael, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations: April 2007. P11.

http://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/20070400_cdsp_paper_pluijm.pdf

the populations of cities in formerly warring countries.”¹⁶ For her, “decentralized cooperation does not focus exclusively on conflict affected areas, as city diplomacy does”¹⁷. “City diplomacy is all activities undertaken by local governments for their counterparts in other regions in the world aimed at creating peace and development.”¹⁸

Here, Wijnen is adopting the definition of city diplomacy of the UCLG Hague Agenda on City Diplomacy where they define city diplomacy as “the tools of local governments and their associations in promoting social cohesion, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post conflict reconstruction with the aim to create a stable environment, in which the citizens can live together in peace, democracy, and prosperity.”¹⁹

There appears to be no actual implications to this difference of definition.

DIPLMACITY

I first heard about ‘diplomacity’ at the 2014 Smart Cities World Expo, in the keynote address given by Paragh Khanna, the noted city scholar. He also used the term in a 2014 article with Michele Acuto:

“To manage this growing set of relationships more effectively, cities and mayor’s offices are generating increasing capacity to conduct their own international missions – a phenomenon that could be called *diplomacity*, an expanding propensity of cities to develop the necessary mechanisms to autonomously navigate foreign relations on their own.”²⁰

Conceptually, this definition of diplomacity seems very close to Rogier van der Pluijm’s definition of ‘city diplomacy’ above. I find both of these definitions useful in describing what municipal foreign affairs actually are.

PARA-DIPLOMACY

Para-diplomacy is the term widely used to refer to all sub-national foreign affairs activities, not just that of cities, but also of states/*Länder*/provinces. Historically, the term was originally used to describe the attempts by ‘stateless nations’ such as Catalonia or Scotland to secure independence for their region, however it is not limited to this usage or meaning. Brazil and Canada are two popular examples of federal nations where their constituent provinces have been formally empowered and now conduct their own ‘para-diplomacy’. States in the USA also have this prerogative.

¹⁶ Wijnen, Emmy. *City Diplomacy: A case study of Velsen’s activities in Galle, Sri Lanka*. Master’s thesis in Conflicts, Territories, and Identities at the Radboud University Nijmegen. November 2010, P4.

<http://gpm.ruhosting.nl/mt/2010MASG45WijnenEmmy.pdf>

¹⁷ Ibid, P13.

¹⁸ Ibid P20.

¹⁹ The Hague Agenda on City Diplomacy. Final Draft 13 June 2008.

http://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/EN_590_en_hague_agenda.pdf

²⁰ Acuto, Michele and Parag Khanna. “Around the World, Mayor’s Take Charge.” *The Atlantic Monthly*. 2014.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/around-the-world-mayors-take-charge/275335/>

Alexander Sergunnin and Pertti Joenniemi state simply that “paradiplomacy denotes international activities of subnational and non-state actors that have limited capabilities – in terms of resources and legal powers – in the foreign policy sphere.”²¹

Carlos Milani and Ribiero, also looking at the Brazilian case, define paradiplomacy as “subnational governments involvement in international relations through the establishment of formal and informal ties, be they permanent or ad hoc, with foreign public or private entities, with the objective of promoting social, economic, cultural, or political dimensions of development.” Later they go on to coin the term ‘local international management’ as the “development of new municipal organizational strategies and local/global governance partnerships, particularly in terms of infrastructural programs, technical assistance and cooperation for development.”²²

Many of the scholars referenced above point out the lack of analysis in this field written from the practical perspective. A notable exception to this is the 2013 article in *Foreign Affairs* by Rodrigo Tavares, who is the head of Sao Paulo, Brazil’s State Government Office of Foreign Affairs. He refers to paradiplomacy simply as “subnational foreign relations”²³.

I would also count a conference paper²⁴ written by Canadian professor and (para)diplomat Andrew Petter as a practitioner’s contribution to the discussion around paradiplomacy. I will discuss his contributions further below.

FEDERATIVE DIPLOMACY

Meanwhile, the formal document Tavares’ office produced, the *Sao Paulo International Relations Plan 2011-2014* uses the term, “federative diplomacy, wherein non-central governments are involved in international relations, bears a tight relation with the need to find global resources to satisfy local interests.”²⁵

URBAN DIPLOMACY

Mohammad Reza Daroudi and Nastaran Peimani discuss “urban diplomacy”, defined as:

“local government tools and dependent associations that in the cases in which local governments have tensions and conflict or they tend to interact internationally in terms of mutual challenges and existing opportunities, helps to provide city-to-city international cooperation [sic] ways and peaceful environmental context for their citizens via negotiations.”²⁶

²¹ Sergunnin, Alexander and Peretti Joenniemi. *Paradiplomacy as a Sustainable Development Strategy: The Case of Russia’s Arctic Subnational Actors*. Date unknown, P1. http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/publicn/eurasia_border_review/ebv5n2/EBR_v5n2_01.pdf

²² Milani, Carlos and Ribeiro. “International Relations and the Paradiplomacy of Brazilian Cities: Crafting the Concept of Local International Management.” *Brazilian Administrative Review*: 2011, P24. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/bar/v8n1/v8n1a03.pdf>

²³ Tavares, Rodrigo. “Foreign Policy Goes Local.” *Foreign Affairs*. October 9, 2013.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-america/2013-10-09/foreign-policy-goes-local>

²⁴ Petter, Andrew. *Canadian Paradiplomacy in Practice: Confessions of a Paradiplomat*. Conference Paper: 2006(?)

http://www.unizar.es/union_europea/files/documentos/conferencia%2010.2006/Petter-english_final.pdf

²⁵ Sao Paulo International Relations Plan 2011-2016. Governo de Estado de Sao Paulo Office of Foreign Affairs. P1

http://www.saopauloglobal.sp.gov.br/relacoes_inter/publica/plano_ri_2011-2014_english.pdf

²⁶ Daroudi, Mohammad Reza and Nastaran Peimani. “Assessing Urban Diplomacy Approach on Foreign Investors in Tehran Using Network Analysis Process – SWOT Analysis.” *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research* 15 (5): 715-722. 2013. P715.

<http://idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr15%285%2913/16.pdf>

INTERMESTIC AFFAIRS

Perry Prada builds on the term proposed by Manning (1977) in using the term “intermestic affairs”. By this he means “a kind of strategic management approach in the field of foreign affairs” brought on by “the internationalizing of domestic issues which blurs the distinction between domestic and international affairs.”²⁷

This discussion is different than the foreign affairs work of sub-state actors, and so I will not analyze it further here.

In conclusion, the literature review I was able to conduct with the resources I had revealed some useful and thoughtful discussions, which I will elaborate on below. It also exposed the limits of the existing literature, especially in contributions from or for a practical orientation.

WHY DO CITIES CONDUCT FOREIGN AFFAIRS?

In researching why cities engage in diplomacy, Wijnen found a few factors being the most important:

- Solidarity with other cities
- Personal engagement of influential people
- Self interest - economic, reputation, civil society, exchange ²⁸

When considering why paradiplomacy occurs, Andrew Petter, a former Canadian provincial official and paradiplomat said:

- Economic pressures
- Nationalism
- Constitutional factors (decentralized federalism)
- Geographic heterogeneity
- International institutional norms and practices (treaties, trade agreements, etc.)
- Politics (personal political benefits accruing to the elected leader at that time)

He elaborates, “the preponderance of such activity is economically driven...it is the need to protect and advance the province’s economic position in an increasingly competitive global economy that provides the greatest political impetus to engage internationally.”²⁹ Especially thanks to the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement, Canadian businesses became largely dependent on markets in the USA, increasing the need for local leaders to go abroad, and the incentives for them to do so.

Tavares though, provides the most direct support for a city to be engaged internationally, and not simply for financial or business gains, writing that:

²⁷ Prada, Perry. “The Intermestic Affairs: A Theoretical Approach.” April 5, 2006.

<http://perryprada.blogspot.com/2006/04/intermestic-affairs-theoretical.html>

²⁸ Wijnen, P 34.

²⁹ Petter, P4.

subnational governments can no longer fulfill their constitutional responsibilities in education, sanitation, economic development, transportation, the environment, and other areas without interacting with the world. These local authorities rely on the international flow of capital, knowledge, and people to successfully implement their governmental programs.³⁰

This is such an important quote, especially for a North American audience, because the items he mentions are the 'bread and butter' of local government, and yet he feels the need to look outward to find solutions to even these most common local challenges. I find that many people, especially Americans, do not think that traveling abroad is the proper role for their mayor. They think that that's what foreign service officers, the Secretary of State, and maybe sometimes even their governor, do. Mayors are supposed to focus on things like traffic, potholes, police, and sanitation, which are inherently local issues. However, Tavares debunks this, stating the need for city officials to seek ideas globally for addressing even their most local challenges. This is not just about economic development and international trade, rather this is about finding the best ideas for local challenges, from people who deal with the same basic issues, just in another country and context.

FRAMEWORKS

Beyond the 'why', some of these scholars also developed analytical frameworks to look at how cities go about this work and some important factors to consider. Before looking at what I discovered in my research, I will review these frameworks. They may help a community think about how to invest its resources for maximum impact.

HOW A CITY INTERNATIONALIZES

In considering the history and process of how a sub-national government goes from its own local affairs into being an international actor, Bellini and Bramanti have proposed a learning framework. They first identify three stages that cities go through in the process of developing their paradiplomacy and the abilities to internationalize. According to them:

...international relations of local and regional governments...are not a stabilized/standardized phenomenon but an evolutionary process where incremental learning takes place, leading to more (or less) commitment, often following a non-linear and discontinuous process driven by contingencies which cannot be programmed (but can be organizationally and strategically elaborated), and by the ability to exploit 'windows of opportunities'".³¹

These phases are:

- *Exploration phase* – international relations comes from individual relationships, chance encounters, immigration, twinning relationships, etc., but is not formalized or strategic, and there are probably no international relations staffers

³⁰ Tavares.

³¹ Bellini, Nicole & Alberto Bramanti. "Sustainable Glocalization': A Framework to Analyze the International Relations of Local and Regional Governments." February 2008: P4.

<http://www.certet.unibocconi.it/wps/wcm/connect/07fdb9004caddb932a4fbfc0f7bdc7be0/wp14.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&useDefaultText=0&useDefaultDesc=0>

- *Consolidation phase* - where the management of international relations is professionalized and involves specialized staff. Offices of international relations have a higher profile and an agenda is systematically planned.
- *Integration phase* - in this phase 'domestic' and international affairs are merged and understood to complement each other directly i.e., when a city joins with a standing international network.³²

TYPES OF PARADIPLOMACY

Sergunnin and Joenniemi see paradiplomatic activities as falling into two broad categories:

- Direct: city itself is engaged internationally
- Indirect: influencing the national government through political and other means³³

For Petter, paradiplomatic activities can be:

- Geographic, sectoral, or cultural
- Bilateral or multilateral
- Region to region, region to state, region to marketplace, or region to civil society³⁴

Another helpful subcategory is again discussed by Wijnen, and is the models of municipal involvement. She identifies three:

- complete control by the municipality
- complete control by civil society
- blended model³⁵

According to Bellini and Bramanti, there are three broad types of policies which can affect internationalization:

- *Policies of Projection* – i.e. export promotion, supporting international agreements of companies, and interaction between high culture, universities, etc.
- *Policies of Attraction* -designed to attract resources and actors to the city
- *Gate Policies* - include things like the development of an airport, designed to strengthen linkages and communications with other areas³⁶

Policies can influence the types, variation, and balance of assets that a community has. They continue that communities each have different allotments of assets which can be used for internationalization:

- Tangible: institutions, actors and infrastructure

³² Ibid P4.

³³ Sergunnin and Joenniemi P5.

³⁴ Petter P9.

³⁵ Wijnen P41.

³⁶ Bellini and Bramanti P14.

- Intangible: relational, cognitive, reputational assets³⁷

By understanding in what stage of its internationalization it is, what other cities around it are doing, what its geographic and physical infrastructure opportunities, limits, and needs are, and having a sense of where it wants to end up, a city can develop a strong foundation from which to determine its trajectory and next steps. The above frameworks can help a city develop this understanding and be ready for the next steps in a thoughtful way.

WHITHER THE NATION-STATE?

