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# THE HANDBOOK OF TOWN TWINNING

## The Turkish Perspective



ANKARA  
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The Turkish and English versions of the Handbook of Town Twinning in Turkey are available online at the following links:

**Turkish:** <http://www.yereldeab.org.tr/sehireslestirme/Yayinlar.aspx>

**English:** <http://www.yereldeab.org.tr/towntwinning/publications.aspx>

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*The original text of the handbook was drafted in Turkish.*

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ALDA</b>	European Association for Local Democracy
<b>CEMR</b>	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
<b>CFCU</b>	Central Finance and Contracts Unit
<b>CoR</b>	Committee of the Regions
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FEMP</b>	Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias)
<b>IPA</b>	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
<b>LAR</b>	Local Administration Reform
<b>MEWA</b>	Middle East and West Asia
<b>SALAR</b>	Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>TGNA</b>	Turkish Grand National Assembly
<b>The Congress</b>	Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
<b>TUSELOG</b>	Turkish-Swedish Partnership for Local Governance – Municipal Partnership Networks II Project
<b>TUSENET</b>	Turkish-Swedish Partnership for Local Governance – Municipal Partnership Networks Project
<b>UCLG</b>	United Cities and Local Governments
<b>UMT</b>	Union of Municipalities of Turkey
<b>VABpro</b>	Technical Assistance for Building Capacity for the EU Affairs in the Governorates
<b>VNG</b>	Association of Netherlands Municipalities (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten)
<b>WWC</b>	World Water Council

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# PREFACE

Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT), of which all municipalities in Turkey are natural members, considers town twinning relationships that enable diversification and development of the quality of urban services of municipalities are contributing to the localisation of sustainable development and improvement of inter-cultural dialogue. In this context, UMT assumes a facilitator role by providing a basis for municipalities to establish and develop sustainable and project-oriented town twinning relationships.

UMT believes that the town twinning relationships established between municipalities sharing similar characteristics and problems both domestically and internationally are contributing to the improvement of the existing financial, administrative, and human resources structure of municipalities through the exchange of experiences. Especially, involvement of other stakeholders of the society (civil society organisations, universities, chambers of commerce, professional chambers, and other relevant institutions) into these relationships and co-operation initiatives is deemed to contribute to sustainable local economic development.

Within this framework, for the purpose of providing guidance to municipalities, UMT regularly reviews the existing town twinning relationships, identifies problem areas, and implements activities to revive inactive relationships or to establish new ones. UMT also organises town twinning events by forming co-operation initiatives with local government unions from other countries with due regard to the national foreign policy priorities. International organisations and national unions from different countries as well as associations and foundations active in this field are

invited to such events where platforms that enable exchange of information and experiences are being set up. By way of formulating projects on various topics in co-operation with national unions of other countries, UMT is promoting the development of theme-based co-operation by municipalities. UMT believes that the projects and partnerships to be formulated in relation to the current developments affecting urban policies at the global level such as the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations are going to contribute to finding joint solutions to prevailing problems and therefore carries out relevant awareness-raising activities for municipalities.

In addition to the close domestic relationship with the municipalities for more effective implementation of town twinning initiatives on a sustainable basis, UMT is aware of the key importance of acting in partnership with Turkish institutions and organisations active abroad (such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, Turkish Maarif Foundation, Yunus Emre Institute etc.). By providing a platform to bring municipalities together with these institutions and organisations, UMT is enabling the implementation of activities in a more efficient manner, in coordination, and by avoiding repetition.

Union of Municipalities of Turkey





# 1. INTRODUCTION

The project entitled “Town Twinning between Turkey and the European Union” is a technical assistance project implemented by the Directorate for EU Affairs with co-financing from the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Turkey under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II).

The overall objective of the project is to increase the administrative capacity at local level in Turkey’s EU Accession process by creating sustainable structures for exchange between local authorities in Turkey and the EU Member States.

In order to contribute to achieving this objective, various activities based on the method of town twinning are designed within the context of this project. Some of these activities focus on the exchange of information and experience through a series of events including training programmes, workshops, study visits, and an internship programme, which are conducted domestically and abroad. In addition, a grant scheme is implemented to enable the acquisition of practical experience and to establish sustainable co-operation networks in the field of town twinning. Furthermore, a number of analyses and evaluation activities are envisaged to support and complement all these activities. Promotion and awareness-raising activities in relation to town twinning and the EU acquis are also incorporated within the context of the project.

The preparation of a handbook of town twinning is envisaged as one of the project activities geared toward increasing awareness and visibility. With the purpose of conveying the basics of town twinning in a simple and concise manner, the handbook is targeted to become one of the main resources in the field of town twinning for relevant officials in Turkey as well as for representatives visiting from abroad to carry out work in this field.

The Handbook of Town Twinning in Turkey, prepared in this context, is presented to a broad spectrum of readers including in particular the officials of local governments, as well as the representatives from all public institutions, civil society, and the private sector.

The handbook begins by providing general information in relation to the project. Subsequently, basic information on town twinning is provided, in particular to address the questions of what is town twinning, what is the purpose of town twinning, what are the thematic focus areas of town twinning, and what are the common activities conducted under town twinning initiatives. Then, as one of the leading institutions in Turkey in the field of town twinning, activities of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) and relevant good practices are summarised. In the next section, information is provided on the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), which supports the pertinent activities at the international level. Afterwards, the legal framework in Turkey in the field of town twinning is depicted and lastly, success criteria for town twinning are pointed out.

As distinct from the existing publications in the respective field, the Handbook of Town Twinning in Turkey does not cover the profound dimensions of town twinning such as its origins and historical development, various case-studies across the world, and its background in Turkey. A concise, stripped-down, and practical handbook is prepared in order to avoid repetition and to provide the stakeholders with a resource that can be overviewed quickly.

This handbook is prepared by compiling information from several resources. It is expected to provide guidance to town twinning initiatives in Turkey and particularly, to contribute to raising awareness on UMT's duties and powers in this field. In this way, the information and experience to be obtained and shared through meaningful and effective town twinning initiatives are going to provide significant input to further the improvement of cities in every aspect and to pave the way for better quality, more effective, and more efficient service delivery at local level.

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

The project on Town Twinning between Turkey and the European Union is designed to encompass an implementation period of 24 months between 6 April 2018 and 5 April 2020.

The Beneficiary of the project is the Directorate for EU Affairs. The key stakeholders of the project consist of the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Local Governments within the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT), and the Union of Provinces. The Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) is the Contracting Authority of the project.

The target groups of the project consist of the Directorate for EU Affairs and the key stakeholders delineated above as well as the local authorities in Turkey and the grant beneficiaries (local governments from Turkey and EU countries).

Technical Assistance for the Project is provided by WYG Türkiye, in consortium with WYG International BV, WEglobal, and VNG International.

The overall objective of the project is to increase administrative capacity at local level in Turkey's EU Accession process, whereas the purpose of the project is to create sustainable structures for exchange between local authorities in Turkey and EU Member States in areas relevant for EU Accession.

The activities planned for the two-year implementation period of the project are envisaged to focus on the following four areas:

1. Improving the capacity of key institutions for town twinning initiatives with the EU (the Directorate for EU Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Local Governments within the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey, and the Union of Provinces), and preparing and publishing a road map to give guidance for further structural improvements.
2. Sustaining the relations with key partners in the EU and Turkey for town twinning, including through strengthened networking structures.
3. Improving the capacity of Turkish local authorities in areas relevant for EU accession and disseminating best practices.
4. Increasing the quantity and quality of town twinning initiatives involving Turkish local authorities, including effective promotion and involvement of key stakeholders such as civil society and citizens at local level.

The project activities are grouped under two components; the first component focuses on “technical assistance for the implementation of the grant scheme” and the second component focuses on “capacity building activities”. Component 1 encompasses the activities for the implementation of the grant scheme under which local governments from Turkey and the EU carry out small-scale town twinning projects together as beneficiary and co-beneficiary. Component 2 primarily focuses on capacity building activities and comprises a series of analyses, evaluation studies, and training activities in the areas of town twinning and EU *acquis*.

