

→ Creation of a sheltered employment scheme

Country Turkey

Project title Developing a sheltered employment scheme

Twinning Municipality of Nijmegen (the Netherlands)

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality (Turkey)

Project period 1 December 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 35,005

Project objective

Develop a business plan for a sheltered employment scheme in Gaziantep and establish a platform of co-operation between Gaziantep, Nijmegen and organizations for the disabled.

Project summary

A business plan focusing on issues such as funding, staffing, location and management was researched and developed. Insight was gained by civil servants of the social welfare department on the various forms of sheltered employment, and civil servants were trained in critical domains to develop a business plan.

Core information

As one of the most industrially developed towns in southern Anatolia, Gaziantep (a population of 1.3 million) pulls in many migrants from nearby towns and rural areas. Industry, agriculture and trade dominate. With some 5,600 years of history it is also a tourist centre. Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality is one of Turkey's 16 Metropolitan Municipalities responsible for overall management of social and public services, infrastructure and co-ordination with district municipalities to meet the demands of citizens.

Problem analysis

Statistics show that almost 10% of the regional residents (130,000 people) are disabled or suffer from a chronic disease. Only 25% of these are covered by any form of social security and more than half are illiterate. Only 20% of the disabled population are employed. While there are many programmes in Turkey involving vocational training centres, participation of the disabled is still low. It was important that concrete measures were taken, and perhaps even more important, that awareness of both problem and solution were raised.

A practice to improve service delivery of local governments

Project implementation

The project kick-off was organized in Nijmegen when a delegation of Gaziantep got acquainted with various local forms of sheltered employment in both public and private sectors. The Dutch delegation then visited Turkey to see the local situation and assisted in transferring Dutch know-how and experience to the Turkish environment. Workshops were organized, a SWOT analysis undertaken and a business plan prepared. An expert meeting was held with experts from stakeholder organizations of the disabled. Finally, the prepared business plan was presented with the involvement of all stakeholders.

Process management

A new process was introduced to the organization: the know-how transfer and capacity building of staff by close collaboration with an experienced practitioner of the municipality of Nijmegen. A participatory approach has followed involving disabled organizations in the process. A platform was established with participation of both municipalities and disabled organizations to ensure the smoothest implementation.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Ensure commitment and competence of staff involved;
- Involve organizations for disabled people;
- Create a platform of both municipalities and groups for disabled people to ensure maximum know-how and minimum difficulty in communication and implementation;
- Organize regular meetings with relevant municipal units and stakeholders.