“Twenty-first century global challenges require us to work with new partners to collaborate and innovate globally. This is a core principal of subnational engagement, a strategy for creating partnerships for achieving modern diplomatic goals by engaging all the elements of our national power and leveraging all forms of our strength.”³⁸

“It is true that Premiers and Presidents can sign treaties that declare war. But it’s also true that mayors can do everything else.”³⁹

This discussion may be disconcerting to those foreign affairs professionals and scholars accustomed to seeing the world in inter-national terms, albeit with some space for international organizations and nongovernmental organizations. It is a fair question to wonder what this changing world means for nation-states, the central unit of international affairs analysis for the 20th Century. How does the emergence of increasingly assertive and wide ranging municipal foreign affairs interact with inter-national relations and how should countries feel about it?

Discussing paradiplomacy generally, Chambers, who looked extensively at the literature, writes

...paradiplomacy is not the same as conventional state diplomacy, which is about pursuing a defined state interest in the international arena. It is more functionally specific and targeted, often opportunistic and experimental...Soldatos denotes two main kinds of paradiplomacy: first, global paradiplomacy, where federated units deal with issues concerning the whole international system such as the liberalisation of international trade. The second type of paradiplomacy is regional, where the issues involved are of regional relevance to the communities taking part in a subnational activity.⁴⁰

Bellini and Bramanti encourage looking at para-diplomacy not:

..as the setting up as of an alternative ‘foreign policy at a smaller scale, but rather as a necessary and new response by local and regional communities to the challenge of globalization, in a scenario where cognitive and relational opportunities turn into key resources for growth and development...these activities imply more often governance

³⁷ Ibid P14.

³⁸ Reta Jo Lewis, Special Representative for Global Intergovernmental Affairs, US Department of State. Speech at the German Marshall Fund, May 2013. <http://m.state.gov/md209839.htm>

³⁹ Mayor Mitch Landrieu, on the signing of the US Conference of Mayors and International Association of Francophone Mayors MOU 9 April 2015. <http://cities-today.com/us-and-francophone-mayors-sign-collaboration-agreement/>

⁴⁰ Chambers, Gary. “Europe and Beyond: The Development of Sub-State Paradiplomacy with Special Reference to Catalonia.” *The Romanian Journal of Society and Politics*. P12. Date Unknown.

than government as they involve a variety of public and private actors sharing projects, visions, and resources in a non-hierarchical relationship.⁴¹

Sergunnin and Joenniemi state that, “subnational actors do not aim in general at applying and copying the principles and characteristics of state-to-state relations. They do not reach out on behalf of the state but usually do so for reasons of their own.” Importantly, this:

...entails that states can for their part remain quite lenient vis-à-vis cooperation between regions and cities. They may view the relations established as being in the first place societal and pragmatic in nature (rather than pertaining to various spheres of “high policy” or security related concerns), this then allows them to stay aloof from any references to ‘diplomacy’ in the context of their quite non-politicized region-to-region or city-to-city relations.⁴²

As a number of articles, and the quote above from Reta Jo Lewis (indeed, the very existence of an Office for Global Intergovernmental Relations within the U.S. State Department) make clear, national governments have increasingly taken to facilitating and inviting sub-national diplomacy. In federated states like Canada and Brazil, states and provinces have long had standing to participate in international negotiations or venues, and American states have for years conducted their own foreign trade work. In a number of European countries, especially Germany, the *Länder* have formal standing to address EU level bodies on certain matters. According to Petter, “The Canadian government also supports provincial missions overseas...provincial offices in its embassies...[and]...will often consult and involve province’s in treaty negotiations that affect them.”⁴³ Interestingly though, in my research, other than for Berlin and Hamburg, which are special cases because they are city-states and their Mayor’s are therefore also state ministers, none of the other cities had a central point of contact or coordinated communication with the German Foreign Ministry or British Foreign Office.

Some scholars and analysts are going beyond just observing this difference to actively calling for a change in the relationship between national and sub-national governments.

According to Baily, Katz and West at the Brookings Institution, “To unleash the entrepreneurial energy and dynamism of the economy, we must rethink relationships among federal and state governments and the cities (and citizens) they govern. All of the economic goals outlined above....will require different levels of government to pursue integrated strategies and coordinate their actions.”⁴⁴

In a report entitled *World Cities and Nation States: Promoting a New Deal for the 21st Century* Greg Clark and Tim Moonen call for an updated and reevaluated relationship with significantly increased coordination and intergovernmental relations between national and municipal governments. This report is about how, as more and more cities within each country internationalize and become ‘world cities’, there is a growing need for national governments to have well thought out plans about how to take advantage of, support, and coordinate these activities. They write:

⁴¹ Bellini and Bramanti P 3.

⁴² Sergunnin and Joenniemi P4.

⁴³ Petter P11.

⁴⁴ Baily, Martin, Bruce Katz, and Darrell West. “Building a Long-Term Strategy for Growth through Innovation”. *Brookings*: May 2011. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2011/05/growth-innovation>

The urbanization of the global economy has required nation states to re-think traditional approaches and recognize: the emergence of world cities...the emergence of city regions and metropolitan areas...systems of cities with complementary roles...many cities with potential for international roles...Claims about the demise of sovereign national governments in a globalised and highly urbanized world have proven exaggerated...even when nation states no longer dictate policy they continue to play critical roles.”⁴⁵

They go on to inventory a number of different models that national officials can use when considering an urban policy.

In short though, municipal foreign affairs need not undermine inter-national relations. Most cities steer clear of actions that would contravene their national government’s stance. National governments are also realizing that it helps to stay coordinated with what their cities, especially their big cities, are doing. And they can even use the partnerships of their cities to help advance geopolitical inter-national goals, like the German-Russian partner city conference co-sponsored by the German Foreign Ministry in June 2015 or the German-Israeli partner city conferences and initiatives all taking place in 2015 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of German diplomatic recognition of Israel.

⁴⁵ Clark, Greg and Tim Moonen. “World Cities and Nation States: Promoting a New Deal for the 21st Century.” Main Report for IV Moscow Urban Forum. February 2015: p 13. <http://thebusinessofcities.com/world-cities-and-nation-states-promoting-a-new-deal-for-the-21st-century>

WHAT ARE MUNICIPAL OFFICES OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS?

So what then are these municipal offices of international affairs and what do they do?

In general, despite differences of emphasis and staffing, German OIAs (*Büro für International Angelegenheiten*) deal with the following portfolio's of work:

- Partner/sister cities
- International networks
- Consular Corps relations
- International Days/Europe Day/Cultural or national heritage days
- European & EU Affairs and fundraising, information and public education
- City Marketing/Branding
- Mayoral travel and delegations (inbound and outbound)
- Development cooperation
- Fair Trade City certification and activities

The German offices readily understand their role to include educating and engaging members of their own local community in understanding and valuing the city's international engagement.

Here is a snapshot comparison of the offices that I looked at:

	Population	Partner Cities	Staff in OIA	OIA budget/yr*
Berlin	3.421.829	17	12	~1 million Euros
Birmingham	1,000,000	10	14.5 FTEs	800.000 pounds
Düsseldorf	597,102	6	6 FTEs	250,000 Euros
Frankfurt	700,000	16	8 FTEs	280,000 Euros
Hamburg	1.746.342	9	9 FTEs	~1 million Euros
Köln	1.044.555	24	9 FTEs	120,000 Euros (additional 60in 2015)
Stuttgart	593 618	10	6 FTEs	180,000 Euros

*in most of the German cities, personnel costs are paid by the Personnel Department but in Birmingham they come out of the 800; they all have a separate travel budget

DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES ON MUNICIPAL INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IN EUROPE AND THE USA

There are a number of notable differences between the ways that Germans/Europeans and Americans think about these offices and this work in general.

The first is the understanding of, and value attached to, municipal international engagement by the respective voting publics. While it is understood that the Secretary of State must travel to represent US interests abroad, and even governors on behalf of their state sometimes, I find that most Americans question why their mayor would be traveling abroad when their responsibilities are (presumably) so local. This is especially true regarding the issue of whether or not public funds are being used to pay for such a trip. The United States being such a large island (the so called 'fortress America mentality'), has also invariably contributed to the perception of not needing to engage (as much) with the rest of the world, an idea that is especially pronounced at the local level. Thus, the local – international nexus is not as clear as it is in Europe. There, thanks to the small size of many of the countries, proximity to their neighbors, history of warfare and reconciliation, and the push towards continental integration, the cultural context is radically different and municipal international travel is more readily understood and accepted.

On a related point, the amount of mayoral travel is much higher in European cities, with mayors routinely making between five and seven international trips a year to visit partner cities, lead delegations to expositions and trade fairs, and conduct other business. This is very different in the USA, where international travel is a low priority in part because it carries significant political risks, and thus even a very occasional trip must be heavily justified.

The European cities that I looked at have much more expansive international portfolios than those in the USA. They include public education, municipal development cooperation and fair trade promotion, which are not generally considered municipal roles in the US. This is also due to differences between Europe and the US regarding the role of government in society and the extent to which local European communities have taken upon themselves the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

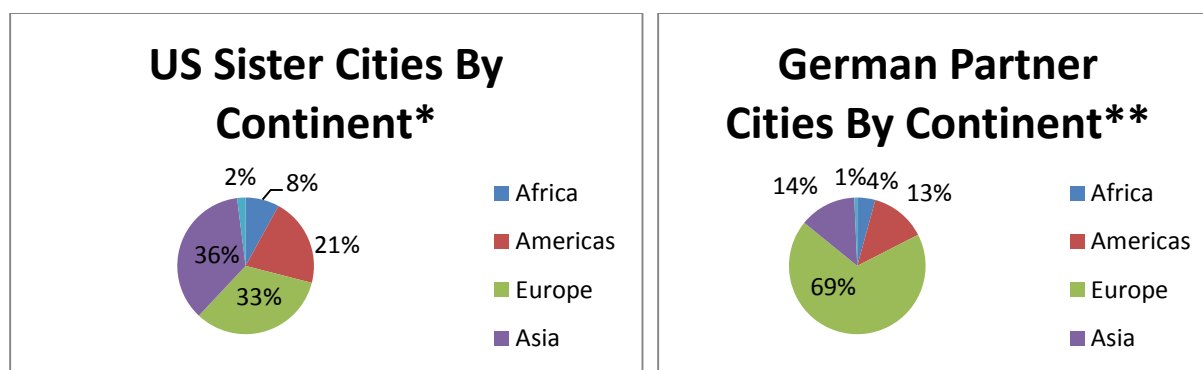
European local government officials therefore think a lot about how to best leverage and use their international relationships, such as organizing partner city conferences and engaging in technical exchanges/apprenticeships with their counterparts in other countries. Though this has happened in the US, it is much less on the minds – or within the budgets – of American city staff now, to the disappointment of the Europeans who would in general like to be much more engaged with their American counterparts.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Pfundheller, Kai. "Sister Cities in the United States and Germany: An Attempt at Comparison." In *Civil Society and Innovative Public Administration* Matthias Freise, Friedrich Paulsen, and Andrea Walter (eds.)

This highlights one of the most significant differences between the USA and Europe, which is the degree to which in Europe municipal international affairs is led by the government and full time professional staff, while in the US there may be one or two staffers in major cities (more in places like New York City, but that is an outlier) but otherwise relations with partner cities are almost entirely conducted by the sister city associations, whose existence are almost a prerequisite for an American city in order for it to have a sister city. In some American cities there are third party organizations which work closely with local officials on incoming and outgoing delegations (like the Trade Development Alliance in the Seattle metropolitan region). European cities have these third party organizations as well but they also have more full time staff who can be more directly involved in the planning and execution of activities and projects.

Europeans also routinely pay the hosting costs when an official partner city delegation visits, and include these expenses in their annual budgeting; in the US this is less common.

The cumulative effect of these contrasts is a substantially different understanding of municipal foreign affairs on each side of the Atlantic, a difference that this paper seeks to bridge.



*USA - 522 participating American cities with 2,012 connections in 143 countries⁴⁷.