Detailed and up-to-date information on the activities conducted under the project are provided in the “Yerelde AB” website ([www.yereldeab.org.tr](http://www.yereldeab.org.tr)), which is the main online portal in relation to the EU harmonisation activities at the local level.

# 3. GENERAL INFORMATION ON TOWN TWINNING

In this section, general information is provided in relation to town twinning, including its definition, purpose, and focus areas as well as common activities conducted in town twinning initiatives. The aim is to establish a common and coherent perception of the concept of town twinning amongst all stakeholders.

## 3.1 What is town twinning?

Prior to elaborating on the concept of town twinning, it would be useful to indicate that the synonym concepts of ‘sister city’ and ‘sister town’ are often used interchangeably. Although the legislation in Turkey refers in general to ‘relations with institutions at home and abroad’ and in particular to ‘sister city’, the project on Town Twinning between Turkey and the European Union makes specific reference to ‘town twinning’ as the main concept and therefore, the term town twinning is used predominantly in this handbook.

Town twinning is a broad and flexible concept encompassing in essence all kinds of relationships that may be established among two or more towns. Such relationships may remain merely in the form of communication and information exchange or may be expanded to more advanced forms of collaboration and partnership.

One of the most fundamental characteristics of town twinning that distinguishes it from other forms of communication and collaboration is its long-term perspective. Therefore, unlike other forms of short- and medium-term collaboration, town twinning is required to have high-level objectives defined in a more comprehensive manner. Furthermore, it is imperative that these objectives are adopted and internalised by the citizens residing in the twinned cities or towns. From this perspective, town twinning is a democratic and participatory approach that brings different communities closer on

the basis of common values and principles, facilitates finding joint solutions to common problems, enables more effective and efficient utilisation of resources by virtue of experience-sharing, and thereby increases the level of citizen satisfaction, raises the living standards, and contributes to socioeconomic development.

### **3.2 Purpose of town twinning initiatives**

The general purpose of town twinning is to bring the cities and communities closer to one another, and thereby contribute to multiple dimensions of their development in a participatory and inclusive manner, so as to serve sustainable development and world peace in the longer term.

The bridges to be established between different cities and towns through town twinning will lay the foundations for acquaintance not only among local governments, but also among the private sector, civil society, and citizens. Such acquaintance will enable the mutual flow of the approaches, methods, and information necessary for the establishment of concrete forms of collaboration, which can then transform into a relationship for social and economic solidarity.

In dealing with problems concerning cities, as in any other issue, it is important to create platforms where different opinions from different parties can be shared and discussed with an equalitarian perspective, so that consensus-based decisions can be taken. By means of expanding the scope of different parties and different opinions that can be reached by the cities beyond the boundaries of a single city, town twinning, both in terms of process and in terms of substance, presents an approach with a potential to provide platforms for more equalitarian and wider consensus-based decisions.

### **3.3 Thematic focus areas of town twinning initiatives**

Town twinning initiatives may be carried out on any of the service areas within the mandate of local governments. At the same time, town twinning initiatives may also be undertaken to make comparative assessments on the organisational

structures and functioning of local governments, relevant administrative and financial processes, legislation, and human resources, as well as for benefitting from good practices. In this context, the following areas may be considered as possible focal points of town twinning initiatives:

- Decentralisation (subsidiarity, devolution etc.)
- Inter-cultural exchange (language, history, arts, youth, sports etc.)
- Technical know-how exchange (effectiveness and efficiency in public services, financial management, leadership, human resources etc.)
- Good governance (participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law etc.)
- Policy development (planning, analysing, monitoring and evaluation etc.)
- Local economic development (sectors including agriculture, tourism, commerce, transportation, infrastructure etc.)
- Social development (education, employment, health, gender equality, social services, social cohesion and inclusion etc.)
- Environmental protection (energy, climate, sustainability, natural resources etc.)
- Crisis management (disaster, emergency, mass migration etc.)
- Technology transfer (innovation, information and management technologies etc.)
- Research and development (scientific cooperation, management and service laboratories etc.)

### **3.4 Common activities conducted within the scope of town twinning initiatives**

Since town twinning initiatives need to be designed as long-term relationships, they are generally required to encompass a set of activities collectively serving a specific purpose instead of including only a single type of activity. As an example, several of the following activities may be incorporated and implemented in a coherent and complementary manner within the scope of town twinning:

- Regular events (festival, conference, seminar, training programme etc.)
- Study visits
- Capacity building activities
- Project implementation
- Personnel exchange
- Building communication networks for information and know-how exchange
- Analysis, monitoring and evaluation activities
- Sharing innovative information systems
- Developing shared methods, guides, and tools
- Improving the legislation
- Developing international standards



## 4. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE UNION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF TURKEY (UMT)

The Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) is a special and autonomous union of local governments, nationally and internationally representing all municipalities in Turkey and therefore, enjoys a broad mandate and a vast network. In this section, summary information is provided on UMT's structure and functioning, its services for municipalities, and its activities in the field of town twinning as well as examples of international and domestic town twinning initiatives.

### 4.1 Structure and functioning of UMT

The Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) was established in 1945 as a public benefit association to operate in the field of municipal management. UMT has conducted its activities toward the protection of the rights and interests of municipalities with the legal status of an association for 57 years.

With the purpose of convening all municipalities in Turkey within a single body, the establishment of a union of local authorities with the title of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey was authorised via the decision no. 2002/4559 of the Council of Ministers dated 21 August 2002 and thereby, UMT has acquired the legal status of a local government union.

With the enactment of the Law No. 5355 on Unions of Local Authorities on 26 May 2005 and in accordance with this Law, the approval of the Statute of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey on 28 September 2005, UMT became the only local government union authorised to represent all municipalities in Turkey at the national and international levels with all municipalities being its natural (*ipso facto*) members.

# MISSION

“Representing municipalities within the context of the local government principles, safeguarding their rights and interests, and supporting their development.”

# VISION

“As an effective local government union, becoming the strong voice of the municipalities at home and abroad.”

The **duties** of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey as stipulated in Article 7 of the Statute of UMT consist of the following:

1. Representing the municipalities at home and abroad; in this context, becoming a member of institutions, organisations, unions, associations, foundations and the like active in the field of local governments; supporting international relations and collaboration among municipalities, and facilitating their access to international networks.
2. Protecting the interests of the municipalities and to this purpose, taking legal action when necessary.
3. Commenting on and making recommendations to the draft legislation concerning municipalities; to this purpose, following the preparatory activities of the relevant legislation at the concerned authorities; participating in the activities conducted by the Commissions of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and other relevant authorities.
4. Taking actions for the solution of problems communicated by the municipalities or determined by the Union itself, and developing proposals for pertinent legislation.
5. Providing guidance to municipalities, delivering consultancy services, and developing opinion in relation to the problems encountered in practice.
6. Organising all kinds of training activities and events such as conferences, seminars, panel discussions, workshops etc. for the mayors, council members, and employees of the municipalities and their affiliated organisations and subsidiaries; establishing training centres; promoting the exchange of information and experience as well as dissemination of good practices and organising domestic and international study visits for this purpose.
7. Promoting co-operation and collaboration among the municipalities at home and abroad, and promoting solidarity with the municipalities that are adversely affected by natural or social events and providing support; to this purpose,

establishing disaster and emergency management centres when necessary in order to ensure coordination among municipalities.

**8.** Pursuant to the decision of the council, collaborating with public institutions and organisations, local governments, universities, civil society organisations, professional organisations and chambers, and similar international organisations in areas relevant to the development of municipal management and local services; conducting joint service projects and **supporting the development of sister city relationships.**

**9.** Supporting the utilisation and dissemination of information technologies in municipalities and the development of e-municipality.

**10.** Issuing any kind of written and visual publications in relation to municipal management, conducting research and development activities, supporting the scientific studies in the field of municipal management.

