

EU AGENDA

ICOC initiated an integration project with the European Union in culture and tourism:

EUROPEAN SYNERGY IN CULTURE AND TOURISM

Istanbul Chamber of Commerce became partner to a joint management project in culture and tourism initiated to ensure sustainable development in Europe. The project management methodology called PRINCE 2, which is widely used and has more than 250,000 certified users around the globe, is planned to be imported into tourism and culture sectors of European countries.

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Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC), one of the biggest and deep-rooted professional organisations in Turkey is gearing up for a new project which will introduce big contribution to the development of the management approach in the tourism sector. To this end, ICOC became partner to the Project Management for European Sustainable Development-PM4ESD which began its operations in October 2009.

The activities of this project, carried out under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme funded within the Life Long Learning Programme of the European Union as Transfer of Innovation Action, will continue for two years. The project management methodology called PRINCE 2, which is widely used and has more than 250,000 certified users around the globe, is planned to be imported into tourism and culture sectors of European countries with the project to terminate on September 30, 2011. In addition, contributing to the sustainable development of tourism and culture in Europe is envisaged.

A NEW METHODOLOGY IS TO BE CREATED

The aims and activities of the project are not limited to this import only. Alongside the implementation of PRINCE 2 in the countries that are partners of the project, development of a new methodology abbreviated as PM4ESD, guided by this methodology, is also targeted. Therefore, a new project management methodology which carries the hallmarks of PRINCE 2 but is independent from it will be created as the project's outcome. Moreover, the products of the said methodology are planned to be commercialised where the intellectual rights would be held by the partner agencies. In this way, all the relevant agencies operating in the tourism and culture sectors of the partner countries will obtain the rights regarding the training, consultancy and direct implementation of the methodology by cooperating with the agency that is partner of the project. A high demand would mean that the project has been successfully completed in terms of dissemination activities as well as the sustainability of the methodology.

With regard to Turkey, on the other hand, following the completion of the project, alongside the ICOC members, all institutions and agencies, particularly the training agencies and businesses, operating in the tourism and culture sectors will have the opportunity to operate under effective methodological guidance. As a result, it is expected for the institutions and agencies to strengthen their capacities with a robust methodology and raise the bar in providing services to their target groups.

A TOTAL OF 8 AGENCIES FROM 5 COUNTRIES

The PM4ESD project is carried out by the Municipality of Frigento which is situated close to Napoli, a major harbour city in Italy. The project's coordinator is a consultancy company from the UK, called Jlag. One of the important partners of the project, where ICOC is playing an active role as the only representative from Turkey, is the Italian company called QPR MMI which holds the legal rights of using the products of Prince 2 methodology for training and consultancy purposes. The other project partners include Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce from Scotland, the Academy of Humanities and Economics in Lodz, Poland, and the vocational training agencies Camigliati School and Auxilium from Italy and Austria respectively.

The project where 8 agencies from 5 countries are taking part is comprised of different activity stages. Two of the stages have been completed and three international brainstorming meetings have been organised within the scope of the project so far. At the second meeting of the project's partners, work packages were roughly defined. On the other hand, the content of the European Needs Analysis Report, the first deliverable of the project which is expected to constitute the fundament of the future activities was discussed. It was decided to announce the European Needs Analysis Report, which conforms to the PRINCE 2 principles, at a conference to be held at the European Parliament during the next meeting of the project's partners following its publication.

DEFICIENCIES IN TURKEY WERE IDENTIFIED

After this meeting, all the partners conducted without delay needs analysis at a local level. In this regard, first of all the current status of the target sectors in the project partner countries and the employed methodologies were researched. On the other hand, desk research was carried out to survey the vocational training systems. Following that, the prepared questionnaires were sent out to all institutions and agencies in the target group.

