

Administrative exchange between delegates from North Rhine-Westphalian and Palestinian partner municipalities

(Updated July 2023)

The Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) of Engagement Global introduces a new tool to improve international municipal relations of cities in North Rhine-Westphalia and their partners in the Palestinian Territories. With funding from the State Chancellery of North-Rhine-Westphalia SKEW supports the administrative cooperation through the means of hosting exchanges that allow for deeper insights.

Aim/content of the hosting exchange

The aim of the exchange is to get to know the processes and structures in the partner municipality by walking along and job shadowing in order to facilitate an exchange about them and identify topics of further cooperation. Travel in both directions – Palestinian delegates visiting the German partner municipality and German delegates visiting the Palestinian partner municipality - should be considered while planning and both scheduled to take place until Spring 2024. The partner municipalities can freely choose the subject area of the exchange or the department in which each exchange is to take place.

Compared to the SKEW offer of Expert Delegation visits this offer is intended to involve active civil society in the in-depth administrative exchange. This could be achieved on the one hand through the participation of civil society representatives in the exchange, and on the other hand through the processing of the role of civil society in the context of local development projects within the hosting exchange.

Duration

The respective municipalities will plan the hosting exchanges. SKEW will offer support and guidance. For a self-planned hosting exchange, we assume a stay of five to five days on site plus days of arrival/departure. The dates have to be set in cooperation with the partners.

If needs be, SKEW may offer a seven-day networked hosting exchange. Here, the exchange of several municipalities will be bundled and the delegations are accompanied by SKEW. Depending on demand, networking and workshop formats will be offered as a framework on the first and last day of the stay. However, the municipal representatives are asked to independently organize the contents of their 3 to 4-day job shadowing in the respective partner municipalities.

If you are interested in a networked job shadowing exchange with the participation of other municipalities, please contact us as soon as possible.

Composition of the delegation

The offer is open for partnerships with municipalities in North Rhine-Westphalia. SKEW covers the travel and accommodation travel expenses for the exchange for up to three people per municipality in accordance with the Federal Travel Expenses Act. **One person** should be from

the **technical department** depending on the focus of the exchange, **one person** from **civil society** (either from the partnership association OR from a civil society organization cooperating or willing to cooperate with the municipality in the chosen field). **Optionally**, the third person can be the **partnership coordinator**. We would appreciate it if the delegation is as diverse as possible in terms of gender and age.

You are interested in an exchange?

If you are planning a hosting exchange with your partner municipality, please submit the attached form "**Expression of Interest**" by **September 30** at the latest. Please follow it up with a **draft programme for the job-shadowing** by the respective host municipality. This enables us to advise you on the content and to support you in your travel preparations in good time. We will be happy to advise you on the development of the exchange and any organizational issues. Please contact us!

On the following pages, you will find some organizational information on the hosting exchange between representatives from North Rhine-Westphalian and Palestinian partner municipalities.

Helpful information for the hosting exchange

International daily and accommodation allowance according to the German *Federal Travel Expenses Act (Bundesreisekostengesetz, BRKG)*:

Country	Daily allowance (max.)	Accommodation allowance (max. gross, incl. breakfast)
Palestinian territories	52,00 €	139,00 €
Germany	28,00 €	75,60 €

Before and during the trip

Cooperation Agreement:

Before the hosting exchange begins, the SKEW will send a cooperation agreement for each delegate to sign. Please read it carefully and send the signed cooperation back via email.

Visa:

Palestinians need a visa on entering Germany. As the process can be lengthy and appointments are not available on short notice, we kindly ask you to sign up for an appointment at the Representative Office in Ramallah [online](#) as soon as you have agreed on travel period and delegation with your partner and at least 90 days before your intended travel date. Please send us a copy of the passports of the delegation before the appointment. SKEW will then provide you with an invitation letter, insurance for your stay and helpful hints on application for a visa.