**11.** Supporting the municipalities in accessing to the national and international credit institutions and funds, and providing support to the development of projects.

**12.** Following the global developments in the field of local government, supporting the municipalities in their structuring and service provision in line with these developments.

**13.** Supporting the local governments of Turkey in the European Union (EU) harmonisation process, contributing to the formulation of EU *acquis* related to local governments, and providing guidance to its implementation.

**14.** For the purposes of achieving the objectives of the Union, representing its members, following the international agenda on local governments, and establishing direct contacts with relevant parties, setting up representative or liaison offices abroad with the consent of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the authorisation of the Ministry of Interior to be granted on the basis of the council decision taken in accordance with the international agreements and foreign policy.

**15.** When necessary, providing accommodation and local transport services for municipal personnel at UMT headquarters and in other locations.

**16.** Providing identity documents to the mayors.

**17.** Conducting public opinion surveys and research in order to determine the views and ideas of the municipalities in relation to the services of the Union.

18. Conducting or supporting social responsibility projects in areas within the mandate of the municipalities.
19. Engaging in any kind of activity and initiative for the development of municipal management.

UMT's **organisational structure** is also determined by the Law No. 5355 and its statutory organs consist of the Council, the Executive Board, and the President.

**UMT Council** is the main decision-making organ where all municipalities in Turkey are represented by a composition of ex-officio (natural) and elected members. The mayors of all metropolitan municipalities and province-centre municipalities as well as the mayors of municipalities with a population of 100.000 or more are ex-officio members of the UMT Council. The elected members other than these natural members consist of the mayors and municipal council members elected amongst themselves on the basis of the number of deputies of the Turkish Grand National Assembly designated for each province. In addition, substitute members amounting to one-half of the permanent members are also elected at the same time. UMT Council holds its regular meetings in the months of May and October each year. Extraordinary meetings may also be held if deemed necessary. The breakdown of UMT Council members according to the representation of the different types of municipalities is indicated in the table below:

*Table 1: Breakdown of UMT council members according to the types of municipalities*

Ex-officio (natural) members	Mayors of metropolitan municipalities	30
	Mayors of province-centre municipalities	51
	Mayors of municipalities with a population of 100.000 and more	171
Elected members	Mayors	340
	Municipal council members	210
<b>Total</b>		<b>802</b>

**UMT Executive Board** is the subsidiary decision-making organ consisting of 15 representatives, including the President of UMT. The members of UMT Executive Board are elected by UMT Council via secret ballot to serve for a one-year term. The President of UMT also chairs the Executive Board of UMT.

**UMT President** is the representative of UMT’s legal personality. The President of UMT is elected by the mayors represented at UMT Council via secret ballot. The President of UMT elected by UMT Council that convenes subsequent to the local elections serves at first for a period of two years, whereas the President elected after this period serves until the next local elections (3 years).

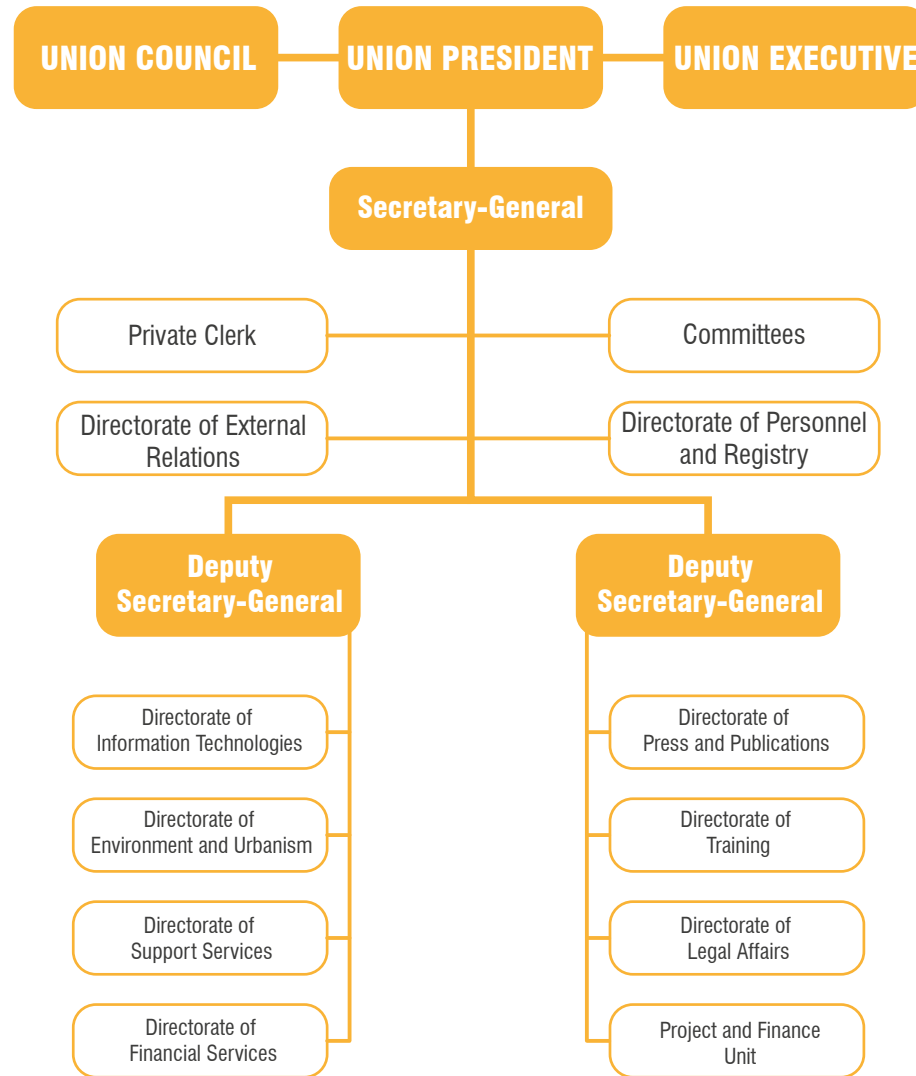


Figure 1: Organisational structure of UMT

## 4.2 Services provided to the municipalities by UMT

Services provided to the municipalities by UMT can be grouped under three main headings as ‘legal services’, ‘training’, and ‘international relations’.

Legal services include:

- Safeguarding the interests of municipalities,
- Commenting on and making recommendations to draft laws concerning municipalities,
- Participating in the legislative activities conducted by the Specialist Commissions of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) and other relevant authorities,
- When necessary, filing court cases on behalf of all municipalities against legislation negatively affecting municipal interests,
- Determining problems encountered in practice and preparing relevant recommendations,
- Responding to the legal opinion requests of municipalities in written, verbal, or e-mail format, and
- Presenting verbal explanations during the court cases tried at the Constitutional Court for the annulment of the laws concerning municipalities.

These services are in conformity with the provisions of Article 4 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (that has the force of law in accordance with Article 90 of the Constitution), which stipulates that “Local authorities shall be consulted, insofar as possible, in due time and in an appropriate way in the planning and decision-making processes for all matters which concern them directly,” as well as with the provisions of Article 6 of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles of Preparing Legislation, which stipulates that “The opinions of local authorities concerned [...] shall also be taken into account for the drafts.” UMT’s duties in relation to safeguarding the interests of municipalities are performed on the basis of the following main principles:



*Figure 2: A photo from UMT’s meetings in legal services*



- Decentralisation principle
- Principle of administrative tutelage
- European Charter of Local Self-Government
- Proportionality as regards functions and revenues
- Principle of the rule of law
- Principle of quality service provision

Services in the field of **training** are provided since 2009 under the institutional framework of the “Municipality Academy” through various activities including training programmes, information dissemination, exchanging good practices, organising events such as congresses, seminars, workshops, symposia, and distance training for the mayors, council members, executives and staff of municipalities in Turkey. The main goal of UMT’s training activities is to provide the municipalities with specialised training through proper training methods on priority topics determined by the annual training needs analyses, and thus to support capacity development of municipalities.



