

Dear Mayor Hollemann

Dear colleagues of Denzlingen's twin towns,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for your invitation and for the possibility to be at the Denzlingen European Festival. It is a great honour for me and a pleasure to be able to be here together with you.

For Poland, 2014 is a special year. In May we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our membership in the European Union, in June we celebrated 25 years of democratic change in Poland, in March we remembered the 15th anniversary of becoming a member of the NATO. This is also the year, in which elections for the European Parliament haven take place for the third time in Poland.

Becoming a member of the European Union has opened many doors for us, which have been closed so far. Everywhere we notice the positive effects. We could reach this stage due to heavy work, and one must not omit to stress the fact that this would have been impossible without the European funds.

In particular, I would like to stress the role of town twinnings in this process. The contacts between local communities - often from distant regions within the European Union - form an important basis of the European community. Denzlingen with its partners is an excellent example for the layout of such a community.

For three years now, Konstancin-Jeziorna has also been part of this community. In our cooperation, we especially invest in the young generation. Stereotypes are overcome by contacts between schools and by sportive meetings of young people from Denzlingen and Konstancin-Jeziorna. Pupils get to know culture and customs of their German peers, and the perfection of their linguistic skills in foreign languages is an investment, which will most certainly bear fruit in future. The cooperation between our towns is also visible in the presentation of products of local artists, photographers, but also in the presentation of history, customs and traditions. The citizens of our towns who enjoy being hosts for friends from Konstancin-Jeziorna or Denzlingen also play an important part in this cooperation.

In this way we learn from each other.

In this way lifelong friendships arise.

In this way a true European unity develops.

We exchange good practices and apply them to our own ground. A good example for this - following the Denzlingen model - is the opening of the first self-service library in Konstancin-Jeziorna's spa gardens. In our town we call it "Book-Stop". In Denzlingen the "open book shelves" have proved a great success. I am convinced, this will be similar with us.

From the perspective of these three years, which have passed since the signing of the twinning contract with Denzlingen, I can tell with great pleasure that, despite the distance and the linguistic barrier, our cooperation is taking a good course. I am very hopeful that the united Europe will remain the basis for a common development in future.

Once again I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Hollemann for his invitation to the European Festival. May the meeting of Denzlingen's Twinning open up new decades of partnership relations. And I invite all of you here to come to Konstancin-Jeziorna, a wonderful spa in the heart of Poland.