**Germany – 1485 connections.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Sister Cities International: <http://sister-cities.org/sites/default/files/Infographic%20Sister%20Cities.png>

⁴⁸ Rat der Gemeinde Regionen Europa Database: <http://www.rgre.de/partnerschaften.html>

RECOMMENDATIONS

“In the context of the balance of global economic power shifting to emerging cities, those urban centers that have good connections - or build them - with the fastest growing ties in the developing world will be in a better position to take advantage of the opportunity they offer. These connections can be physical, such as airport hubs and ports, or business and personal relationships....In the developed world, large cities looking to sustain growth need to forge close commercial, trade, and personal links with the emerging market dynamos -particularly middleweights - that are remaking the urban world.”⁴⁹

“Cities should create their own policies on trade, foreign direct investment, tourism, and attracting foreign talent, and advance these globally as far as possible.”⁵⁰

For many reasons already explained, German and European cities see the importance of having their OIA. In Europe there is also a significant historical and geographic precedence for having such an office. What about outside of Europe? Should other municipalities invest in such an office? Is it worth the resources? What value does it really bring?

All of the cities in this study, plus many others around the world, have already made the decision to internationalize. Here are recommendations, based on my own experiences and the interviews that I conducted, to form a set of promising practices that other cities can use when considering setting up their own OIA, or making their existing one more effective. This can also be viewed as an ala carte menu of responsibilities that such an office could have or activities it could carry out:

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND AUDIT

Structures of different OIAs vary and reflect the strategic priorities of each city, its budgetary situation, and the political importance it puts on international affairs. It also reflects what portfolios other departments such as Protocol, Economic Development or Cultural Affairs have and how they all should work together.

The first and perhaps most important thing for an OIA office is to know what it does and what it does not do. For example, in Düsseldorf, the OIA is not involved in municipal development cooperation projects unless it is with one of its partner cities – the environment ministry is the lead department on most development projects. However, the Düsseldorf OIA does have a large role to play in relations with the Consular Corps. In Birmingham the emphasis on involvement with Eurocities and winning financial awards from the EU is significant. Stuttgart emphasizes partner cities. While the city has started a strategic planning process, its budget and staff allocation reflect its focus on partner cities for the time being, as do the city's activities, which lean heavily on partner city events. In Hamburg one of the largest emphases is on regional affairs in the Baltic and North Sea regions.

The emphases and responsibilities vary, and an office which understands what it needs to do, and then orients its staff and resources accordingly is in a good position to be effective at doing those things. However the world is big and with a catchall name like 'office of international

⁴⁹ McKinsey Global Institute, Ibid, P58-9.

⁵⁰ World Economic Forum. Ibid, P5.

affairs' it is possible to be involved in everything that has any international connotation. This spreads staff too thin, not allowing them time to be proactive, to adequately prepare themselves and the Mayor for meetings, or to undertake the follow up work after meetings or trips which actually result in tangible projects or partnerships. This clarification of responsibilities can also help address turf and point of contact issues, like which office has responsibility for the local Consular Corps or for communal development assistance.

One way to figure this out is through a strategic planning process within the government. This has many benefits. It creates connections between midlevel staff in various departments which facilitates ongoing information sharing. An OIA is well positioned to help other departments if it knows what they are doing. Other departments can draw upon the OIA if they understand what OIA staff do and the value they can bring. Such a process creates those connections, shows where the OIA is vital and valuable and also creates a series of goals and priorities that the entire city government can work towards. After that, staff from the OIA can explain how what they are doing rolls up to one of the mutually agreed upon goals. It also catalogues and inventories the international activities, network memberships, and international projects/grants that other departments are working on so that through this process the OIA develops a central awareness of the international involvement of the city.

An audit of what's going on in the city is another, but different, process. The strategic planning process is about what the office should do. This audit is about what assets, opportunities, and challenges the city has. Through this process OIA staff come to understand exactly what areas of their city to promote, in which venues to do so, and what investment and partnership opportunities there are.

Other things to consider during such a process is where a city falls within the network of other nearby cities, whether in a metropolitan region, an economic or tourism cluster, a production chain, or by itself. The sources of connectivity and their proximity and connectedness with the city, such as airports, seaports, highways, and other ways of bringing visitors into and out of the city should also be discussed and are essential ingredients for most forms of internationalization.

Finally, cities should be forward looking in considering the value of an OIA – what are the coming needs of the city and its community? For example, given the interest of their constituents, some of my interviewees strongly felt that their future was more in continuing to facilitate development cooperation projects than in maintaining partner city relations.

ORGANIZATIONAL & STAFFING

Organizationally and hierarchically, where the OIA is positioned matters. Most of the cities that I looked at did not have a standalone 'international affairs' office until the mid 1990's, at the earliest. Previously, European affairs and partner cities were usually spread out between different departments, most commonly economic development or cultural affairs. However, combining and centralizing them directly within the office of the mayor had a number of effects:

- It raised their profile and ability to act: By being one of the few offices to be housed directly within the mayor's office, other departments were aware of OIA and the importance the mayor attached to it. OIA was then accorded more authority when proposing ideas, reaching out to departments, and giving input.
- Allowed the OIA to look across the city - international affairs is a crosscutting issue, meaning that many different departments are doing it within their respective fields (meeting with or assisting colleagues from abroad, attending conferences, participating

in international projects or collaborations, wooing businesses, etc.) and the vantage point and authority of being housed in the mayor's office allows international affairs offices the perspective to know what is going on in other departments and where and how to get involved. This can occur by reaching out to other departments formally (meetings, briefings, briefing documents, press releases) and informally (colleague to colleague chit chat) but in both cases the stature helps.

- When representing the city abroad it often helps to be seen as the direct and personal representative of the mayor. Business cards and titles matter in the world of protocol and diplomacy and proximity to the mayor's office is an asset when representing the city abroad.

Centralized travel services: The idea of a central travel agent for the city, either within OIA or elsewhere, and empowered not to just book tickets but also to look out for redundancies and help coordinate and make connections between different departments of the city is something to consider for particularly international cities. A central travel coordinator can save cities money and increase their effectiveness by finding good pricing and also by ensuring that the OIA has an awareness of who is traveling abroad on city business, where, and when, so that if someone from another department is also unknowingly scheduling a trip to the same place the travel agent can flag this and inform the relevant personnel so they talk to each other. Uncoordinated travel to the same place gives the impression that the left and right hands of the city are not talking to each other and the administration is unorganized.

BUDGETING

I saw two main approaches to budgeting in the cities I looked at:

- Line item budgeting - whereby the City Council proscribes how much of the OIA budget will go to each activity and/or partner city at the beginning of each year or budgeting period. This method is good for predictability and being able to plan activities throughout the year, but downsides include micromanagement and inflexibility.
- Discretionary budgeting – whereby the head of office maintains discretion to use the budget as needed.

Under either arrangement, a certain amount of the budget should be flexible to support events and last minute delegations, buy gifts for visiting partner city mayors, etc.

PARTNER CITIES

Creating a new partnership or sister city is a relatively big deal and an open-ended, long term commitment. It is something that should not be done casually. The field is scattered with stories of unmet or unreciprocated expectations, people became disappointed and tuned out and relationships that went defunct but are still officially on the books.

As discussed above, the heyday of partner city ties was in the years after WWII through the fall of the USSR. Now, their value is under question, but opinions differ. Partner cities were vital when international travel was not so easy and readily available for young people and their first experience abroad would have come through a school trip to their partner city. Now, these relationships are not so necessary for travel. Meanwhile, the people who were originally instrumental in building and sustaining those relationships are getting older. Yet, having a long

term relationship is something that City Council members can more readily understand and do not need to be continuously explained or justified – they were there before and will remain.

These relationships can be updated too. People are seeing the value of a partner/sister-city relationship in economic terms now. According to the head of international relations for the city of San Antonio, Texas, “We have a 26 year old relationship with Kumamoto of Japan which has enabled us to build mutual trust between the two cities, a vital ingredient for successful business development.”⁵¹ The evidence of success is the presence of 30 Japanese companies in the city now. In the same article, Amy Liu of the Brookings Institution, when talking about a “first of its kind city to city trade agreement” between Chicago and Mexico City, observed that, “The mayors of both these cities recognize the value of strategic partnerships in a global economy, and have leveraged existing sister city relationships to formalize trade agreements.”⁵²

Nonetheless, not all partnerships are between powerhouses like Chicago and Mexico City. In a how-to manual on ‘twinning’, the United Kingdom Local Government Agency’s International Bureau colorfully calls partner city relationships, “marriages without divorce” and raises the possibility that cities should consider project-based or time-limited “municipal promiscuity” as another model for less open ended partnerships.⁵³

Cities should think seriously if a formal, open-ended partnership is what they want, or a more limited term relationship, perhaps based around one project or the length of one mayoral term. If, after that, they both want to renew the relationship they can choose to do so.

When a partnership or sister city relationship does exist, here are a few activities that have shown to be effective at giving focus, meaning, and life to the bond, beyond the ‘traditional’ exchanges of culture, youth and sports:

- Create an annual theme – Technical exchange and sharing of approaches that have worked is vital for cities. Partner cities can agree upon a theme, such as mobility, inclusion, integration, etc. and spend a year focusing on projects and sharing approaches on that topic. This broadens the bond between the cities from simply the two OIA’s and relevant community groups to include staff in the technical departments and local community groups also working on that specific topic. It also creates focus, and can culminate in a useful final conference or report (an approach employed with great success by Stuttgart).
- Focus (more) on one relationship each year – As another way to provide sharper focus and direction to their work, some cities have chosen to spend a year prioritizing one relationship in particular. They host public events, organize incoming and outgoing delegations and find other ways to leverage the focus and highlight the ties. They seek to mobilize other interested departments to participate in exchanges with that city. A potential downside of this approach is neglect of other cities (especially if the city in question has a lot of partner cities), though by letting the rest of their partners know in advance, and know when it will be their turn, they can alleviate this somewhat.

⁵¹ Ballantine, Jonathan. “How sister city partnerships can play a new role in the global economy.” *Cities Today*. 27 May, 2014. <http://cities-today.com/how-sister-city-partnerships-can-play-a-new-role-in-a-global-economy/>

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ United Kingdom Local Government International Bureau P4.

- Anniversaries (*Jubileum*) – Anniversary years (5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50...) are another way to highlight a particular relationship and have proven successful for the cities I studied. This is also because it is the same for both partners so they can work together to highlight their relationship in both cities. The year leading up to the anniversary is an excellent time to (re)mobilize and (re)engage those in the community interested in the relationship, get them meeting and working together and build momentum for the events to take place during the anniversary year.
- Other partnerships under the sister/partner city umbrella – Once a partner city relationship is established, partner schools, churches, ports, and hospitals can follow. The broad areas of interest are usually listed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the two cities. These smaller, more topical relationships create further bonds between the cities and their community members, provide substance to the relationship, and can result in successes throughout the years.
- Financial support from the city to community groups working with (or traveling to) community groups in a partner city – the city can bless or support activities undertaken by community groups which have the effect of strengthening the ties
- Trilateral or multilateral partner city relationships – There are some times when two partner cities share a common third partner, or a city has partners in two countries with another type of bond, or in conflict (ie, Cologne-Bethlehem-Jerusalem). By developing activities and thinking trilaterally, they can leverage their relationships for maximum gain.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

One of the largest and most fundamental differences between the European and American model of partner cities is the role of community groups. In the USA there are no sister city relationships without sustained community leadership and involvement in the form of a sister city association focused on that relationship. In Europe this is not the case and relationships are usually driven by professional staff in the government.

Nonetheless, many German partner city relationships have a club (*Verein*) dedicated to sustaining and personalizing that relationship. They have varying degrees of affiliation with, and support from, the city but they do create meaningful community bases for the relationship and person to person contacts. These civic relationships can sometimes go deeper than simply government (staff) to government (staff) relationships.

A related governance model, pioneered by Cologne in Germany, though relatively common in the USA, is the idea of a single association under which all of the individual clubs or associations of that city are housed (the Cologne Alliance or in the US a Sister City Association). This approach streamlines the oversight of the clubs and keeps everyone in better contact through regular meetings of the leadership of each club and common reporting requirements. There is also the possibility for pooling costs on things like insurance for events, marketing, outreach, etc.

Stuttgart, for example, emphasizes empowering civil society to be the pillar of partner city work. The professional staff in city hall supports local engagement by coordinating the strategic direction and activities of the clubs: institutions, schools or associations are involved in different partnership arrangements, and are convened on a regular basis by the city administration (so-

called round tables) to share their approaches, develop new ideas and above all to allow a peer-to-peer advisory process.