In order to augment the effectiveness and efficiency of the training and information dissemination activities, UMT’s training programmes are developed with due consideration to the types and scales of municipalities, as well as the status and job descriptions of their personnel.

The training activities are conducted under three main headings consisting of main services (A), legislation (B), and vision (C). Within the scope of the main services group of training programmes, it is targeted to facilitate the solution of problems encountered in relation to the main services provided by municipalities and to disseminate good practice examples. Under the group of training programmes on legislation, guidance is provided to municipalities by keeping track of the changes in pertinent legislation. The group of training programmes on vision aims to contribute to institutional capacity building within municipalities.

*Figure 3: Photographs from the training programmes of UMT*

# TRAINING PROGRAMMES

## A

- A1. Land development planning
- A2. Building licences
- A3. Business licences
- A4. Housing
- A5. Urban renewal
- A6. Urban design
- A7. Theme parks and gardens
- A8. Transport and traffic
- A9. Water and sewerage
- A10. Cleaning and solid waste
- A11. Environment and sanitation
- A12. Municipal police
- A13. Firefighting, disaster and emergency
- A14. Funerals and cemeteries
- A15. Social assistance
- A16. Marriage
- A17. Youth services
- A18. Sports
- A19. Training
- A20. Health services
- A21. Wholesale markets and food markets
- A22. Slaughterhouses and veterinary medicine
- A23. Agriculture and livestock
- A24. Culture, arts and tourism
- A25. e-Municipality
- A26. Economy and commerce

## B

- B1. Municipal legislation
- B2. Land development law
- B3. Financial management
- B4. Municipal revenues
- B5. Borrowing
- B6. Procurement legislation
- B7. Registry legislation
- B8. Vehicle legislation
- B9. Labour and social security law
- B10. Local self-government and administrative tutelage

## C

- C1. Human resources management
- C2. Personal and institutional development
- C3. Urban vision
- C4. Participation and local democracy
- C5. Project preparation
- C6. Diplomacy academy
- C7. External relations
- C8. Gender equality
- C9. Foreign language training

Figure 4: Main training topics of UMT





*Figure 5: A photograph from UMT distance training centre*

Within the context of the training programmes of UMT, the feasibility studies of the “Distance Training Centre” were completed in 2017 and the training service that enables the municipal personnel to receive continuous and up-to-date training without the limitations of space and time was recently put in operation.

UMT takes the national and international occupational standards as basis and continues its activities toward the improvement, implementation, and accreditation of technical and occupational training standards and proficiencies. In this context, through the identification of standards in relation to municipal services and the definition of occupational competencies in relation to these standards, UMT will promptly complete the accreditation process by contributing to the development of main service areas of municipalities.

In order to ensure that the training activities provided by UMT are carried out in a more systematic and planned manner, the construction of the Municipality Academy Campus was initiated in 2018. Once completed, the campus with its outstanding architecture will serve as a training and research centre of municipal services for local officials coming from around the country and from abroad.



*Figure 6: Architectural design of the Municipality Academy Campus*

Within the context of services in the field of **international relations**, UMT conducts various activities with the purpose of representing the municipalities in Turkey at home and abroad, following and shaping the international agenda in relation to local governments, ensuring exchange of information and experience in relation to global good practices, supporting the municipalities that are adversely affected by natural and social events, and promoting solidarity.



*Figure 7: UMT Local Diplomacy Workshop*

UMT is representing Turkey and the municipalities of Turkey in all of the leading international institutions active in the field of local governments. International relations of UMT is contributing not only to the introduction of the local government system in Turkey at the international level, primarily at the United Nations and the European Union but also to the transfer of the good practices in various countries and the international standards to Turkey.

UMT is the member and/or the secretariat of the following international institutions:

- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- UCLG Middle East and West Asia (MEWA)
- Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- World Water Council (WWC)

- Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (The Congress)
- Turkey Working Group of the European Union Committee of the Regions (CoR)
- European Mobility Week

In addition, UMT develops projects and programmes to support the activities of municipalities in Turkey by conducting joint projects with its counterparts and local governments in other countries.

UMT also supports the municipalities in Turkey in the EU harmonisation process, provides guidance to the implementation of the EU acquis related to local governments, and carries out activities with the purpose of ensuring the effective utilisation of EU funds.

### **4.3 UMT's activities in the field of town twinning**

As explicitly stated in the Statute of UMT, the joint projects and town twinning initiatives of the municipalities in Turkey to be implemented with municipalities from abroad pursuant to Article 74 of the Law No. 5393 on Municipality are supported by UMT on the basis of the following principles:

1. Collaboration is themed around town twinning and is developed in a project-oriented manner.
2. The initiative is on a voluntary basis mutually and responsibility is shared.
3. The towns are comparable in terms of population and socioeconomic aspects.
4. All stakeholders of the town are involved in the twinning process (civil society organisations, schools and universities, chambers of trade and industry etc.).
5. Public institutions and national organisations are involved in the process.
6. Budget is allocated.
7. Contact persons are identified.
8. Cultural heritage, shared architecture, urban identity, and architectural character are protected.
9. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out.

UMT also promotes the exchange of experience among local governments by developing joint projects with counterpart organisations in other countries and thereby contributes to finding diverse solutions to common problems faced by municipalities, multiplying the number of good practices by sharing experiences in service delivery, and strengthening of the bonds of friendship and fraternity amongst local governments. At the time of the preparation of this handbook, UMT is conducting cooperation projects with local governments from many countries including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Kosovo, Lebanon, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Palestine, Somalia, and Sweden.

### 4.3.1 Examples of international town twinning initiatives

#### **Turkish-Swedish Partnership for Local Governance – Municipal Partnership Network Projects**

The “Municipal Partnerships Network Project (TUSENET)” and the “Municipal Partnership Networks II Project” (TUSELOG) implemented by UMT in collaboration with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) are among the important initiatives carried out in the field of twinning.

##### *TUSENET: Municipal Partnership Networks Project*

The main objectives of the TUSENET Project, which was implemented between 2006 and 2011 were supporting the local government reform in Turkey, improving the capacity of UMT, and strengthening the service capacity by establishing inter-municipal co-operation. Partnership networks were established among 23 municipalities from Turkey and 6 municipalities from Sweden. These partnerships were developed in a participatory manner and municipalities came together to carry out situation analyses and to formulate projects.

The partnership topics, twinned municipalities and project outputs obtained as a result of the TUSENET Project are shown in the table below.

Table 2: TUSENET partnerships

Partnership topics	Twinned municipalities		Project outputs
Environmental protection, technical infrastructure, water, sewerage, and solid waste management	İstanbul Büyükçekmece Zeytinburnu Adalar	Stockholm Nacka	A set of 32 indicators were developed on social services and environment.
Taxes, fees, budgeting, financial tracking and supervision, leadership development	Tepebaşı Altındağ Nilüfer Osmangazi Yıldırım	Umeå	Human Resources Management Guidebook
Sustainable tourism	Manisa Karşıyaka Bornova	Kalmar	Tourism Guidebooks and Sustainable Tourism Plan
Sustainable social, economic, and environmental development	Antalya Muğla Tarsus	Malmö	Energy Handbook
Urban planning, land use, risk management	Gaziantep Osmaniye Şırnak Midyat	Karlstad	Urban Planning Guidebook
Local economic development and employment	Samsun Ordu Amasya Giresun	Kalmar	Co-operation Implementation Guidebook, Black Sea Tourism Network 1-2



With the pilot projects implemented within the scope of the TUSENET Project, the municipalities in Turkey exchanged experiences both among themselves and also with the municipalities from Sweden and while they were developing their capacity, they also contributed to the creation of a permanent platform of friendship and trust between the local governments of the two countries. Municipalities of different scales from different regions of Turkey came together and developed a joint working culture. Preparation of the pilot projects with a participatory method had a significant impact on the successful conclusion of these projects.

