## Klaus Wowereit

Klaus Wowereit was born in 1953 in West Berlin, the youngest of four children. He grew up without a father and although the family was of modest means, his mother encouraged him to go to grammar school and later university.

He is a German politician, member of the SPD (Social Democratic Party), and has been the Mayor of Berlin since the 2001 state elections, where his party won a plurality of the votes, 29.7%. He served as President of the Bundesrat (the fourth highest office in Germany) in 2001/02. His SPD-led coalition was re-elected in the 2006 elections

Until 1973, Klaus Wowereit attended the Ulrich-von-Hutten-Oberschule in Berlin. Afterwards, he studied law at the Free University Berlin (State Exams, 1981 and 1984). After 3 years as a civil servant in the Senate office of the Interior, Wowereit stood



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for election as municipal councillor in the Tempelhof district.



At the age of 30, he was, therefore, the youngest councilor in the city of Berlin. After eleven years as a District Councillor he stood for the Berlin House of Deputies (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin) which serves as the City's Landtag or state legislature in 1995.

In December 1999, he was elected chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Abgeordnetenhaus. Since June 2001 he has served as Governing Mayor (Regierender Bürgermeister) of Berlin.

Previously, the SPD had left the grand coalition with the CDU and initiated new elections. After this election and following long-time negotiations, Wowereit finally started a coalition with the PDS.

Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit is Germany's best-known city leader and, after the departure of German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in late 2005, has become one of the country's leading Social Democrat politicians. In the elections held on 17 September 2006, Wowereit's SPD finished as the strongest party. The 16th Abgeordnetenhaus re-elected Wowereit as Governing Mayor on 23 November 2006.

Klaus Wowereit, Mayor of Berlin stated regarding himself and his duties in Berlin city that, "As Governing Mayor, I am responsible for the 3.4 million people of the city of Berlin, who elected me to office. I am also the Senator (minister) in charge of cultural policy. As a Social Democrat, fighting unemployment is an issue that is especially important to me. I am the head of the Berlin state government; like Bremen and Hamburg, the capital city Berlin is both a city and a state under Germany's federal structure, which is why the Governing Mayor of Berlin is always one of Germany's state premiers."

Mr. Wowereit, Mayor of Berlin also added, "I was born in Berlin, studied law here in the city, and started my political career here, too.".

As Governing Mayor, Mr. Klaus Wowereit also summarised his achievements and cultural/business activities, regarding his future plans and visions of Berlin city for the next three years that, "I hope that by the end of this legislative period we will have gotten a grip on the consequences of the financial and economic crisis. Until the crisis broke, our strict austerity policies had helped us to start paying down our public debt. Unfortunately, however, the crisis put an end to that. We had to start borrowing money again to help boost the economy."

"Our economic policies made innovative industries and new technologies the focus of our efforts, and it appears that these sectors are more stable than the older industries. We are going to continue down this road. As far as cultural policy is concerned, we are working on making Berlin one of the world's major cultural capitals."

Klaus Wowereit, Mayor of Berlin said the following about the reasons are for Turkey to join the European Union: "I can't answer for the Turkish government. As Governing Mayor of Berlin, however, I can say that bringing Turkey into the European Union is in our city's best interest. After all, in terms of the number of people of Turkish origin, we can say that Berlin is the largest Turkish city outside Turkey. And these Berliners benefit both our city and our economy. If Turkey were to accede to the European Union, that would promote both trade and exchange between Turkey and Berlin."

Mayor of Berlin, Mr. Wowereit stated out his essential advices to Turkish young entrepreneurs living in Europe: "My advice is no different than it would be to any entrepreneur starting out in business: you need a good idea, reliable partners, and enough money, along with hard work and commitment. And as a Social Democrat, it is especially importo me personally that everyone has the opportunity to acquire the skills and means they need to become a successful entrepreneur."

German politician, Mayor of Berlin, Mr. Wowereit stated regarding his fundamental principles in becoming a successful professional: "Again and again, I have noticed that it is vital to be well acquainted with the facts. You always have an advantage if you are better informed than your negotiating partner. Even then, however, in order to succeed, you also need to be persistent in following the goals you have set for yourself."