Birmingham has successfully created a series of four geographically oriented 'area associations' comprised of leading community members who represent organizations with resources that they can bring to bear to advance the agreed upon work plans of the associations. They have an area association each for North and South America, China and the Far East, Europe, and the Commonwealth Countries and Countries of Origin. These associations meet monthly and work with the city to develop and execute their respective work plans. It has proven an effective strategy for engaging key community leaders and institutions and ensuring that work is happening, even if it is not being done by governmental staff.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Public education was a part of the portfolios of all of the European cities I looked at. They organized and supported local events which increased the awareness of their communities about the city's international ties, partner cities, and other cultures. The city government itself was thus a central player in building awareness of, and support for, the city's involvement in international and European affairs.

There is an especial role here for awareness of, and education about, the countries of origin of large immigrant populations.

There is also an especial role here for education about benefits of being in the European Union. Under their European Affairs portfolios these cities host Europe Days and other events designed to promote the idea of 'Europe' and their cities active involvement and engagement with it, including benefits it receives from being within 'Europe'.

INVESTMENT, BUSINESS & TRADE

According to the McKinsey Global Institute:

Building a sufficiently detailed profile of the cities with the most promising market opportunities, including competitiveness and cost considerations, is a complex and time-consuming but necessary exercise. Companies that are able to identify the most promising markets and build a presence early on are likely to benefit from better market access and higher margins.⁵⁴

Cities can proactively take the lead in this work by benchmarking or auditing themselves, identifying their own clusters and assts, and marketing them to the appropriate audiences and in the appropriate venues. The detailed information held by planning and economic development departments can be put to good use by the OIA to strategically pick and choose to whom to market the city, what expositions and trade shows to attend, and where to look for interested investors.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS - HOW TO ADD VALUE

One recurring theme from my interviews was the desire of OIA staff to add value and enable the work of their colleagues in other departments. OIA's can add a lot.

⁵⁴ McKinsey, P48.

Overall, they can function like a strategic planning unit within the city government. They can offer logistical support to technical departments (especially in areas where there is no protocol department) and help address intercultural expectations and avoid cultural gaffes. They can also offer advice, especially with regards to the city's international strategic positioning.

Travel Planning: They can assist with or be in charge of international travel planning, per the above description. They can bring a broader perspective to international travel opportunities, making sure that each trip is leveraging its potential, and not just being seen from the perspective of an individual technical department.

Grant Writing: Many grants, especially at the EU level, require boilerplate language about the profile of the city. The OIA can be in charge of this portion of grant applications. They can develop expertise in grant writing and procedures and project manage grant applications, especially when being coordinated between multiple cities (whether partner cities or not).

New partners: When a technical department is interested in pursuing a grant opportunity but needs international partners, OIAs can find those partners. Through their involvement in international networks OIA staff meet their counterparts in other cities and have a good sense of who is available to work with or how to make contact with others.

Internationalize their colleagues: Finally, as part of their own mandate, OIAs can work to increase the international competence and perspective of the city government overall, so that international perspectives or ideas from abroad are not seen as afterthoughts or burdens, but rather as promising ideas and valuable comparative perspectives that could add value for the city (ala the quote from Tavares, above). OIA staff can serve as in house international analysts or consultants, providing advice to departments as requested.

CITY AMBASSADORS

City Ambassador programs can be effective and efficient ways of ensuring that one's city is well represented abroad.

Hamburg's City Ambassador program is comprised of 35 notable executives and senior level figures who have or had some significant ties to Hamburg and are now living or stationed elsewhere. They are empowered to unofficially represent Hamburg and to organize their own trade delegations and missions to visit the city (in coordination with the city, of course). Once there, the delegations are treated as official delegations, meeting with senior level local figures, visiting sites of interest, learning about investment opportunities, etc. Once a year the Hamburg Ambassadors are invited to visit Hamburg (at their own expense) to meet with each other, senior level local officials, enjoy a reception with the mayor, and to be updated on the latest Hamburg news and priorities.

Barcelona, Spain also has a similar program, called the Barcelona Global Council⁵⁵.

Hamburg reports that the program is going well. Certainly, there are risks in this sort of 'outsourcing', but through selecting responsible people as the Ambassadors those risks can be minimized and a city is able to magnify its presence and brand abroad at minimal expense to

⁵⁵ <http://www.barcelonaglobal.com/international-council/about-us>

itself.

ROUNDTABLES & ADVISORY GROUPS

Internal to City Government (i.e. the Cologne or Stuttgart Roundtables) – A regular (i.e. quarterly) meeting of staff from across the city government who are involved in or aware of the international connections and affairs of their department(s) can be invaluable, helping spread awareness and information across the government, keeping departments aware of each other's international ties and activities, and building relationships between staff working or interested in these areas. Such a group can also help break down silos between departments, fostering more useful intergovernmental relations and international travel.

High Level Community members: Area Associations of community stakeholders to engage and involve people working in these areas who represent organizations with resources. This model is working very well for Birmingham, UK.

General Public – Citizen diplomacy and community relations are still a bedrock of partner and sister city ties, and continuing to ensure that the public is involved is important. Groups, whether clubs or advisory councils, designed to engage the general public in the international work of the city are also important. Such groups promote interest in and awareness of international topics, networks, the EU, partner cities and their cultures, etc. in your city. However, it must be noted, when a mayor or city council creates a formal community advisory group, it must be prepared to act on their recommendations, or accept the political fallout from not doing so.

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION

Branding refers to creating single image, or series of images and impressions that people have about a place. Branding is another area where OIAs can be involved and add value, like Frankfurt, where the OIA is the lead coordinating agency for the citywide branding work. A full discussion of 'place branding' is outside the scope of this paper, suffice to say that as regular emissaries of the city, often with an intentional eagle's eye perspective on what is happening in city government and the city at large and in regular contact with a variety of international contacts, OIAs are well positioned to provide valuable perspectives on any city branding initiative. As described above, OIAs can also be particularly effective at coordinating other governmental or pseudo governmental entities (like regional investment, trade, or marketing organizations which are regularly involved in such processes).

Offices abroad: Whether a full office in another country or renting desk space in an embassy or consulate from your national government, tourism bureau or marketing agency, cities having an international presence has proven valuable, especially in places where there is a lot of interest in and trade with, the city. The OIA staffer (or contractor) who works at an office in the foreign city can serve as a local single point of contact back to the home city, making connections which can later result in business deals or collaborative projects and helping in innumerable other ways.

TRACKING AND REPORTING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

Though it may seem tedious and unimportant, tracking the number of city officials who go abroad, why they do so, and the number of meetings/groups from abroad who meet with city officials or OIA staff provides:

- A) A mechanism to explain the work of the OIA and help community members, colleagues, and elected officials understand the role it plays,
- B) A baseline and metric for analysis to assist in determining the growing or declining international interest in the city, and in which areas.
- C) Another way to display the value of the OIA office

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & NETWORKS

The OIA is often the lead agency for a city's involvement in all but the most technical international networks. OIA staff can help determine an appropriate level of involvement for a city in each network it wants to be involved in, see how the networks relate to each other, and be able to take advantage of the opportunities provided by involvement. When a technical expert or exchange is necessary, the OIA staffer can make that contact with the appropriate staff in their technical departments.

PEACEBUILDING

Once the cornerstone of citizen diplomacy and city partnerships, building peace is still an important reason for, and goal of, city level ties. Most relevantly right now are the ways that German-Russian partner city ties are being used to maintain open lines of dialogue on a range of topics while at the national level, Russian military aggression in Ukraine and German/EU sponsored sanctions on Russia have chilled inter-national relations. One can also observe significant use of German-Israeli-Palestinian partner city triangles to try to promote peace between Israeli and Palestinian communities. Other examples include the American-Iraqi sister city ties that have been formed over the last decade⁵⁶. Though hard to measure and mostly overlooked by news media, there is still an important role for these ties to keep people from combatant communities in touch during tense times.

⁵⁶ <http://www.sister-cities.org/news/newest-us-iraqi-sister-city-aims-expand-cultural-understanding>

CONCLUSION

As the world urbanizes and the role of cities in the world order changes yet again, harkening back to their heyday before the advent of nation-states, many local officials and jurisdictions are looking abroad in search of advice, investment, partnership, and more. Where they exist, the staff of their respective Offices for International Affairs take the lead in finding, forming, and leveraging each city's international opportunities and ties. By better understanding the work of these offices and the group of professionals who staff them, we can improve our knowledge of what actually happens between cities and how that can be improved and strengthened.

With both internally and externally facing responsibilities, OIA staff occupy a unique position in their governments and their communities. Within the government they can serve as a convener, strategic advisor, think tank, and travel planner. They work to assist and build the capacity of their colleagues to engage internationally and take advantage of international opportunities. They also have a high-visibility external affairs role, working directly with the local Consular Corps, honorary consuls, and visiting foreign government officials. They simultaneously work with local constituents and community groups who have an interest in partner/sister cities or municipal development cooperation and the international role and reputation of their city. OIA staff have a protocol/diplomacy function, an economic development function, a communications function and, especially in Europe, a function as development/technical assistance program officers.

Probably one of the most important functions of OIA staff is to ably prepare, advise, and staff their elected leadership on relevant issues, decisions and meetings. Meetings between the political leadership of different cities or levels of government is when the big decisions and agreements are made, and OIA staff are vital to ensure that their political leaders know what they are getting into and what in the best interests of their community. Once these directions are set, the OIA staff, the 'technical experts', conduct the day today work of maintaining and growing inter-city relationships, staying engaged in international networks, being aware of changing landscapes, facilitating technical assistance projects and exchanges, and a hundred other activities. Given the way that international protocol and diplomacy work, international affairs staff are understood to be the official representatives of their city and its mayor when the mayor is not personally available, another key element and important responsibility of their position.

In the course of a given day an OIA staffer could be preparing for an incoming trade delegation, attending the opening of a new consulate, working with community groups to prepare a local event to highlight ties with another city, providing case management services to an honorary consul looking to help a resident from her country, emailing with a counterpart in another city and country to prepare her mayor's trip there in a few weeks, meeting with colleagues in other departments to advise them on a tri-city grant application, meeting with members of a local community group interested in a specific international issue, and then attending a cultural event in the evening, either staffing an elected leader or independently.

OIA staff thus can wear many hats simultaneously and engage with a wide variety of local and international stakeholders. They have innumerable international interactions and relationships and are thus central actors in subnational and citizen diplomacy. Thus, not just for the city's that they represent, but regarding the larger issue of ties between their country and others, these day to day contacts between OIA staff and people in their respective communities play a large role in building and maintaining inter-national relations, especially during challenging times.

The Mayors Offices I have worked in and looked at all came to increasingly see the value of their city internationalizing. They centralized their international affairs offices and gave the staff increasing authority to take initiative and act. By bringing the offices into the suite of offices which report directly to the Mayor's Office, OIA staff developed the eagle's eye perspective on the rest of the government which enabled them to add great value to their colleagues work.

At the same time, it is very important for OIA staff to have an understanding of what to prioritize and what not to or they risk being spread too thin and not being able to properly follow through.

The recommendations contained in this paper are the beginning of what should be an ongoing list of activities that an OIA can conduct or participate in on different issues and to achieve different goals. Over time their role will undoubtedly evolve with a changing world landscape and with that will come new initiatives and activities to achieve new goals and objectives.

This paper seeks to contribute to the ability of cities to be strategic and effective in participating in the global community, addressing their own and the world's challenges, and improving the quality of life for their residents and surrounding communities.

City Snapshot: Birmingham

<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/eia>
<http://distinctlybirmingham.com/home/>

The City of Birmingham, United Kingdom is an older industrial city which is reshaping itself into a 'new London' of sorts, a more affordable conference/convention and tourism destination. It runs a robust international affairs program, anchored by its deep involvement in Europe and its history as a founding member of Eurocities, a role which it takes very seriously.

