

→ Awareness building on waste separation

Country Turkey

Project title Awareness building on waste separation

Twinning Municipality of Zoetermeer (the Netherlands)
Municipality of Fatih (Turkey)

Project period 1 September 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 28,307

Project objective

To create a municipal communication plan and develop communication materials to raise awareness of school children in the municipality of Fatih (district of Istanbul) as to the benefits of waste separation to all concerned.

Project summary

Zoetermeer and Fatih established a new twinning. The project focused on developing and implementing a communication plan and communication materials for the separation and collection of waste. Targeting local schools, the project resulted in increased awareness of children in separating and recycling waste. Civil servants were trained in different aspects of communication towards children in specific and citizens in general.

Core information

For several centuries, Fatih, one of the oldest city district municipalities of Istanbul, was actually the centre of the city. Nowadays this urban centre of 450,000 inhabitants boasts important city schools and health institutions, large shopping areas in Aksaray and Findikzade, and a high population density with related urban challenges.

Problem analysis

Separating waste is one criterion for European Union membership, and the city of Istanbul will shortly start separating its solid waste across the city. Currently citizens in Fatih do not separate their waste and have little knowledge or awareness of the subject. Training and awareness building are the most important factors in structurally changing behaviour. Students are one key target group in this field as they are easy to reach and influence. Staff members of the Fatih cleaning department were not experienced in drafting a communication plan and so were assisted by their counterparts from the municipality of Zoetermeer.

A practice to improve service delivery of local governments

Project implementation

The project was started by exchanging information and know-how on setting up a communication system. The current situation was analyzed by means of a survey. The original plan targeted all adults, but in this case the young were chosen as primary target as they were easy to reach, interested in the subject, and well able to influence their parents. Training was provided to relevant municipal staff on communication plans and creating special 'education boxes' for schools. Finally the lessons learned were actively shared with other regional municipalities.

Process management

The project focussed on raising the awareness of school children in targeting separation of waste and a communication plan was drafted. Also different communication tools were developed resulting in an education box for schools. The project included capacity building for municipal staff, and process development in preparing, implementing and optimizing the effects of the communication plan.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- In preparing communication materials one should focus on the target group(s);
- Dedicate attention to the commitment of involved staff;
- Involve higher bodies, in this case Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, as they are responsible for the city's overall waste management programme;
- Train the Trainers to ensure process sustainability;
- Involve teachers and university staff for their close contact with the target group;
- Track and adapt the communication plan as the lessons learned show up new ways of getting the message across. Do not fear changing direction.