### TUSELOG: Municipal Partnership Networks II Project

TUSELOG Project, which started right after the completion of the TUSENET Project, was implemented between 2012 and 2016. Having the same main objective, the project activities were carried out under five different components. The first three of these components focused on the institutional development of UMT as a service provider, lobbying activities, and the role of UMT in the EU harmonisation process. The remaining two objectives were mostly concentrated on establishing co-operation initiatives among the local governments in Sweden and Turkey, and on improving certain services through the implementation of training programmes. Activities were carried out within the scope of five different partnership networks established among the municipalities and UMT worked on disseminating the results achieved.



*Figure 8: A photograph from TUSELOG project*

The partnership topics, twinned municipalities and project outputs obtained as a result of the TUSELOG Project are shown in the table below.

Table 3: TUSELOG partnerships

Partnership topics	Twinned municipalities		Project outputs
Quality and efficiency in municipal services	Manisa Çorum Şişli Tarsus	Huddinge	A set of 32 indicators were developed on social services and environment.
Sustainable ecological urban planning	Gaziantep Hatay Muğla Nilüfer	Karlstad	The guidebook titled “Approach Towards Sustainable Ecological Urban Development” was prepared by municipalities and published by the UMT.
Gender equality	Ordu Giresun Osmangazi	Kalmar	The CEMR Charter was signed by the municipalities, action plans were developed. As a result of these activities, a Gender Equality Working Group was set up at the UMT.
Waste management	Burdur Malatya Erzincan Karaman	Linköping	Recycling containers were installed.
Energy	Zeytinburnu Büyükçekmece Bornova Karşıyaka	Umeå	The online training module on energy efficiency titled “Energy at the Local Level” started to be broadcast at <a href="http://www.yereldeenerji.com">www.yereldeenerji.com</a> web address.

Municipalities developed and implemented concrete projects within the scope of both projects. UMT has set up a Gender Equality Working Group and a Participation Working Group upon the completion of these two projects. Şehir Konferansı” (26-28 Ekim 2009) düzenlenmiştir.

## **Project on the Promotion of Co-operation among Municipalities in Turkey and Spain**

The Project on the Promotion of Co-operation among Municipalities in Turkey and Spain was conducted by UMT in collaboration with the Federation of Spanish Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) under the framework of the project on the Promotion of Civil Society Dialogue between the EU and Turkey within the scope of the Towns and Municipalities Grant Scheme. The project launched in July 2008 was concluded after an implementation period of 17 months. With the overall goal of enhancing the dialogue between municipalities in Turkey and in the EU member states and candidate countries for the establishment of long-term sustainable collaboration, the project aimed to achieve two objectives:

1. Establishing sustainable collaboration and town twinning initiatives among 10 small and medium scale municipalities from Turkey and Spain for the preparation of local economic and social development plans.
2. Establishing sustainable collaboration between UMT and FEMP to promote town twinning relationships and joint projects for local governments and to enhance the efficiency of the activities carried out by UMT in this field.



Table 4: Partnerships established within the context of the project on the Promotion of Co-operation between Municipalities in Turkey and Spain

Municipalities in Turkey	Municipalities in Spain
<p>Amasra Beypazarı Birecik Buldan Erdemli İslâhiye Kavak Selçuk Tatvan Zeytinli</p>	<p>Rute Viladecans Algeciras Villafranca de los Barros Cartaya Hinojosa del Duque Santa Coloma de Gramenet La Línea Montoro</p>

Situation analyses and problems-needs analyses were carried out in the pilot municipalities of Turkey and the fields of co-operation were identified in order to plan the project activities. Participation of urban stakeholders such as the civil society organisations (CSOs), professional chambers, training institutions etc. to this process was ensured. Subsequently, twinning initiatives were undertaken on the topics jointly identified by the municipalities at the meeting held with the participation of municipalities from Turkey and Spain.

Following the twinning agreements, reciprocal visits were carried out for municipalities to exchange experiences in relation to the town twinning activities, training programmes were organised on the topics of sustainable town twinning relationships and international municipal co-operation, a guidebook titled “International Co-operation for Municipalities and Town Twinning” was prepared with the contributions of the municipalities, and with the purposes of disseminating project results and promoting the town twinning relationships of municipalities, “International Town Twinning Conference” (26-28 October 2009) was organised.

## Partnerships Established between the Municipalities in Turkey and The Netherlands

Within the context of this project which constitutes one of the earliest major projects of UMT, a database was established concerning the international town twinning relations of the municipalities, along with a website enabling twinning among municipalities. In addition, a guidebook was prepared on town twinning that defines the main elements of town twinning relationships and provides directions to the municipalities in international collaboration.

Table 5: Partnerships established between the municipalities in Turkey and The Netherlands

Municipalities in Turkey	Municipalities in The Netherlands
Lüleburgaz Edirne Bergama Denizli Kocaeli Emirdağ İstanbul Gaziantep	Deventer Alkmaar Almelo Amsterdam Haarlem Rotterdam Nijmegen

## Support to Further Implementation of Local Administration Reform (LAR II) Project

The main beneficiaries of the “Support to Further Implementation of Local Administration Reform in Turkey (LAR II) Project” financed by the EU and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme were the Ministry of Interior and the Union of Municipalities of Turkey. The project, with the overall objective of ensuring effective, transparent, inclusive, and participatory local government in Turkey through effective implementation of the legislation adopted in 2003-2005, has targeted to develop and strengthen the administrative capacity of and cooperation among the Ministry of Interior

General Directorate of Local Authorities, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey, regional unions of municipalities, and local governments. The project launched in September 2009 has terminated in November 2011. Amongst the five components of the project, two components entitled “Capacity Building at the Unions of Local Authorities” and “Improvement of National and International Co-operation among Municipalities” were conducted directly with UMT:

1. UMT’s communication strategy and action plan were developed within the context of the project component titled “Capacity Building at the Unions of Local Authorities”. The topic of “communication and lobbying” was included as a new topic into the training curriculum of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey and the training programme, contents and learning materials were developed. Books on “Communication in Local Governments” and “Communication in UMT” were prepared.
2. A Municipal Co-operation Strategy for UMT was developed within the framework of the second related component in order to promote town twinning relationships between municipalities in Turkey and in Europe as well as domestic town twinning among municipalities in Turkey.

With the participation of 10 pilot municipalities from Turkey and 13 municipalities from Europe an “Introductory Meeting for the Town Twinning Project between Municipalities in the EU and Turkey” was organised. Municipalities exchanged information throughout the programme on their own cities and their priority areas for co-operation. Group activities were carried out on the topics of environmental protection and energy efficiency, tourism and culture, municipal services (social services, public transport, urban planning, disaster management, firefighting, migration issues etc.), local economic development, and citizen participation in urban decisions. 10 municipalities from Turkey and 9 municipalities from six EU member states (Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, and Sweden) have established partnerships for town twinning initiatives and carried out projects.

Table 6: Partnerships established under LAR II project

Municipalities in Turkey	Municipalities in EU Countries
Ereğli, Zonguldak	Biržai, Lithuania
Uşak	East Riding of Yorkshire, Great Britain
Kırşehir	Härryda, Sweden
Kahta	Rēzekne, Latvia
Düzce	Charleroi, Belgium
Nevşehir	Monfalcone, Italy
Zonguldak	Brindisi, Italy
Gölbaşı	Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Italy
Patnos	Sciacca, Italy
Mustafakemalpaşa	

## Technical Assistance for Building Capacity for the EU Affairs in the Governorates (VABpro)

Technical Assistance for Building Capacity for the EU Affairs in the Governorates (VABpro) was implemented with the purposes of fully materialising the projects carried out in the EU accession process and for ensuring monitoring and improving the level of comprehension of the EU accession process among the public. VABpro project, which was conducted by the Directorate of EU Affairs (formerly the Ministry for EU Affairs) between 2012 and 2014, included activities that were intended for complementing the projects carried out in the 20 pilot provinces. In this context, project activities covered capacity development activities aimed at the officials working for the relevant EU units of the governorates, international study trips and regional workshops, as well as the development of a strategy paper for strengthening the capacity at the local level concerning EU affairs.