Private stays:

Any private stays before or after the hosting exchange must be organized and financed independently and may not exceed a maximum of 5 days (excluding Saturday and Sunday) from the beginning or end of the exchange. Please contact us at an early stage if you are planning to add a private stay.

Arrival/departure:

After consultation with SKEW and confirmation of the travel period and delegation, SKEW will book the flights. If applicable, SKEW can cover the journey to and from the airport in Germany with a Rail&Fly ticket. Travel to and from Tel Aviv airport or travel to and from Amman airport must be organized independently. Please submit incurred costs to SKEW after the trip (further information below).

Hotel bookings:

You have to book the hotel for your stay on your own. Your partner municipality can assist you here. The Service Agency Communities in One World will refund the costs for your stay within the framework of Federal Travel Expenses Act (Bundesreisekostengesetz, BRKG) after

the original invoice has been submitted. (See list above for daily and overnight allowances). Should the accommodation costs exceed the above-mentioned limits of the overnight allowance, we request a comparison of 3 offers/cost estimates.

Flight bookings:

The flight bookings for your delegation will be arranged by SKEW. Please contact SKEW as soon as planning is completed and provide a passport copy as well as the desired travel dates. After your booking is completed, you will receive an electronic flight ticket by e-mail.

Rail travel:

If you require a **Rail&Fly** ticket, please also provide this information with the flight booking information. Otherwise, you have to organize your own travel to and from the airport in Germany. If you are travelling by train without Rail&Fly, please note that only second-class tickets can be refunded. For a refund, the original ticket has to be submitted along with your travel expense report. You can find more information about the Rail&Fly ticket here: https://www.bahn.de/service/buchung/bahn_und_flug/rail-and-fly-english

Car travel:

If you are charging a mileage allowance for travel, please note the exact route using a Google Maps screenshot and a brief explanation if necessary. SKEW will refund 20ct/km, for a max. of 130 km. Parking fees can be refunded with a maximum of 10,00 €/day.

After the trip

Travel expense report:

We ask you to submit your travel expense report no later than two weeks after your return. You will receive the template in advance in electronic form. Please fill it out and send it back signed, together with the original receipts. From the Palestinian territories, sending all forms and receipts by e-mail is sufficient. In order to avoid queries and long processing times, please enclose a short explanation/note for items that are not self-explanatory. (Please refer to the "Receipts" chapter of this information sheet for further information).

For the transfer of travel expenses to an account outside Germany, please also submit the document "Transfer Information" as well as a screenshot of your online banking with account number, name as well as the indication if the transfer of Euro and/or USD is possible (any further information can be blacked out).

Receipts:

Please make sure that the date, your name as well as the institution are noted on the original receipts that you submit following your trip. Costs in foreign currency can be listed as such in the travel expense report. We will convert them using the exchange rate on the date of the receipt. If you paid expenses in foreign currency by credit card, please submit the relevant credit card statement so that we can refund the full amount of the expenses you incurred. Otherwise, the exchange rate of the voucher date will be applied here as well.

Boarding passes:

Together with your travel expense report, please submit the original boarding cards of all flights, as these will be used as evidence that you actually made the trip, even if the booking was made by SKEW.

Daily allowance:

The daily allowance is calculated by us and then added to your travel expenses. For the calculation, please indicate when you were invited to meals in an official capacity. You can find the maximum daily allowance according to the *German Federal Expenses Act* in the table above.

Taxi rides:

Taxi rides in Germany can only be covered for departures between 23:00-06:00 or for health reasons. In the Palestinian territories, they are mostly refundable (no other reliable transportation is available or the use of that transportation is unacceptable from a security point of view). In any case, a written justification has to be attached to the travel expense report with the original receipt.

Report (Mission Report):

Please submit the mission report (see Cooperation Agreement) to the Service Agency Communities in One World at the latest three weeks after your return. The report needs to be written in the usual communication language of the partnership. You will receive a sample report from SKEW in advance.