The city invested considerable effort in developing a well thought out strategic plan entitled *Distinctly Birmingham: A European and International Strategy for Birmingham 2013-2016*. The plan was created through a lengthy stakeholder outreach and involvement process which helped the city clarify its thinking and set priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

The plan lays out the four priorities for the city:

- Maximize European funding opportunities
- Strengthening European and international partnerships, trade, and investment
- Enhancing influence and reputation
- Developing joint-up working with our key partners

The Birmingham City Council European and International Affairs team has responsibility for

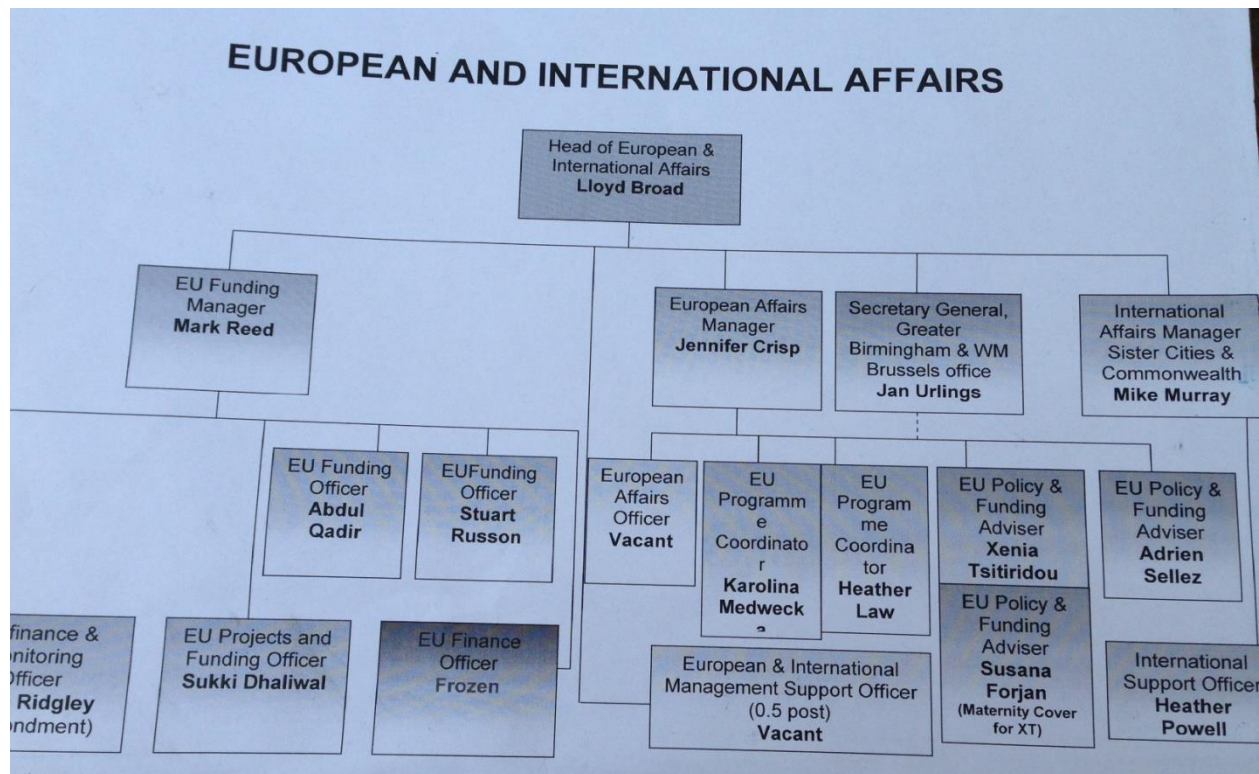
- European funding
- European policy
- International affairs

OFFICE STRUCTURE & FUNDING

To achieve these initiatives, help implement the goals and oversee the day to day activities of the strategic plan, the office has 14 staff. The office is housed within the Corporate Strategy Team of the Directorate of Economy (one of 3 Directorates, or divisions, of the city). The Director of Economy reports to the City's Chief Executive, Sir Albert Bore, who reports to the City Council.

Alone among cities I looked at, Birmingham has its own official presence in Brussels, through its Greater Birmingham and West Midlands Brussels Office (<http://greaterbirmingham.eu/>). The office there, run by the City of Birmingham but also supporting itself by providing paid/subscription services to other organizations based in greater Birmingham that benefit from having eyes and representation in Brussels, ensures that Birmingham is ably represented at the EU level and is well positioned to learn about opportunities for funding or influence there. It is also well networked in Brussels. It's a position envied by other cities.

Though the Brussels office is legally and financially separate from the Birmingham office (only one staffer is paid by Birmingham), staff there report to the City of Birmingham's European Affairs Manager.



The office runs on 800,000 pounds/year. 50% are for personnel costs. The rest of the budget goes towards travel, twinning (~50,000 pounds), events and visitors the city hosts, and other assorted costs of the office. This is supplemented with project funding from the EU.

The emphasis put on winning funds from the EU is considerable. Note the position of EU Funding Manager with three staff in Birmingham, in addition to the Brussels Office. These are often people with significant EU level experience, knowledgeable about the opportunities and funding pools out there and what the grant administrators are looking for; aka how to win awards. These staffers should ideally 'pay for themselves', but it is still noteworthy to see how many of them there are. To highlight just how valuable and successful this work is, they have published a glossy report entitled *The Benefits of Being in Europe for Birmingham*⁵⁷, listing significant projects the city has been able to undertake thanks to EU funding. The document projected that by the end of 2014, Birmingham will have received more than 1 Billion pounds in grant awarded EU funds. It also claims that half of the exports from the entire West Midlands region (in which Birmingham is) go to other EU countries.

All of the staff are local government officers. None are political appointees.

CITY MARKETING/BRANDING

City Marketing is done largely by another organization, Marketing Birmingham⁵⁸ but the OIA is involved in some of this work. Marketing Birmingham has an extensive campaign underway to brand and market the city and the region, involving a wide group of stakeholders. The OIA is a member of this group and provides input.

⁵⁷ http://distinctlybirmingham.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/benefitsofeurope_web1.pdf

⁵⁸ <http://www.marketingbirmingham.com/>

TRAVEL & TRADE

International travel is extremely important to the work of the city. From April-March 2015 there were 105 visits by Birmingham officials abroad, involving 135 people. Most of these trips were in relation to European projects or Eurocities events and meetings. In the same period, the city officially received 584 visitors from abroad, of all types (ranging from official mayoral partner city delegations to this interviewer). The OIA reports these trips and visitors to the City Council annually. Reporting these numbers helps the elected officials understand just how globally networked Birmingham is and what the OIA staff spend their time doing.

International travel is also an important way for the Lord Mayor to represent the city. Though it is a ceremonial position and depends on the level of interest of the person in that role, the Lord Mayor usually takes five international trips per year, one each to visit local troops stationed in Germany, France, and Belgium, and one to two more trips to partner cities. Other city officials also travel on their own or with their own delegations for technical or working meetings with counterparts from elsewhere.

Community members and the media do not generally raise concerns about the international travel of city officials.

PARTNER CITIES

Partner cities have long been a mainstay of municipal international affairs, but the nature of these relationships has changed from being more culture or community focused to more grant partnership and economic development focused. These types of more contingent relationships also emerge through Birmingham's involvement in Eurocities.

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Birmingham	Guangzhou	China	2007
Birmingham	Nanjing	China	2006
Birmingham	Johannesburg	South Africa	1997
Birmingham	Chicago	USA	1993
Birmingham	Mirpur	Pakistan	1993
Birmingham	Leipzig	Germany (East)	1992
Birmingham	Changchun	China	1983
Birmingham	Milan	Italy	1975
Birmingham	Frankfurt	Germany	1966
Birmingham	Lyon	France	1951

One of Birmingham's longstanding marquee partner city events is the annual Frankfurt Christmas Market, the largest German Christmas Market in the UK, and brings considerable tourism and revenue to the city.

AREA ASSOCIATIONS

To support the flourishing of these relationships and coordinate stakeholders across the city, Birmingham has created four working groups focused on geographic regions of the world:

- North & South America
- China & the Far East
- Commonwealth & Countries of Origin

- Europe

Each of these groups was created by a call put out by the OIA looking for interested parties. The office invited key people in the community - not politicians - whom they knew to be active in the relevant area to serve as the president of each association. There was no resistance or competition to this process.

The European Association is primarily focused on funding available from the EU and recently published a document entitled *Benefits of Working with Europe for Birmingham*. Because of the financial nature of this committee, the City is very involved in its work. Around 30 people are on the European Association's mailing list and around 20 attend each of its quarterly meetings, though anyone could contact the office and join the association. The association is particularly good at engaging Members of the European Parliament. Each meeting has a thematic focus. The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce is working with the Enterprise Europe Network (small and medium sized enterprise support network). The City has hopes that the association will take on more of a lead role in relations with European partner cities as well.

The North & South America association is currently focused on relations with sister city Chicago. There are a number of information, knowledge transfer, culture, and business exchanges taking place right now.

In its first year the China & the Far East Association was focused on the Chief Executive's visit to Beijing, Guangzhou, and Chongqing and on the areas of inward investment, sister city relationships, and securing direct flights to and from Birmingham and Chinese airports, which it succeeded in doing. Its largest focus now is on Chinese FDI in Birmingham.

The Commonwealth Association is the largest in terms of membership and focuses on:

- Education
- Community/faith issues
- Trade and business
- Culture, arts and sport

One premier project right now is a building a tighter relationship with Jamaica.

March 2015 was the one year mark for the existence of these associations and the presidents of the associations and the City held a joint meeting to assess their progress and next steps. They deemed their work thus far a success and pledged to continue.

COORDINATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY

In terms of relations with the Foreign Commonwealth Office, there is nothing coordinated and no single point of contact. There are conversations with the consulates and United Kingdom Trade & Investment (UKTI) in specific locations, especially like Milan or Chicago, but there is nothing comprehensive or ongoing regarding when Birmingham goes abroad.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Sir Albert Bore is currently reprising a role from years before as Chief Executive of Birmingham, and in that time he led Birmingham to be one of the founding members of Eurocities. Under his current leadership Birmingham remains very engaged with Eurocities. Birmingham has committed to the success of the organization and uses it as a platform to build its international

network. Birmingham officials currently serve as the Treasurer of the Executive Committee, the Vice Chair of the Mobility Committee, and the Vice Chair of the Culture Forum.

Birmingham is also a part of a few other international networks, but the OIA is most deeply involved with Eurocities.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When considering the ultimate value of such an office [an OIA], my interviewee said that “we need to be aware of urban approaches around the world. We can no longer limit ourselves to our own experiences and ideas....For our offices it’s not about controlling the agenda but coordinating and adding value. We can help other city offices work together on our agreed upon priorities.”

City Snapshot: Düsseldorf

<http://düsseldorf.de/internationales/>

Düsseldorf is the capital city of a major German province, North Rhine Westfalia. Lying right on the Rhine River, it was the center of German steel production and remains a major commercial hub. It has also reinvented itself as a city for shopping, a fashion center, and a convention destination.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

- Partner cities:
 - revitalize existing relationships
 - expand and look to create new ones
- European affairs:
 - inform the local community about Europe
 - attract EU funding and find partners for projects
- Consular Corps Relations

OFFICE STRUCTURE & FUNDING

Previously, European Affairs and partner cities had been in separate divisions within the Economic Development Agency. It was only under the current mayor, in a process begun in September 2014 and officially approved by the City Council in November 2014 that the European Affairs and partner cities portfolios were united into a single office and brought directly into the Mayor's office.

The OIA now has five full time employee positions, occupied by six employees (two are half time).

- Two full time employees (FTEs) focus on partner cities,
- Two FTEs focus on European Affairs,
- One FTE is for administration/front desk
- A Director, whose role includes management of the office, coordination with other offices, and representing the office and the Mayor when he is not available, especially with the Consular Corps.

The director of OIA reports to the Head of the Mayor's Office and directly to the Mayor himself.

All staff are civil servants, not political appointees.

The office budget is 250,000€ per year with about 100,000€ for European affairs and 150,000€ for partner cities. However, the budget is very flexible relative to that of other city departments and the director has discretion. Some years, i.e. anniversaries or in expectation of an upcoming trip, one partner city gets a bit more than others. Staff travel is paid for out of a separate travel budget (not included in the 250,000€) and the Mayor has his own travel budget.

CITY MARKETING/BRANDING

The OIA does not formally participate in city branding and there is no branding campaign going on. The lead agency for this work would be Düsseldorf Marketing and Tourism (DMT). However, OIA's work influences how Düsseldorf is perceived abroad. One goal of OIA is to 'sell' Düsseldorf in international environments and to international audiences. Even at international expos it is the economic development agency, not OIA that is lead, even though OIA is usually in attendance for the networking opportunities.