Pilot provinces of the VABpro project were Adıyaman, Aksaray, Amasya, Antalya, Bartın, Denizli, Düzce, Elazığ, Erzincan, Hatay, Isparta, İstanbul, Karaman, Kahramanmaraş, Manisa, Mardin, Muğla, Tekirdağ, Trabzon, and Yalova. Within the scope of the town twinning activities implemented during the project, these 20 pilot provinces from Turkey were brought together with 33 cities from Europe.

### **4.3.2 Examples of domestic town twinning initiatives**

Concerning the collaboration amongst the municipalities in Turkey, UMT has conducted activities within the context of the strategy developed on domestic municipal co-operation. A report was published on the legislative and financial incentive regulations needed in Turkey in this field. Furthermore, the Toolkit on Inter-municipal Co-operation published by the Council of Europe was adapted to the Turkish context by taking into consideration the specific legal and financial circumstances in Turkey.

In order to develop the respective capacities of UMT and the regional unions of municipalities in promoting domestic inter-municipal co-operation, a two-stage training of trainers programme was implemented in 2010. Subsequently, with the objective of expanding and developing the collaboration among the municipalities within Turkey, conferences and workshops were organised and trainers were trained in various provinces on various occasions in partnership with the Union of Municipalities of East-West Thrace, the Union of Municipalities of Çukurova, the Union of Aegean Municipalities, the Union of Municipalities of Southeast Anatolia Region, and the Union of Municipalities of Eastern Anatolia.



## 5. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS (CEMR)

As the primary organisation representing the municipalities and regions in Europe, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is an international organisation conducting important activities in the field of town twinning and providing multi-faceted support in this field to local governments. In this section, summary information is provided on CEMR's structure and functioning, followed by the particular activities carried out by CEMR in the field of town twinning.

### 5.1 Structure and functioning of CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) was established in 1951 by bringing together the national unions of local governments in Europe to create a harmonious, peaceful, and democratic Europe bound by the principles of local self-government, subsidiarity, and citizen participation.

With its experience in the field of local governments for nearly 70 years, CEMR has 60 member unions representing 130.000 local governments from 42 countries and covers all sub-national government levels including provincial, regional, and local. The headquarters of CEMR is in Brussels, Belgium and it also serves as the European section of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

CEMR's activities can be summarised under the following two main headings:

Influencing European policy and legislation in all areas having an impact on municipalities and regions.

Providing a forum for debate between local and regional governments via their national representative associations.

Figure 9: Activity areas of CEMR

CEMR's governing structure is composed of two main organs, which are defined as the Policy Committee and the Executive Bureau.

As the main governing organ, the **Policy Committee** decides on the main policy lines and on the admission of new members. It approves the budget and the annual programme. It is composed of around 170 members based on the population of countries and the members are elected for a period of three years. The Policy Committee is required to convene at least once-a-year and in general, its meetings are held twice-a-year. Turkey is represented in the Policy Committee by the UMT with 8 full members and 8 substitute members.

As the auxiliary governing organ, the **Executive Bureau** includes CEMR's President, Co-Presidents, the Executive Presidents, the Vice-Presidents, and the Secretary-General. The function of the Executive Bureau is to implement the decisions taken by the Policy Committee and to carry out the work of CEMR. The President, Co-Presidents, Executive Presidents, and Vice-Presidents are elected by the Policy Committee for a period of three years. The Secretary-General is also elected by the Policy Committee for a period of six-years.

Coupled with these two statutory organs, there is also the Financial Management Committee, which is an advisory organ responsible for the regular monitoring of CEMR's management. Financial Management Committee prepares budget and accounts, requests external audit when necessary, and makes recommendations to the Executive Bureau.

## 5.2 CEMR's priorities

CEMR's main policy priorities encompass the following five areas:

- Governance, democracy and citizenship
- Economic, social and territorial cohesion
- International engagement and cooperation
- Environment, climate and energy
- Local and regional public services



Within the scope of each one of the priority policy areas, activities are conducted under various sub-headings, as summarised below:

Governance, democracy and citizenship	Economic, social and territorial cohesion	International engagement and cooperation	Environment, climate and energy	Local and regional public services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Governance and citizenship</li> <li>■ Young local and regional elected representatives</li> <li>■ Town twinning</li> <li>■ Equality of women and men in local life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cohesion policy</li> <li>■ Diversity and integration</li> <li>■ Project: Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities</li> <li>■ Project: Local and Regional Dialogues on Cohesion Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ UCLG &amp; Global Taskforce</li> <li>■ PLATFORMA: European platform of local and regional authorities for development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mobility</li> <li>■ Climate and energy transition</li> <li>■ Waste management and circular economy</li> <li>■ Project: Covenant of Mayors</li> <li>■ Project: Covenant of Mayors Office for Sub-Saharan Africa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Digitalisation</li> <li>■ Local and regional governments as employers</li> <li>■ Local and regional governments as service providers</li> </ul>

Figure 10: CEMR's main policy priorities

Before providing detailed information on its political priorities, the 2018 Work Programme of CEMR underlines a number of common values and principles, which can be summarised as follows:

- Common values
  - Democracy
  - Human rights
  - Equality
  - Respect for rule of law
- Principles
  - Subsidiarity
  - Proportionality
  - Democratic civic participation

The policy priorities of CEMR for the year 2019 covers the following themes in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations:

1. **SDG 16:** Promotion of local and regional governments in the European Governance System to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
2. **SDG 17:** Connecting local and regional government with the world: strengthening the means of global partnership for Sustainable Development.
3. **SDG 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
4. **SDG 9, SDG 10, and SDG 11:** Reduce inequality within and among countries, make cities, towns and municipalities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
5. **SDG 4 and SDG 8:** Ensure quality education, lifelong learning, promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
6. **SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG12, and SDG 13:** Take urgent actions to combat climate change and its impacts; ensure access to sustainable and modern energy for all; sustainable consumption and production patterns; ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

In addition to these policy priorities, as the umbrella organisation of the local and regional governments in Europe, CEMR also identifies priorities in relation to its own structure and functioning, such as how to strengthen the ties between its members, how to provide better support to its members, how to take a stronger position vis-à-vis the EU policies etc.



Figure 11: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

### 5.3 CEMR's activities in the field of town twinning

Town twinning finds its place under CEMR's main policy priorities on Governance, Democracy and Citizenship. Promoting cooperation between local and regional governments for bringing together citizens from different countries and different cultures is regarded as a cornerstone of European integration.

GOALS



CEMR is carrying out special activities to ensure that town twinning, which is considered as an instrument to address current global problems, develops in connection with the contemporary issues so a special **focus group** on town twinning is established for this purpose. This focus group brings together the officials responsible for town twinning from CEMR member unions and the experts of this field. The objectives of this focus group are stipulated as follows:

- To guarantee peaceful relations between Europeans and to ensure their active participation at the local level.
- To reinforce mutual understanding and friendship between European citizens.
- To provide a virtual platform to encourage and facilitate town twinning initiatives between European municipalities (Town Twinning Website: [www.twinning.org](http://www.twinning.org)).
- To encourage technical cooperation between municipalities and the exchange of best practices.
- To support good local governance and reinforce the role of local and regional authorities in the European integration process.

One of the most important activities of CEMR in the field of town twinning is the **Town Twinning Website** specifically designed for twinning purposes. This website, which can be displayed in 24 languages, gives details on the history, current situation, and the future of town twinning. In addition, various kinds of information are provided on how to find support for town twinning initiatives, how to find partners, and how to have access to financial support. Furthermore, a search module is provided to view the institutions seeking partners in CEMR member countries and to enter respective data.



# 6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF TOWN TWINNING IN TURKEY

The legal framework of town twinning in Turkey is defined by comprehensive regulations wherein different institutions are involved in the various dimensions of the process as stipulated by these regulations. In this section basic information is provided in relation to the legislation on town twinning, related institutions, and the process of town twinning in Turkey.

