

→ Action planning for modernisation of the fire services

Country Turkey

Project title Regional development of fire brigades in Turkey

Twinning Municipality of Deventer (the Netherlands)

Union of Southeast Anatolian Municipalities (GABB)

Municipal fire brigades of Edirne, Lüleburgaz and Çorlu

Union of all firemen of Turkey (TIB)

Project period 1 July 2008 to 31 October 2009

Project budget € 64.401,48

Project objective

To prepare a plan for modernisation and permanent improvement of the service quality of fire brigades in Thracia and Southeast Anatolia by developing a procurement and equipment plan, including training and regional cooperation, and by funding for execution of the plan.

Project summary

The project targeted identification of the problems of fire brigades in Turkey and an action plan for the modernisation and improvement of service quality through selected representative areas was developed. Training of trainers and developing regional cooperation were important components as well as investigation of funding options. The results were communicated to other fire brigades through a seminar.

Core information

Thracia is the European section of Turkey, up to the border with Greece and Bulgaria. It is an emerging industrial and urban region. The provinces of Edirne, Lüleburgaz and Çorlu have populations around 100,000. The south-eastern region of Turkey is a predominantly rural area with densely populated regional centres. Agriculture and livestock are the main elements of the economy. The Union of Southeast Anatolian Municipalities (GABB) is one of the most important regional municipal associations in Turkey, while the Union of all Firemen (TIB) is the association of the fire chiefs of Turkey.

Problem analysis

Fire brigades in Turkey, particularly in smaller cities, often do not even have elementary fire fighting equipment and/or protective clothing, neither they have received basic training. This kind of serious underdevelopment is observed not only in poor regions like the Southeast, but also in some regions with a strong industrialization and mounting industrial risks, like in Thracia. Also, in large parts of rural Turkey, there are no municipalities and therefore neither fire

brigades. Action plans are needed to address the need for training and equipment and the organisational and structural shortcomings at the same time to offer integrated solutions.

Project implementation

The first step was factfinding, getting a complete overview of existing equipment, training level, staff numbers, and general situation of the fire brigades in the project area. Further, GABB and fire chiefs visited the fire brigade of Deventer and Enschede. This was followed by an introduction to the fire brigades in Thracia and Souteastern Anatolia. The situation of fire brigades in these areas was examined, with special attention to risks in the region and required training on hazardous materials. Subsequently, training and equipment plans were developed during a meeting, with particular attention to the requirements for institution of permanent training facilities in both regions. "Training of trainers" on hazardous materials followed, with a fireman representative from each region. The next step was determination of action plans and regional cooperation, listing the practical needs to attain European levels of training and equipment. A report on funding possibilities was prepared on the basis of the developed actions plans.

Process management

To address the complex problems of the Turkish fire brigades, the regions of Thracia and Souteastern Anatolia were selected, as together they present all challenges that can be found elsewhere in Turkey and hence offer excellent opportunities for developing a universally applicable modernisation model. A truly multi-partner cooperation led to the project's success: on the Turkish side the Union of Municipalities of Southeast Anatolia, and the municipal fire brigades of Edirne, Lüleburgaz and Çorlu, and on the Dutch side the Municipality of Deventer. Consultancy and technical assistance was provided by the Turkish Union of all Firemen and the fire brigades of Amsterdam-Amstelland and Enschede. Within the Turkish context the coalition was a rare example of a much needed 'East-West' cooperation between municipalities from very different areas.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Although the problems of fire brigades across Turkey are varied and complex, it is possible to attain a better level of service by regional and inter-institutional cooperation.
- Spread the required training from the trained to untrained and so on.
- Adapt action plans to specific needs, and investigate options of funding for execution Develop and train a voluntary fire brigade.
- Raise public awareness in fire fighting.