

Interest Representation at EU-level

Simona Wohleser Österreichischer Städtebund, Büro Brüssel 27 Sept 2011, 10:15



VIENNA – office

(Pres Mayor Häupl; Gremien: Städtetag, Hptausschuss, Geschäftsleitung; meets in 37 committees)

- Constitutional representative body of all Austrian cities (2 associations)
- Leads financial adjustment negotiations & represents cities at High Courts
- Long tradition of subsidiarity & local self gov; high quality of services & infrastructure to affordable prices; high satisfaction rate of citizens;

BRUSSELS - office

Since 1994 part of Austrian EU-Delegation; offices in Austrian Perm Rep to EU



BRUSSELS office

Because:

- * AT-Const: ,,on all EU-issues, cities have same rights AND obligations as federal and regional level" (art 21 d/1);
- ❖ Our democratic right & obligation..."für das Gemeinwohl"
- ❖ EU-Information from federal state: too late, too sparse, sometimes false;
- ❖ Local gov are essential & logic stakeholders at EU-level;
- * active participation in EU-legislative process for us essential;
- * Coop with other nat associations: competence platform for EU-officials & others to consult;



main tasks "political and technical"

- Monitoring
- Networking
- Lobbying
- (Promoting)



practical advice

in general

- ❖ Position papers: clear, short, to the point; easy accessible language (EN/FR); Follow-up to pp [with appropriate officials; always be prepared, always be on time & NEVER overstay your appointment, always remain professional, NEVER emotional!!)
- ❖ Create (rainbow) coalitions (EU-Institutions, business & Industry, NGOs, PermReps, Media, etc)



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

(European & national interest)

- * excellent tool for putting pressure & raising issues;
- Fragile opinion forming process
- ❖ Balance of forces more cultural-historic than along party lines:
- ❖ Liberal-Anglo-Saxon--French-Belgian--North-/Central European & Italian
- important EP-rules of procedure & legislative procedure; MEP in co-ordinators' group of political groups (decisions about reports, rapporteurs, hearings, ideas for hearings, speakers, experts); assistants & EP-officials



EU-COMMISSION

(European interest – BUT: not to underestimate MS influence)

- * Has no neutral policy agenda; follows its own agenda
- Prefers market oriented solutions
- * guards, interprets & re-interprets Treaties
- ❖ Some departments initiate & dominate politics, influence public opinion, encourage discussion und propose legislation only when the time is right
- * Important: EU-legislative procedure esp when is proposal due;
- relevant DGs, units, sectors, expert groups (ca 6.000) etc



COUNCIL of the EU

(represents total of all national interests)

- * no public meetings; lack of transparency;
- * has rather "distant" relationship with local & reg gov
- * Council decisions to be lobbied for/against in MS ("at home")
- ❖ Influence of BXL based offices limited
- * important officials of Perm Rep



REQUIREMENTS for Successful offices

- * Precise definition of objectives from "home office"
- Clear political goals
- Willingness of cities to deal with EU-policy areas
- ❖ Secure financial ressources of BXL-office
- ❖ Sufficient competence (professional & social) of BXL reps

a BXL-office is only as successful as the home office wants it to be



PLANETARIUM BRÜSSEL



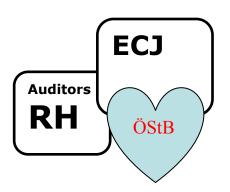
Parliament

ÖStB

EU & nat Interest; Legislative; 750
MEP;20Committees

Council of EU

Total of nat. Interests;
islative; work level:
ouncil wg, COREPER, Fachräte



Lobbyists (ca 30.000)

Industry (32%); NGOs (11%); chambers/Unions (10%); local/reg offices (ca6%); 27 dipl EU reps & ca 150 GovDeleg; ca 1.300 Journalists



European Umbrellas CEEP, CEMR, Busines

CEEP, CEMR, Business Europe, Eureau ÖStB

National Associations

SALAR, COSLA, LGA ÖGdB, VNG, LGA, ÖStB ÖStB

Networks
ELAN, POLIS

Energy Cities