Should the DMT lead a formal branding process, OIA would like to be involved because it feels it has a unique perspective to offer.

TRAVEL & TRADE

Travel is crucial to the work of OIA. Counterparts from other cities have to sit together, see people and talk with them. Personal contacts are vital in this line of business. Getting out of one's own city is also important, to see it from the outside and to see what is going well and poorly in other places.

The Mayor travels abroad roughly every two months to expositions, partner cities, etc. Roughly two to four of those trips each year are longer than two days (i.e. partner city conference in Haifa) and the rest are one or two nights (ie, an exposition in France)

The Mayor travels abroad for a number of reasons, including to business expositions, rotating partner city visits, because he has an interest in developing relationships with a new region, and for special event related purposes, such as to go to Brazil for the Olympics.

Other city departments do travel abroad without the mayor. OIA travels frequently, as does the cultural affairs department.

Delegation sizes on these trips vary, with about 3-10 people on the government side depending on the size of the overall delegation, i.e., for the Haifa trip there were only five people total but for the Moscow trip there were 24 (city government, civil society, people working on local themed projects (in this example, disabilities), convention center, DMT, and private sector representatives)

Community members do have some concerns about international travel, for example the fact that the previous mayor traveled first class became an issue in the reelection campaign (which he lost to the incumbent). Mayor Geisel even received a formal complaint from a community member for meeting with a Chinese deputy prime minister. The complaint was to the effect that such a meeting was not the role of a mayor. So, community members have complained, but it is not very common. Media has been invited to attend some trips but have not recently accepted since they would have to pay their own way.

Düsseldorf's OIA manages incoming delegations, which to them inherently means an official guest of the city, who is then hosted by OIA. These are usually visitors from partner cities or other cities with which Düsseldorf has especially close relations.

Soliciting inbound investment is the responsibility of the economic development agency and its outside partner NRW Invest. Though there is occasionally some overlap and cost sharing, especially when it concerns a partner city, for the most part these portfolios are distinct, even though the economic development agency has a number of its own international specialists.

PARTNER CITIES

Düsseldorf has six partner cities:

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Düsseldorf	Chongqing	China	2004
Düsseldorf	Moscow	Russia	1992

Düsseldorf	Warsaw	Poland	1989
Düsseldorf	Haifa	Israel	1988
Düsseldorf	Chemnitz	Germany (East)	1988
Düsseldorf	Reading	United Kingdom	1988

The content of the relationship that Düsseldorf has with each one varies.

With Moscow it is all encompassing, with an emphasis on culture. On an official partner city visit to Moscow in April 2015, Mayor Geisel and Mayor Sobyenin signed another Memorandum of Understanding recommitting themselves and their cities to the partnership on a wide range of topics.

With the former East German city of Chemnitz the focus remains sports programs and exchanges.

With Haifa, Israel, the focus is on creative industries and startups. Düsseldorf recently launched its own startup initiative.

Over the past five years Düsseldorf let many of its partnerships weaken and when the new (current) administration took over they were rather moribund. The new OIA is working to re-engage with its partners and revitalize the relationships, letting them know that Düsseldorf wants to partner with them again on projects and seek out other opportunities.

Düsseldorf does have partnership clubs (*Partnerschaftsverein*) but because the office is so new it has not worked with them a lot yet.

There are also partner universities, schools, sports clubs, church groups, etc. OIA is in touch with them and call them when the mayor is going to visit the city they have partnerships in.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Europe Day – as a part of its mission of educating and engaging the local community about the importance of international affairs and engagement with Europe, Düsseldorf hosts an annual Europe Day (May 9) event. The City Hall opens its doors to the public for a festival of European cultures and current events.

National themed days – To highlight other cultures of importance to the city, the city hosts a China Day and Japan Day, with public events and a fair, to connect the Düsseldorf community with those heritages.

A substantial amount of the time of the Director is spent on meetings and events with members of the local Consular Corps, including business meetings, new consulate openings, celebrating important days, and cultural activities.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Düsseldorf is a member of a number of international networks. For professional networks the relevant department is the lead or member agency, such as the European Forum for Urban Security (Police Department) and the One World Network (Environment Agency). OIA is the lead office for Eurocities, RGRE, Euregio, and Mayors for Peace. The ultimate goal of being involved in such networks is to improve or gain new expertise, find new project partners and

identify funding opportunities. But simply being a member of a network is not enough - cities need to be active and engaged in order for these networks to actually be useful.

COORDINATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY

When the Mayor travels abroad there is no coordinated interaction with the foreign ministry. OIA may call local consulates or embassies to set up a briefing or alert them to their presence but it is ad hoc and at will, not required. Sometimes, like the recent Moscow visit, the Ambassador or Consul will join a meeting.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The need for intercultural understanding and exchange (the original basis for these relationships) remains. For many young people, their first trip abroad is still the school trip to a sister school in a sister city.

A lot is happening in cities these days – cities must look strategically at their relationships and also at which cities in the world face similar challenges and build a relationship around that. Düsseldorf has done this with Haifa, and together they are looking for solutions to the challenges both face supporting poor young families.

Partner cities as a concept has history which many people understand and does not require much explanation anymore. You work continuously on the relationship and keep coming back to them. It requires dedication. Political oversight committees understand that we as a city have these relationships and why we are working with them and do not need to explain or justify them the same way as a new relationship or project. This does not exclude project based relationships though. Project based relationships risk the ties ending when the project does.

Our approach is that with every partner city there is something that we can work on if you look/want to.

City Snapshot: Frankfurt

<http://www.frankfurt.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=3904>

Frankfurt has a lengthy history as an international city, dating back to its founding as a main trade city. After World War II it was the headquarters of the American Military Command in the American Zone, an influence which still lingers to this day. Dubbed “Mainhattan” due to its location on the Main River and its finance cluster, including a number of European level financial institutions, the city is very international and Europe-oriented.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

- Partner Cities (~50-60% of the work of the office)
- Europe and Networks (~25-30% of the work of the office)
- Development and Fair Trade (~5 % of the work of the office)

Activities of the office include:

- Central point of contact for the Consular Corps (109 of them in town)
- Coordinator for the international and European affairs of the City of Frankfurt am Main
- Care and maintenance of partner city relationships
- Support of citizen and youth exchanges with the partner cities
- Coordinating the City marketing working group
- Supporting the development of the internationalization concept
- Supporting international oriented groups and institutions
- Coordinating and preparing the Mayor for meetings
- Municipal Development Cooperation
- Organizing the in-city portions of visits of official guests
- Supporting other meetings as needed

STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

The OIA is housed within the Mayor's Office, but is in a separate government building, about three minutes from the City Hall, accessed from a shopping mall. The OIA office and its nine employees occupy the entire 5th floor.

Staff:

- FTE 1- Director of the Division of International Affairs, Economy and Region
- FTE 2 – Division Leader
- FTE 3 – Office Administration
- FTE 4 - Project leader for Europe, America and MENA-Region
- FTE 5 - Project coordinator for Europe, America and MENA-Region
- FTE 6 - Project coordinator for Europe, America and MENA-Region
- FTE 7 - Project manager for Asia, Africa, Australia
- FTE 8 - Project coordinator for Asia, Africa, Australia
- FTE 9 - Project manager for Consular Corps and public relations
- FTE 10 - Project coordinator for Consular Corps and public relations
- FTE 11 – Project coordinator for regional and economic issues 1
- FTE 12 - Project coordinator for regional and economic issues 2

The budget of the entire office is around 280,000€

- 208,000€ is split up among the 16 partner cities, with around 13,000€ each

- Europe and international networks: 20,000€
- America and development cooperation: 47,000€
- Public relations and media: 5,000€

Frankfurt does not have an independent Brussels presence but they are members of the Regionalverband Land Hessen which has a European office.⁵⁹

CITY MARKETING AND BRANDING

The OIA coordinates the city marketing group of five to six organizations which meets every other month, including the convention center, industry and trade association and Frankfurt Marketing Region.⁶⁰

Additionally, the OIA sees itself having a direct role to play in promoting and positioning Frankfurt in the world even though the city is already well known around the world.

TRAVEL AND TRADE

International travel plays an important role in the work of the office. Roughly each year they try to visit a few partner cities, and visit each of them every five years. Economic development and marketing are strong reasons for these trips. They also serve the function as being “door openers” for further relationships and contacts. These trips involve delegations of around 20 people from government, business, universities, and the media.

The wider community is very supportive of the mayor’s trips abroad. As long as they are transparent with the press, and show that the trip is not a junket but has a real working program, then there is no scandal. The trips build relationships, contacts, and trust. “We can’t sit in glass houses and wait for business to come to us or the train will pass us by” my interview partner said.

The OIA is not the lead department on business solicitation or inbound investment which is the purview of Hessen Trade & Investment⁶¹, however they do attend expositions.

In terms of hosting foreign delegations, guests from partner cities are considered guests of the city of Frankfurt, however when they come from other places that is not necessarily the case. They are welcomed, but not necessarily hosted (financially) or guaranteed meetings with senior level government officials.

PARTNER CITIES

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Frankfurt	Eskisehir	Turkey	2013
Frankfurt	Yokohama	Japan	2011
Frankfurt	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	2005
Frankfurt	Granada	Spain	1991
Frankfurt	Krakow	Poland	1991
Frankfurt	Budapest	Romania	1990
Frankfurt	Leipzig	Germany (East)	1990

⁵⁹ <http://www.region-frankfurt.de/Europab%C3%BCro>

⁶⁰ <http://www.frm-united.com/>

⁶¹ <http://www.htai.de/>

Frankfurt	Prague	Czech Republic	1990
Frankfurt	Toronto	Canada	1989
Frankfurt	Guangzhou	China	1988
Frankfurt	Tel Aviv/Jaffo	Israel	1980
Frankfurt	Cairo	Nicaragua	1979
Frankfurt	Milan	Italy	1970
Frankfurt	Deuil-la-Barre	France	1967
Frankfurt	Birmingham	United Kingdom	1966
Frankfurt	Lyon	France	1960

Frankfurt's relationships with its partner cities is very varied and depends to a considerable amount on the interests and involvement of the partner. For example, Toronto and Guangzhou were established at around the same time but their levels of activity are polar opposites. Guangzhou sends trade delegations and delegations of government officials and experts seeking to gain knowledge on issues, such as governance or access for differently abled people. Each year, up to five Chinese delegations come to Frankfurt. In contrast, Toronto, where Germans have a lot of interest has, in 20 years, only sent two delegations. This was similar with St. Louis, USA.

Krakow is one of the most active relationships.

There is a flourishing annual Frankfurt Christmas Market in Birmingham, which is the main project of the relationship.

There are a number of Partner City Friendship Clubs in Frankfurt. They are each independent of each other and the city, have varying levels of membership and activity:

The Frankfurt/Krakow Friendship Club was formed in 1989 by community members and was the primary driver of the partner city relationship with Krakow and continues to be the main driver the culture activities and exchanged between the two cities.

The Club Partner City Frankfurt-Granada existed long before the 1991 founding of the partner city relationship, and was the primary driver of it.

The Frankfurt-Dubai Club was formed a year after the signing of that partner city agreement and is designed to support the relationship by helping members of the Frankfurt community better get to know and understand the people in Dubai.

The Avrupali-Eskisehir Club was a cultural club for members of that particular Turkish community which is sizable in Frankfurt. The existence of that community partly led to the selection of Eskisehir as the Turkish city to partner with, and is now primarily in charge of the relationship.

When a group of community members wants to travel to a partner city, they can submit an application for financial support to the OIA. The office will also help make connections to organizations and people in the partner city that fit within the theme of the trip, as long as it is an organized group in the other city. Special help goes to groups where $\frac{3}{4}$ of the attendees are students.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Frankfurt is a dues paying member of Eurocities. Rather than pay the 16,000€ membership fee itself, all of the interested departments (OIA, Traffic, Health, and Culture) pool their funds together to pay.

They are also in the European Forum for Urban Security, the Covenant of Mayors, Mayors for Peace, and a few other networks.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Support the Fair Trade Campaign of Frankfurt - in 2011 Frankfurt was certified a Fair Trade town; the OIA office works to help the "Steuergruppe" maintain that certification .