## 6.1 Relevant legislation

The European Charter of Local Self-Government, ratified by Turkey in 1992, constitutes the primary international regulation in relation to town twinning and lays down the foundations of town twinning in the following context:

### Article 10

#### Local authorities' right to associate

3 – Local authorities shall be entitled, under such conditions as may be provided for by the law, to co-operate with their counterparts in other States.

The primary legislation in the field of town twinning in Turkey are the basic laws on local governments, which are the Law No. 5393 on Municipality, and the Law No. 5302 on Special Provincial Administration. The specific articles of these laws entitled “Foreign relations” encompass the following provisions that constitute the legal basis of town twinning:

#### Law No. 5393 on Municipality

**Article 74-** Subject to the resolution of the general provincial council, the special provincial administration may be founding member or member of international organisations or bodies concerned with matters relating to its

purview.

The special provincial administration may carry out joint activity or service projects with such organisations and bodies.

Activities conducted under the terms of the first and second paragraphs shall be undertaken in a manner consistent with foreign policy and with international treaties, and be subject to prior authorisation by the Ministry of Interior.

Pursuant to these two basic articles of the laws delineated above, the decision-making power in relation to town twinning is vested on the municipal council and the general provincial council respectively, also by the same laws. The relevant duties and powers of these councils are stipulated in the following articles of the Law No. 5393 and the Law No. 5302:

Law No. 5393 on Municipality

*Duties and powers of the council*

**Article 18-** The municipal council shall have the following duties and powers:

(...)

p) Decide to engage in mutual co-operation with municipalities and unions of local authorities at home and, with the authorisation of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, abroad; to establish town twinning relationships; to carry out activities and projects in areas such as culture, arts, sports in order to develop economic and social relations; and to build, have built, lease, or allocate land plots, buildings, and similar facilities for such purposes.

(...)

Law No. 5302 on Special Provincial Administration

*Duties and powers of the general provincial council*

**Article 10-** The general provincial council shall have the following duties and powers:

(...)

- m) Decide to co-operate with local authorities and unions of local authorities at home and abroad.  
(...)

Since international relations are required to be conducted in line with the foreign policy of the country, another basic legislation in the field of town twinning is the Law No. 1173 on the Conduct and Coordination of International Relations. Paragraph 6 of the Article 1 of this Law regulates the international relations of local governments as follows:

Power of international contact, negotiation, agreement

**Article 1- 6.** Ministries, departments, and organisations with general and annexed budgets, local authorities, state economic enterprises, banks established by special laws, professional organisations having the status of public institutions, and public benefit associations whose special revenue sources and special facilities are provided by law shall contact with foreign country embassies-general and embassies, consulates-general and consulates, honorary consulates-general and honorary consulates and other missions of the states, as well as with the representatives of international boards and missions and their affiliated undersecretary and attaché offices, bureaus and other similar authorities in accordance with the provisions and procedures of international law. Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall be informed about such contacts.

The Circular No. 2005/36 dated 7.4.2005 on granting authorisation to local governments for town twinning initiatives itemises the documents necessary for official authorisation that needs to be granted via official written correspondence as follows:

- Respective council decision.
- Information on the city or town with which twinning relationship will be established.
- Information on the topic of town twinning to be initiated.
- Description of the benefits expected from the town twinning initiative.
- A copy of the town twinning protocol to be signed.

## 6.2 Related institutions

The institutions in Turkey directly related to town twinning, and their respective mandates are summarised in the following table:

Table 7: Institutions in Turkey related to town twinning

Related institution:	Mandate:
Ministry of Interior	Legislation in relation to local governments Authorisation for foreign relations (with respect to special provincial administrations and unions of special provincial administrations and villages)
Ministry of Environment and Urbanism	Legislation in relation to local governments Authorisation for foreign relations (with respect to municipalities and unions of municipalities)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Consistence with national foreign policy
Directorate for EU Affairs	Town twinning support provided by the European Union Good practice examples
Union of Municipalities of Turkey	Support in the fields of law, training, and international relations Good practice examples
Union of Provinces	Support in the fields of law, training, and international relations Good practice examples
Other unions of local authorities	Good practice examples



### 6.3 The process of town twinning

The process of town twinning can be summarised in three main stages; the preparatory stage, formal procedures, and the implementation stage.

During the **preparatory stage** the twinning partners are expected to conduct activities toward developing mutual introduction and exchanging information. At this stage, reciprocal visits may be conducted and the respective legislation, organisational structures, working methods, policy priorities and service areas of the relevant parties may be compared and assessed.

The **formal procedures** following the preparatory stage are to be carried out in line with the legislation in the respective countries of the twinning partners. In Turkey, the steps to be taken to comply with the formal procedures may be summarised as follows:



Figure 12: Formal procedures in the process of town twinning in Turkey

The **implementation phase** as the final stage is expected to include the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and, if necessary, auditing of the activities envisaged to be carried out pursuant to the partnership protocol signed by the parties.

It is imperative to ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the civil society and citizens, public institutions, and private sector representatives via appropriate methods in all stages of the town twinning process delineated above. In order to ensure the implementation of town twinning activities in accordance with the **good governance principles**, it is indispensable that all stages of the town twinning process are carried out in a transparent and accountable manner, and all procedures are performed in conformity with the rule of law.

# 7. SUCCESS CRITERIA FOR TOWN TWINNING INITIATIVES

In order to ensure that the time, effort, and resources devoted to town twinning activities enable the attainment of targeted results, it is important to give due consideration to the issues delineated below:

## Finding the right partner

Finding the right town is the first step in attaining success. Although each twinning is unique, successful town twinning relationships have common characteristics. The similarities among the municipalities in terms of population, geographical location, economic structure, historical links, and main social and environmental issues play a key role on the way to success. In this respect, it is important to have the similar or comparable understanding and aspirations with the partner municipality.

## Involving the citizens and the civil society

Any twinning activity without effective citizen participation is absolutely incomplete. Even though the elected representatives and municipal officials take the lead in such processes, involvement of the public lays the foundation of the relationship on firmer ground. Increasing the visibility of the town twinning initiative would reinforce the ownership of the local community. Signs to be posted at the town hall, local newsletters, and websites may be effective for this purpose.

## Defining common objectives

What do we expect from town twinning? This should be the first question to be asked when establishing a town twinning relationship. It is very important for the partnering municipalities to clearly define the objectives and types of activities,

and to agree on a calendar for these activities from the outset. If sufficient attention is not paid to this particular point, the town twinning initiative may well fail due to misunderstandings or misperceptions. Regularly reassessing the objectives and actions is important to monitor if both parties have the same priorities or not.

## **Creating support structures**

Over time, effectiveness and efficiency might decrease in town twinning activities. Establishing a small but active team in each of the twinned towns can play an important role to ensure the continuity of the co-operation. Such teams might revitalise the partnership with new projects. In addition, a standing steering committee composed of members from both parties or an organisation that has both parties as members might be a driving force in twinning.

## **Working with schools and young people**

There are many ways of ensuring that schools play an effective role in town twinning relationships. Student exchange programmes play an important role in partnerships and such programmes might also stimulate interest in learning the languages of the twinned towns. These activities involve students, parents, teachers, school staff, and student associations, which renders them inherently inclusive.

## **Addressing the major issues of our day**

Focusing on current issues through twinning can help raising awareness among the public. This is particularly the case for young people. Any current topic ranging from environmental issues to the future of the world, from human rights to peace, from social inclusion to football or other kinds of sports can be useful on the way to success.

## Having a sustainable basis of relationship

A successful town twinning relationship should avoid becoming superficial while trying to keep up-to-date. Establishing strong friendships and genuine solidarity among different towns requires time. Only those relationships that can resist against time are of substance. For instance; the results of such solidarity are immediately visible during disasters.

## Looking to the future and building the basis for new exchanges

Twinning connections may create an appropriate experience sharing platform for developing new co-operation techniques. The parties may focus on some particular issues for this experience exchange by carrying out detailed studies, enabling progress, and generating solutions.

