

## → Creation of a municipal heritage department

**Country** Turkey

**Project title** Institutionalizing monument preservation in Kocaeli

**Twinning** Municipality of Amsterdam (the Netherlands)

Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality (Turkey)

**Project period** 1 December 2006 to 30 September 2007

**Project budget** € 51,983

### Project objective

Improve the quality of public services of Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality by setting up a municipal heritage department to better protect monuments and deliver better services to owners and users of monuments.

### Project summary

Amsterdam supported Kocaeli in setting up a heritage department to provide better services to owners and users of monuments. Monument preservation is one of the themes of the co-operation agreement between the twinning partners. Staff of the Historical Environment and Urban Aesthetics department were trained on topics such as monument preservation, public relations and record keeping. A data base was created with all known data on monuments and their owners.

### Core information

Kocaeli is a coastal city located at 110 km from Istanbul. Characterized by industry and trade, Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality has a population of 1.2 million. In 2004, the municipal area was enlarged to 3,578 km<sup>2</sup> and 42 small sub-municipalities. The area has many impressive monuments of very different periods, from classical Greek and Roman to 19th century Ottoman. The centre of Kocaeli, the city of Izmit, is built on the ruins of the ancient town of Nikomedia.

### Problem analysis

In Turkey a much higher percentage of monuments (70-75 %) is privately owned. Owners' awareness and knowledge of their rights and duties is pivotal to the success of monument preservation. In November 2005, a department of Historical Environments and Urban Aesthetics was established in Kocaeli to act as intermediary between the Regional Conservation Council and the owners of monuments to assure a more

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effective monument preservation process. Three problems were identified for effective service delivery: 1) although the new staff are professional, they were relatively untrained and unprepared for their task; 2) there was no full inventory of monuments in Kocaeli; and 3) there was no publicity and public relations programme. Consequently owners of monuments were not aware of their duties, rights, including the recently introduced state subsidies for restoration.

#### **Project implementation**

The project started with a visit of a delegation of the Amsterdam department of Conservation to Kocaeli to assess the particularities of the situation, monument owners and types of monument, and to define details of later project activities. A delegation from Kocaeli then visited Amsterdam to see how things are approached in the Netherlands, with particular attention to conservation, public relations, rules and regulations. Then, specialists of the Historical Environments and Urban Aesthetics of Kocaeli were trained by specialists of Amsterdam. The monument database was gradually built up in Kocaeli. Finally, promotion materials were developed and a publicity campaign was implemented to attract public attention. The project achieved awareness of monument owners, resulting in a number of applications for restoration works and state subsidies.

#### **Process management**

The project ensured the creation of an efficient process in Kocaeli to provide the services required. Since the related unit was newly established, the project was more a new start-up than changing a process. Stakeholders included the Department of Historical Environments and Cultural department of Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality and the Aesthetics Council (Chamber of Architects, Kocaeli University, Gebze Institute of Technology).

#### **Recommendations: do's and don'ts**

- Ensure a good database and information system set up and operation for effective monitoring and service delivery;
- Ensure skills and dedication of staff;
- Ensure good co-operation and involvement of stakeholders, especially the Regional Conservation Council.