Help support citizen trips to partner cities, in cooperation with trip organizer (includes financial support as well) - about 2 trips/year.

Supports identified organizations on their communal development projects in and with Frankfurt's partner cities.

Supports awareness of the EU in the region, through:

- Providing information to the community about EU programs and grant applications, along with the Europe Office of the Metropolregion Frankfurt Rhein Main (includes: position Frankfurt in Europe and its networks, being actively engaged and participating in them
- providing EU information and hosting events on EU topics,
- helping organize student trips to Brussels and Strassburg,
- helping local organizations learn about grant and other project opportunities they can participate in at the EU level,
- helping develop or support these projects,
- hosting events in Frankfurt about the European theme of the year, and
- helping support the annual "Europe Week" in May, and the EZB-Kulturtag)

Frankfurt also hosts a series of cultural festivals, including the Newcomers Festival, Bon Odori, the Turkish Film Festival, and more.

FINAL THOUGHTS

"City partnerships are not dead, they still have a vital role to play."

Exchanges help people make up their own ideas about a place and help young people to grow "it's better to see a place once than to hear about it 100 times."

Partner cities 'grease the wheels' for business and other contacts

These days those relationships are need oriented.

City Snapshot: Hamburg

<http://www.hamburg.de/international/>

Hamburg is one of three German city-states. An ancient Hanseatic City with a bustling port and maritime scene, since its creation, Hamburg has had a tradition of being involved in international affairs and trade. As a city-state it is unique among the cities in this study. Nonetheless, its goals and approaches to international affairs merit analysis.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

- Partner cities: (less than 10% of the offices time).
- European Affairs
 - At the EU level, because it is a city-state, Hamburg has a number of levers and elected officials who engage directly with European institutions
 - Hamburg is a European Info Point: <http://www.infopoint-europa.de/>
 - Recipient of large InterReg funds for North and Baltic Seas
- Communal Development Cooperation, with:
 - East Asia
 - East Sea
 - South America
 - India

STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

The Hamburg OIA is part of the Senate Chancery (*Stadtesamt*). It organizes its office as one of a suite of externally facing offices - EU Affairs, Protocol, and International Affairs.

Separating out EU and International Affairs reflects the amount of work that Hamburg does at the European Union level.

The office occupies the fifth floor of an otherwise nondescript government building about 10 minutes walk from City Hall. This distance reflects the relatively autonomous running of the office under its Executive Director (ED). The ED reports to the State Secretary, whose primary office is in the Office of the Permanent Representative of Hamburg in Berlin. The Executive Director role is apolitical but his boss, the State Secretary, is a member of Hamburg's senior leadership appointed directly by the Governing Mayor.

The staff is organized largely geographically, with the following positions and responsibilities:

- FTE 1 - Executive Director
- FTE 2 - Baltic Sea coordination, Baltic Sea organization, Northern Europe/Baltic Sea neighboring countries
- FTE 3 - Deputy for ST 2, Development politics, Sister city Dar es Salaam
- FTE 4 - Asia & Middle East, Sister cities Shanghai & Osaka; China Time and India Week
- FTE 5 - Central America and the Caribbean, Sister city León
- FTE 6 - North- & South America, South- & Western Europe, Sister cities Marseille & Chicago
- FTE 7 - Central & Eastern Europe, Sister city Prague, event organization
- FTE 8 - Baltic Sea cooperation projects, Cooperation with Denmark and the Oresund Region
- FTE 9 - Australia, New Zealand, Pacific, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, Sister city St. Petersburg, budgeting

Though otherwise operating very autonomously, on politically sensitive matters the OIA seeks operational guidance from the elected and appointed leadership. A current example is relations with the Russian partner city of St. Petersburg due to the current tense state of German-Russian relations. This was also previously the case concerning relations with Leon, Nicaragua, when the EU froze funds in response to an election it considered tarnished.

The budget for the OIA is a little over €1 million. This does not include travel, which is paid for out of a different budget. This budget has gone down in recent years. OIA is a discretionary office (not in the city charter) so it is more subject to budget cuts than services required by the charter.

Previously the budget had line items for development cooperation, Baltic cooperation, and partner cities dictated by the City Council. 2015-2016 marks the first year for new allocation model of a combined budget under the discretion of the executive director.

There is often overlap between development cooperation and partner city funds, for example, partner city money for Dar es Salaam or Leon is used to fund development projects in those cities. Also, up to ½ of the development cooperation budget has been spent in Hamburg schools to educate the local students about Hamburg's work in development assistance or to Hamburg based organizations to undertake projects abroad. 37% was recently spent in Leon.

EU funds are used to finance many projects that the office participates in. The EU office is responsible for identifying grant and funding opportunities and informing the relevant departments which may be interested. It also sometimes helps them with the application itself. The OIA sometimes helps coordinate multiple departments, or can give money from its international cooperation budget to hire a grant writer or for the application fee. Departments themselves cannot do this because their money is earmarked for actually doing project work, whereas the OIA can spend its budget on activities which promote international cooperation, which joint grant applications are.

To also support its work at the European level, the Joint Representation of Hamburg & Schleswig-Holstein in Europe, based in Brussels:

- Notifies Hamburg of EU political, legal, and development programs
- Develops and leverages a wide network of European contacts
- Represents Hamburg & Schleswig-Holstein culture in Brussels
- Informs & explains to the home community members about developments and decision making processes at the EU level
- Identifies opportunities for further European integration

CITY MARKETING AND BRANDING

This is not work that Hamburg's OIA participates in.

TRAVEL AND TRADE

The Lord Mayor regularly travels internationally. One to two trips per year are about a week long and there are many shorter ones. OIA staff travel abroad if they deem it necessary. The Hamburg economics, culture, and education ministers also travel abroad and lead delegations, and that travel is coordinated through the OIA to minimize redundancy.

PARTNER CITIES

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Hamburg	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	2010
Hamburg	Chicago	USA	1994
Hamburg	Prague	Czech Republic	1990
Hamburg	Leon	Nicaragua	1989
Hamburg	Osaka	Japan	1989
Hamburg	Dresden	Germany (East)	1987
Hamburg	Shanghai	China	1986
Hamburg	Marseilles	France	1958
Hamburg	St. Petersburg	Russia	1957

Surprisingly, classic city partnership work/exchanges occupy less than 10% of the overall work of the office. However, municipal development cooperation, often with partner cities is a sizable part of the workload and relatively high profile, given the interest of community members.

There is also an Advisory Commission for Development Cooperation, which is comprised of community members and supposed to advise the Lord Mayor and City Council about the city's approach to development cooperation projects and priorities.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Hamburg is a part of a number of international networks, and takes a deep interest in ones centered especially on the North & Baltic Sea regions.

OTHER INITIATIVES

The Hamburg Ambassadors are a group of (currently 35) senior level people who all have some deep connection to Hamburg (are from there or lived there for a long time) and are now living elsewhere in the world. They are authorized to informally represent and promote Hamburg, and even organize their own delegations to visit the city. When these delegations come, they are treated very well.

Once a year all of the Ambassadors are invited back to Hamburg (at their own expense) for meetings with senior level officials and updates on the latest goings on in Hamburg that they can use to promote it. Some are very active and successful, others less so, but in general the program is felt to be useful and effective.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Despite some concern about the open-ended nature of city partnerships, my interview partner emphasized the importance of internationality in an urbanizing world.

"Finding solutions for how other cultures can live together in peace takes place in cities, this is more important than alliances between states. Real solutions come at the local level, so more exchange between cities is a good idea. The role of municipal international relations professionals is to look within our own city and find opportunities for partnership and to look abroad to find those partners. It doesn't always work out on every deal but we are the ones looking for these opportunities."

City Snapshot: Köln

<http://www.stadt-koeln.de/politik-und-verwaltung/internationales/>

The City of Köln is a dynamic and flourishing metropolis in western Germany along the Rhine River, south of Dusseldorf. With around 1 million residents, it is Germany's fourth largest city and quite cosmopolitan. It has the largest number of partner cities of any German city, a fact that it is quite proud of.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

- City partnerships - with 22 partner cities, Köln has the most of any other city in Germany (this takes up about 45% of the work)
- Europe (about 35% of the work of the office), including involvement in international networks and project based work
- Communal development cooperation (about 25% of the work of the office)
 - Two ongoing climate partnerships - with Rio and Corinto - important to use/revitalize the city partnerships in this manner
 - OneWorld City Cologne
 - ProCent - city donation program - donate to help partner cities in need (came about after fall USSR)

STRUCTURE AND FUNDING:

Originally, protocol and partner cities were one office and European affairs was another. In 2004 they were merged into one, separated from protocol, and brought directly into the office of the mayor.

- FTE 1 - Director
 - Foundational relationships & basic questions
 - Partner cities : Tel Aviv-Yafo, Bethlehem
 - Regions: Near and Middle East, Australia, and Oceanea
 - City diplomacy
 - Deputy Director of the Cologne Alliance
 - European politics, fundamental questions, and lobbying
 - City networks: UCLG, EUROCITIES, CEMR, GED, Kölner Netzwerk der Daseinsvorsorge, International working group of the German Stadtetag, Europarunde NRW Staatskanzlei
 - Basic questions of communal development cooperation
- FTE 2
 - Partner cities: Esch-sur-Alzette, Istanbul, Klausenburg, Lüttich, Rotterdam
 - Regions: BeNeLux-States, the Balkans, Southeast Europe, Austria, and Switzerland
 - Advisor, EU-Program "Europe for Citizens"
 - ProCent-Charity Program
- FTE 3
 - Partner cities: Cork, Kattowitz, Lille, Liverpool, Peking, Rio de Janeiro, Volgograd
 - Regions: Asia Latin America, East Europe
 - Overlapping city partnership projects
 - Advisor, EU-Program "Europe for Citizens"
 - Networks: Mayors for Peace, Working group Hiroshima-Nagasaki, Breslauer Sammlung, Friendship circle Fregatte Köln e. V.

- FTE 4
 - Partner cities: Barcelona, Indianapolis, Kyoto, Thessaloniki, Tunis, Turin, Turku
 - Regions: Mediterranean Sea, North America, Scandanavia, Maghreb, and Asia
 - Advisor, EU-Program "Europe for Citizens"
 - Networks: New Hanseatic League, League of Historical Cities
 - America House NRW e. V.
- FTE 5
 - Partner cities: Corinto/El Realejo
 - Regions: Africa, Middle America, Latin America
 - Network "One World City" Cologne Chapter
 - Fair Trade Town
 - Point of contact and cooperation for: GIZ, Engagement Global, SEKW, Communal development cooperation Committee of the DeutscheStadteTag
 - MDG-Research
- FTE 6
 - Research Program "The Structure of City Partnerships"
 - Director, the Köln Alliance
 - Europe Direct Information Center Köln and the Region Köln/Bonn (EDIC Köln)
 - EU-Information Service
 - Public affairs
- FTE 7
 - EU-Project development and management
 - City networks: EFRE-Cooperation Circle
 - EU Public Education
- FTE 8
 - EU-Projects and financial management
 - City networks: RGRE Dt. Sektion, EU-NRW-Werkstatt, AK Europa Region Köln/Bonn
 - EU Public Education
 - General questions
 - Financials
 - Intern management

In 2014 the annual budget for the OIA was 121,000€, with personnel and travel costs paid for out of separate budgets. In 2015 the OIA requested and was granted another 60,000€ for partner city projects led by technical departments.

PARTNER CITIES

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Köln	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	2011
Köln	Istanbul	Turkey	1997
Köln	Bethlehem	Palestine	1996
Köln	Kattowitz	Poland	1991
Köln	Berlin Treptow	Germany (East)	1990
Köln	Indianapolis	USA	1988
Köln	Wolwograd	Russia	1988
Köln	Corinto/El Reajo	Nicaragua	1988

Köln	Cork	Ireland	1988
Köln	Thessaloniki	Greece	1988
Köln	Beijing	China	1987
Köln	Barcelona	Spain	1984
Köln	Tel Aviv/Jaffo	Israel	1979
Köln	Cluj Napoca	Romania	1976
Köln	Berlin Neuköln	Germany (East)	1967
Köln	Turku	Finland	1967
Köln	Tunis	Tunisia	1964
Köln	Kyoto	Japan	1963
Köln	Esch zur-Alzette	Luxembourg	1958
Köln	Lille	France	1958
Köln	Luttich	Belgium	1958
Köln	Rotterdam	Netherlands	1958
Köln	Turin	Italy	1958
Köln	Liverpool	United Kingdom	1952

The reason that Köln has so many European partner cities is because it really localized the goal and actions of the EU project - extending the postwar peace building theme to the local level and new entrant countries. Konrad Adenauer, the famous post war premier, being a former Mayor of Köln was also very significant and a great source of pride for the city which wanted to continue his traditions of internationalism.

