

The Berlin District Mayor of Steglitz-Zehlendorf



File no. (Please indicate in any correspondence) PÖDBA PB

Berlin District Office of Steglitz-Zehlendorf, 14160 Berlin

Mr. Pawel Karczmarcyk
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24-320 Poniatowa / Poland

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Date 12.05.2020

LGBT+ declaration issued in Poniatowa on 30 August 2019

Dear Mr. Kaczmarczyk,

I note with deep concern that the Town Council of Poniatowa declared our twin town an LGBT-free zone on 30 August 2019.

Our Berlin District of Steglitz-Zehlendorf stands for a free civil society and we believe that freedom of speech and fundamental civil liberties are indispensable, regardless of sexual orientation. Tolerance and equality are major pillars of democracy.

The European Parliament condemns Poland for its LGBT-free zones and urges Polish authorities to condemn this action and to withdraw all decisions attacking LGBTI rights. It went on saying that EU funds should not be used for discriminatory purposes. The Berlin District of Steglitz-Zehlendorf fully endorses this declaration issued by the EU.

Town twinning thrives on the lively exchange that connects people across borders. Such exchange is based on social diversity and the inclusion of everyone. But it also entails that partners can tell each other very sincerely how they feel.

The Berlin District Office of Steglitz-Zehlendorf wishes to make it very clear that it distances itself from the decision taken by the Town Council of Poniatowa on 30 August 2019 since we consider this decision to be incompatible with the joint spirit of our twinning agreement. I should therefore like to ask you to inform the members of the Town Council of my letter, expecting that the decision will be reconsidered and revoked. All members of the Berlin District Office of Steglitz-Zehlendorf agree that upholding this decision would place a considerable burden on our partnership.

Public transport

City train: S 1 (Zehlendorf)
Bus line: 101, 112, 115, 285, 623,
X10 (S Zehlendorf)
118 (Rathaus Zehlendorf)

Bank details

Account of the District Steglitz-Zehlendorf:
IBAN: DE36 1005 0000 1210 0034 02
BIC: BE LA DE BE XXX (Berliner Sparkasse)

Electronic access acc. to

**Sect. 3a (1) of the Administrative
Procedure Act (VwVfG)**
post.organisationsinhalt@ba-sz.berlin.de
Access for persons with disabilities

Opening hours

Mon-Thurs 9 am - 3 pm
Fri 9 am - 2 pm and upon
prior arrangement by
phone

Please understand that the Berlin District Office of Steglitz-Zehlendorf will make public its stance against the decision taken by the Town Council of Poniatowa in an appropriate manner, joining with many other twin towns of Polish municipalities issuing similar, discriminatory decisions. I will also take the liberty to inform our two other Polish sister cities of Nałęczów and Kazimierz Dolny of this letter.

Kind regards,

Cerstin Richter-Kotowski
District Mayor

Maren Schellenberg
District Councilor

Carolina Böhm
District Councilor

Franz Mückisch
District Councilor

Michael Karnetzki
District Councilor