Field works with public institutions, associations, foundations, tourism enterprises and training agencies were conducted during the comprehensive desk research carried out across Turkey. In this way, the number of implemented projects to date, the amount of total expenditure and the employed methodology was surveyed. The received responses revealed that there was a significant deficiency in the projects implemented in the tourism and culture area in terms of statistics and methodology. And the reason for that was the difficulty in obtaining statistics or the amount of expenditure with regard to the number of projects implemented across Turkey in the recent years in the sectors in question.

DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS

In addition, almost all of the interviewed agencies stated that when they were taking part in international projects they were having sufficient information regarding the fundamentals of the project such as the budget, time schedule and management principles but they generally were leaving the operation of the project's methodology to the foreign partners. Following the desk research, questionnaire survey regarding the same institutions was carried out. Within the scope of the questionnaire work, the aim was to obtain information regarding whether there was any kind of project management methodology employed in Turkey and to uncover the knowledge level about PRINCE 2.

Together with these results, the questionnaires from the other project partner countries were gathered and the results were analysed. After that a needs analysis report was drafted by the project's consortium. The report was unveiled at a conference held at the European Parliament in Brussels in July, in line with the project's main principles of dissemination and sustainability across Europe. The meeting was attended by the Tourism Department of the Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry at the European Commission, officials of the Directorate General for Education and representatives from training agencies, consultancy companies and tourism associations operating in Brussels as well as in the other project partner countries.

SIMILARITIES AMONG THE PROJECT PARTNERS

Scrutiny of the report reveals that there are significant similarities from many aspects among the countries. There is a deficiency in the implementation of PRINCE 2 and the other management methodologies in our country. This deficiency is also present in the other countries albeit to a lesser degree. Because PRINCE 2 was born in the UK, its usage in Scotland is rather extensive. It is preferred frequently particularly by training agencies and public institutions. In contrast, institutions and agencies operating in the same area in Turkey, Italy, Poland and Austria are not employing not only the PRINCE 2 but the other methodologies too.

Another similarity is related to the number of the projects implemented in the recent years. Almost in every project partner country the aids to tourism and culture projects supported by the public sector were reduced. For this reason, a fall in the number of international projects carried out by the state agencies is observed. In addition, support is demanded in the area of financing as well as project management by the associations, foundations and tourism companies in the countries.

Together with these results, the European Needs Analysis Report is showing that the project management approach and sustainability in the partner countries is gaining importance. In this regard, the establishment of the management methodology concept in Europe is carried out in certain European countries where it is most needed in line with the aims and targets of the PM4ESD project. If the targets are met and the dissemination activities are successful, the PRINCE 2 as well as the PM4ESD methodology which will have been created at the end of

the project will be used extensively in the project partner companies. And with this, significant contribution to the successful completion of all kinds of sectoral projects is anticipated. In addition, with the dissemination of all the project outcomes, to be obtained on September 30, 2011, to the rest of the European countries over time, it is expected that not only the tourism and culture sectors but also the other sectors which are in leading positions in different countries will support the sustainable development of the economies of these countries.

KUTU (Additional Information in Box)

What is PRINCE 2?

PRINCE 2 is a key project that needs to be implemented by the public institutions, association or the companies for effective operations and to obtain successful results. Within the scope of this project, a management methodology that defines the management principles and one that can be applied in all sectors is targeted.

KUTU (Additional Information in Box)

We do not have methodology in tourism and culture projects

First a questionnaire research was carried out for the assessment of the status prior the initiation of the project. Within the scope of the questionnaire work, the aim was to obtain information regarding whether there was any kind of project management methodology employed in Turkey and to uncover the knowledge level about PRINCE 2. Only 6 agencies, out of the targeted 26 departments in 15 institutions and agencies, responded to the questionnaires. The information compiled from these questionnaires was interesting:

- The participating companies and associations claimed that despite of the fact that they were in the target sector, they did not have tourism and culture related projects.
- On the other hand, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and a small number of relevant directorates operating under the roof of the municipalities are familiar with a certain project management methodology.
- These directorates, however, heard of PRINCE 2 but did not have the chance to employ it in practice.