## Managing the budget

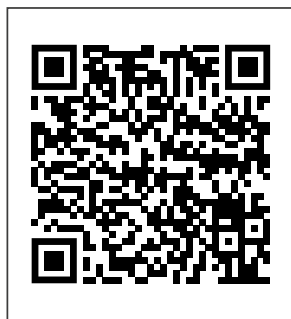
Last but not least, another significant issue is the financial dimension of town twinning. No matter how carefully the activities are organised, any international initiative has a cost. It is therefore very important for the local governments to allocate a specific budget to the town twinning initiatives so as to sustain the momentum.

## 12 basic steps for successful town twinning initiatives

On the basis of the abovementioned criteria, the 12 basic steps of implementing a successful town twinning initiative are summarised in the following table:

*Table 8: 12 basic steps for successful town twinning initiatives*

Steps	Explanations
1.Reviewing your needs	As the first step, review your needs. Amongst your strengths or the areas that you intend to improve further, carefully identify which of the topics that are suitable for town twinning have a priority for you.
2.Specifying your purpose with diligence	Contemplate on the purpose of establishing your partnership. Specifying your purpose with diligence will enable your partnership to be built upon foundations that yield mutual benefits, and open up avenues for a successful town twinning.
3.Finding the right twinning partner	The path to a successful town twinning is paved by finding the right twinning partner. Asking yourself why are you seeking a twinning partner and what specific characteristics do you seek in your twinning partner would lead you to the right partner.
4.Drawing up the Partnership Agreement	Specifying the purpose of your partnership, areas of collaboration, joint activities to be conducted and their duration within the Partnership Agreement would enable you to lay the foundations of successful partnerships.
5.Allocating a budget	In order to attain your predetermined targets, do not neglect to allocate a budget. Ensure that the budget to be allocated for this purpose is realistic and sufficient to sustain your partnership.



<p>6.Preparing the implementation plan</p>	<p>Make sure to carefully plan every stage of implementation, and to identify the persons who will assume responsibilities thereof. In this manner, the successful and timely implementation of your respective tasks would be facilitated.</p>
<p>7.Placing communication at the forefront</p>	<p>Ortağınız ile iletişiminizde etkinlik ve süreklilik sağlamanız başarının anahtarlarından biridir. İletişim kanallarını belirlerken, her aşamada kamuoyunu haberdar etmenizi sağlayacak yöntemlere başvurmayı unutmayınız.</p>
<p>8.Involving local stakeholders</p>	<p>One of the cornerstones of successful town twinning is participation. Involving the local stakeholders in the process would pave the way for converting your partnership into a good practice with prospects of replicability.</p>
<p>9.Drawing lessons from implementation</p>	<p>Evaluating the process enables you to review your activities and make necessary adjustments for subsequent steps. Drawing lessons from implementation would facilitate your journey towards success.</p>
<p>10.Disseminating your achievements</p>	<p>If you share the local and international accomplishments of your partnership via diverse communication channels, you will not only display your achievements, but also be a source of inspiration for an increased number of local authorities.</p>
<p>11.Developing new projects</p>	<p>The primary means of accessing to funds for supporting the partnerships that you intend to establish in mutual priority areas is through well-prepared projects. Develop new projects on the basis of experience gained in your previous partnership.</p>
<p>12. Emphasizing sustainability</p>	<p>In order to ensure the durability and sustainability of your partnership, give due importance to each of the steps that need to be taken toward a successful town twinning.</p>





# 8. CONCLUSION

This handbook, prepared within the context of the project on Town Twinning between Turkey and the European Union, aims at contributing to increasing the awareness in relation to town twinning by providing summary information on the legal framework of town twinning activities, the duties and powers of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey in this field, the respective activities of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, and good practices in Turkey on town twinning.

Well-planned and well-designed town twinning activities conducted effectively and efficiently are going to have a positive impact on improving the service delivery capacities of local governments in Turkey, while at the same time contributing to the promotion of Turkey in the international arena and to the development of inter-cultural relationships.

Taken together with the other capacity building activities carried out within the scope of the project and the grant scheme, the Handbook of Town Twinning in Turkey is a resource for all stakeholders to have quick access to basic information both during and also after the implementation of the project.

The information provided herein is valid for the period during which this handbook was prepared. On the other hand, it is important to take into consideration that the contents of this handbook require regular updates in line with possible developments of institutional reorganisation and legislative changes. In this context, it would be useful to check online the updated electronic versions of the printed handbook.



# 9. REFERENCES

A number of sources that may be useful for those engaged in town twinning activities are provided below as legislation, publications, and Internet connections.

## 9.1 Legislation

Legislation in relation to town twinning and the functioning of the Union of Municipalities of Turkey are listed below by type:

### **Laws**

Law No. 5355 on Unions of Local Authorities. Official Gazette No. 25842 dated 11.6.2005.

Law No. 5393 on Municipality. Official Gazette No. 25874 dated 13.7.2005.

Law No. 5302 on Special Provincial Administration. Official Gazette No. 25745 dated 4.3.2005.

Law No. 6216 on Establishment and Rules of Procedures of the Constitutional Court. Official Gazette No. 27894 dated 3.4.2011.

Law No. 1173 on Conduct and Coordination of International Relations. Official Gazette No. 13201 dated 17.5.1969.

### **International regulation**

Decision on the Approval of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Official Gazette No. 21364 dated 3.10.1992.

## Regulations

Regulation on Norm Cadre Principles and Standards for Municipality and Affiliated Institutions and for Unions of Local Authorities. Official Gazette No. 26442 dated 22.2.2007.

Regulation on Procedures and Principles of Preparing Legislation. Official Gazette No. 26083 dated 17.2.2006.

## Circular

Ministry of Interior Circular No. 2005/36 dated 7.4.2005.

## 9.2 Publications

CEMR (2019) Work Programme: Policy and Thematic Priorities. December 2018.

CEMR (2018) Work Programme: Political and Thematic Priorities. January 2018.

CEMR (2007) Twinning for Tomorrow's World: Practical Handbook.

Ekşi, S.T. (2018) Dünyada ve Türkiye'de Kardeş Şehircilik. İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Belediyeler Birliği Yayınları, No. 26.

Özden, M. S. ve Gündüz, S. (2017) Belediyeler için Uluslararası İşbirlikler ve Kardeş Şehir Rehberi. Ankara: TBB Yayınları.

TBB (2012) Kardeş Şehirler: Uluslararası Belediye İşbirlikleri ve Birliğimizin Rolü. İller ve Belediyeler Dergisi, Sayı: 776.

## 9.3 Web links

Internet connections in relation to town twinning are listed below in alphabetical order:

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the

Council of Europe:

[www.coe.int/en/web/congress](http://www.coe.int/en/web/congress)

Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR):

[www.ccre.org](http://www.ccre.org)

Directorate for EU Affairs:

[www.ab.gov.tr](http://www.ab.gov.tr)

EU Committee of the Regions (CoR):

[www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)

European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA):	<a href="http://www.alda-europe.eu">www.alda-europe.eu</a>
Sister Cities International:	<a href="http://www.sistercities.org">www.sistercities.org</a>
Town Twinning Website:	<a href="http://www.twinning.org">www.twinning.org</a>
UCLG Middle East and West Asia (MEWA):	<a href="http://www.uclg-mewa.org">www.uclg-mewa.org</a>
Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT):	<a href="http://www.tbb.gov.tr">www.tbb.gov.tr</a>
Union of Provinces:	<a href="http://www.vilayetler.gov.tr">www.vilayetler.gov.tr</a>
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG):	<a href="http://www.uclg.org">www.uclg.org</a>
World Water Council:	<a href="http://www.worldwatercouncil.org">www.worldwatercouncil.org</a>
Yerelde AB Website:	<a href="http://www.yereldeab.org.tr">www.yereldeab.org.tr</a>



## Town Twinning Between Turkey and the European Union

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