With so many partner cities, the partner city clubs (Vereins) do the regular, cultural work of partner city relationship maintenance. There was a time when international travel was rare and hard-partner cities were ways for people to see the world, have an international experience, focus their attention, and build relationships with people abroad. Now, with the internet and our globalized world, Erasmus, etc. international travel is at the tip of every kids fingertips, and partner cities have lost one of their core purposes and much of their allure. The average age of a club member is now about 50, further imperiling the future of the clubs.

The Köln Alliance is an innovative model (for Germany) to manage and coordinate the sprawling network of partner city club. The 22 clubs are now united under the umbrella of one organization.

Each year the city hosts a yearly meeting of all of the members of all of the clubs (*Jahrestreffung*), to allow them to meet and mingle and discuss a few topics. There is also a more regular meeting of the presidents of each club (*Koordinationsgruppe*), to coordinate activities, keep each other informed, etc.

In addition to partner cities, Köln also has partner districts with two city districts in former East Berlin. The relationships with Berlin's districts of Neuköln and Treptow are very local, with perhaps one or two exchanges/projects a year. When they were created it was a political statement to show solidarity and connectedness with the former East Germany.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Köln is a part of numerous international networks including Eurocities, RGRE, and UCLG.

CITY MARKETING AND BRANDING

Köln OIA does not formally participate in any branding projects or initiatives.

TRAVEL AND TRADE

The Mayor travels 3-4 times a year to partner cities, plus his other trips to expos, fairs, etc. When he travels he does so under his own budget.

Criteria for travel include:

- Whether it's an anniversary year (*Jubiläumsjahr*)
- Economic motivations (such as conventions or expos)
- personal interest
- UCLG, Deutsche Städtetag meetings/events

Official trips must have an official working program to not be considered junkets.

Trips to China has become controversial given the human rights situation.

Inbound investment is handled by the economic development department.

OTHER INITIATIVES

China Offensive – a yearlong series of events focused on China and the Köln-China sister city relationship, designed to increase ties and spur investment. It was managed by the Economic Development Agency, with significant help from the OIA due to the partner city relationship and existing ties.

India Offensive – a similar push for events and deeper ties with India, but because Köln has no partner city with India, this initiative was completely driven by the Economic Development agency.

Köln International - an internal city government roundtable to coordinate the international activities of city departments

FINAL THOUGHTS

We must:

- Continue the focus on communal development cooperation
- Increase the focus on bidirectional relationships that also bring us something (know how)
- Strengthen the international competence of the rest of city government
- Find and take advantage of more opportunities in the EU
- Find technical/substantive topics of mutual benefit with our partners

City Snapshot: Stuttgart

<http://www.stuttgart.de/stuttgart-international>

Stuttgart is the capitol of the state of Baden-Wurtemberg. It is one of the wealthiest German cities, with leading companies such as Bosch, Porsche, and others in the city and region.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

- Partnercities
- Europe
- Municipal development cooperation

HISTORY, STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

Immigration and international affairs are significant issues for the city, and the evolution of the international affairs office reflects this. In 1997 Stuttgart created a position for a person focused on Europe. In 2002 the Mayor merged the Europe and the City Partnerships division (which had previously been in the Department for Culture) into one office. In 2005 the Mayor also pulled development cooperation into that office, and brought them all into his personal office. This had the effect of centralizing the office, giving it a better position from which to see the workings of other departments, being visibly close to the power source (the Mayor), enabling it to better see goings on in other departments and coordinate between them. Because international affairs is a cross cutting topic this move has been vital to its effectiveness. Though it took some time, and the office had to earn its ability to operate with authority, it is now well positioned to do so.

The staff consists of 6 people and 5 FTE's. 3 ppl 100%, 1 at 70%, 1 at 50% 1 at 80%.

Responsibilities are divided geographically (had tried it thematically but didn't work so well).

- The Director focuses on strategy and management.
- The Deputy Director focuses on partner cities (especially politically sensitive ones like Samara, Russia),
- 2 assistants: 1 focuses on Europe and meetings (logistics and subject matter).
- 1 focus 50% time on partner cities and 20% rest

The budget for the office is about 180,000€/year. This amount is for programming and is allocated relatively equally between partner cities. Personnel and travel costs are paid for out of other budgets.

When there is an anniversary (*Jubileum*) year (5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50...) the office goes to the City Council and requests an overage of around 25,000€ for further programming, planning meetings, etc.

Stuttgart is a partner in a number of EU funded projects, such as:

- To Move To
- Civitas (with Brno, Malaga, Tel Aviv)
- Europe for Citizens (with Cardiff)

Decisions to participate in different European projects are usually made by the project staff in the technical departments, who determine if there is a good fit.

The office does not currently have a person focusing full time on European issues or fundraising exclusively, which they concede is a big hole, and forces them to rely on their existing staff

resources or use consulting firms when wanting to write a grant application. The technical departments can themselves apply, but the grant process is complex and not their expertise. The technical departments would also like for OIA to play a more specific, coordinator/lobbyist role. Without this person, OIA learns about some grant opportunities from Eurocities (even though Stuttgart is not a member) and the European Office of Baden Württemberg: <http://www.europabuero-bw.de/>. However, not having a person in this role limits what opportunities Stuttgart learns about in the first place and how far in advance they learn about it. There is also not a person making proactive Stuttgart specific local analysis or political judgments/connections. That need is added to existing workloads, and therefore not done as well or intentionally as they would like.

Conceptually, the approach OIA has used to engage other departments has been to first inform them of opportunities, then integrate the idea of working with/through/in partnership with Europe, and finally to engage them to actually take the steps to apply for grants or projects, or participate in other cities initiatives.

CITY MARKETING AND BRANDING

The office does not formally participate in any city branding efforts. Through their regular work thought they position the city and network on its behalf. The regional marketing agency Stuttgart Marketing (<http://www.stuttgart-tourist.de/>) (a 100% city owned company) would also need to be involved in any formal branding effort.

TRAVEL AND TRADE

The Mayor travels regularly about four to five times per year. Last year he went to Mumbai. He recently went to Cairo at the invitation of the German ambassador there, and is going soon to Brno, Czech Republic to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the city partnership. Anniversary year delegations are larger than usual, about 20 people. Other trips are small, usually fewer than five people.

Other OIA staff travel on their own, without the Mayor, about five times/year.

Hosting incoming delegations is also an important part of the job. Delegations from partner cities are formal guests of Stuttgart. Other visitors are not necessarily granted any special accommodation.

Business development and inbound investment is really the responsibility of the Economic Development Agency (*Wirtschaftsförderung*) which has a .5 FTE dedicated to international business questions.

They are also aided in this by

- Baden Württemberg International: <http://www.bw-i.de/startseite.html>
- Stuttgart Messe: <http://www.messe-stuttgart.de/en/>
- Stuttgart Industry and Trade Association: <http://www.stuttgart.ihk24.de/>

Attending expos is largely the responsibility of the Economic Development Agency. OIA assists in making connections when events are in partner cities, but is not the lead agency in this area. Other promotion efforts are the EU's Open Days and Green Week.

PARTNER CITIES

	Partner City	Country	Year Formalized
Stuttgart	Samara	Russia	1992
Stuttgart	Lodz	Poland	1988
Stuttgart	Brun	Czech Republic	1987
Stuttgart	Cairo	Egypt	1979
Stuttgart	Menzel Bourguiba	Tunisia	1971
Stuttgart	Mumbai	India	1968
Stuttgart	Straousburg	France	1962
Stuttgart	St. Louis	USA	1960
Stuttgart	Cardiff	United Kingdom	1955
Stuttgart	St. Helens	United Kingdom	1948

Stuttgart really emphasizes its relationships with its partner cities and invests its budget accordingly. For the last few years it has hosted its own conference of each of its partner cities, though going forward it hopes to continue the tradition with a conference every two years. Delegates pay their own travel and Stuttgart pays for everything else. The vision is for future conferences to have a theme, ie, mobility or inclusion, where partners can all focus on learning about how a single issue is dealt with in each of their cities.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Stuttgart is a part of a number of international associations such as ICLEI and EFUS. The goal of this involvement is to learn new things that they can bring back to Stuttgart

OTHER INITIATIVES

Relationships with the Consular Corps is primarily the responsibility of the Protocol Department

It uses anniversary years (and their preparation), partner city days (Cardiff Day, etc) and trips as key tactics to invite participation and increase interest, awareness, and engagement on the part of community members.

It organizes all of the stakeholder groups around each partner city 2x per year in order to keep the networks alive and involve new people

There is occasional interaction with the Foreign Ministry, but, for example, the trip to India took place because the German ambassador invited him.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The office sees itself as key enabler and facilitator, building strong connections with civil society and among various stakeholders interested in international affairs in Stuttgart.

Appendix I: Interview Questions

- Please tell me about your cities international affairs – how does your city think and talk about international affairs?
- What are the main reasons for your city to be internationally engaged?
- Where do international affairs fall in your cities priorities?
- Is there a strategic plan or any document governing the work of the office?
 - Do you produce an annual report or post project reports?
- Is it more focused on economic development/trade, or culture, development, etc?

Structure/Functioning of your office

- How is your office structured?
- Number of staff?
- How are they allocated (ie, per partner city, by continent, topical area, etc.)
- Are the staff civil servants or political appointees?
- Whom do you report to? Oberbürgermeister? Stadtrat?
- How involved are they? How autonomous are you?
- Are you (or your boss) a member of the senior leadership team of the mayor?

International Affairs Budget

- What is your annual budget?
- How is it apportioned (lump sum, line items, etc)
- How much goes to Partner cities? Development projects? Other?
- Do you use European funds to finance projects in your city?
 - In which areas?
 - Who decides in which areas?
 - Who is responsible for fundraising? Do you have a special "fundraising unit" and how is it organised?

Promotion of your city

- Do you participate in city marketing/branding?
- Attend expos?
- What other steps do you take to promote your city?

International Travel & Inbound delegations

- How important is travel to your work?
- How often does the Oberbürgermeister travel internationally?
- For what reasons?
- Do other city officials travel internationally (separately than with the Oberbürgermeister)?
- Roughly how many people travel on these trips/delegations?

- What is the reason for these trips?
- Do community members have concerns about officials travelling abroad?
- Do you host incoming delegations? How often?

Relationships with other cities

- Relationship with partner cities?
- How did these partnerships come to be? (Their history)
- Who initiates projects/relationships?
- What makes for a good project/relationship?
- Examples?
- Are city partnerships the main driver of your international affairs?
- Do you have a preference of project based relationships or more open ended partner city relationships?

Business solicitation

- Is international trade and investment a core reason and goal for your work?
- Do you have strategies focused on specific regions of the world (ie China, India)?
- Do you have strategies focused on inviting investment in specific sectors (fashion, biotech, etc)
- Do you have any offices or employees/contractors based abroad? Where? Why there?
 - How many? (If not, would you like to? Why not?)
 - If yes, what role do they play/how do they contribute to the work of the office?
- Do you work with or have 3rd party organizations to assist with these efforts?
 - What is their relationship to your office?
 - What do they do?
- Do you have any data or information quantifying how effective this is?

Multilateral Networks

- Which global networks are you most active in? (Global Compact, Eurocities, Metropolis, Union of Capitals of EU, C40, United Cities and Local Government, Local Governments for Sustainability, etc...)
- Why are you involved? (who is pushing your involvement)?
- What is the goal/purpose of your involvement?
- What do you get out of being a part of this network?
- Suggestions for improving them or their usefulness?

Miscellaneous/Concluding thoughts

- Relationship with local Consular Corps?
- Relationship with Foreign Ministry?
- What do you see as the differences between Germany/Europe & the USA in this area?
- Final thoughts/best practices for others looking to build effective city international affairs?
- If you could do anything in this field, what would it be?

- What are the next steps in city international relations?