

Results in Europe and Central Asia

In Turkey: Citizens' Report Card

Photo Gallery



Related Links

- [The World Bank in Turkey](#)
- [Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey](#)
- [Manisa Municipality](#)
- [Manisa Governorship](#)
- [Celal Bayar University](#)
- [Manisa Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Manisa Vatandaş Karnesi 2011](#)
- [Vatandaş Karnesi](#) (Twitter)
- [Manisa Vatandaş Karnesi](#) (facebook)

Tunya Celasin, Sr Communications Officer in the World Bank Ankara Office, offers this story..

Responsive, responsible government, responding to the needs of citizens; that's the idea behind Turkey's first ever citizens' report card—the people who rely on the government's services assess the government's services.

Asking for Help

Over the phone, via Facebook and Twitter, more than ten thousand requests for help rolled into the city of Manisa's government call center last year. Most of them were resolved.



Yusef Sevincli

Yusef Sevincli stopped by the call center. A day ago, he says, a government official told him his house had been built illegally and wasn't really his. He has the documents to prove he owns the house, and he produces them with a flourish. Case closed.

"Frankly speaking, I'm very happy with this," he says. "The quick response, the problem solved. The only thing that's bad is the amount of the water bill I pay!"

A New Approach



Nursel Ustamehmetoglu

Bills aside, the government of the city of Manisa is aiming to be open, transparent, and user-friendly. It's a new idea for local government here.

Nursel Ustamehmetoglu is Manisa's deputy mayor, part of the team that brought the call center into being. "We want to see whether we do a good job at what we do. Local governments are accountable to citizens. We're open to criticism, if we're not successful, we want to do better."

As part of that, the city worked hard on outreach at the neighborhood level, using social media and more old-fashioned methods, like printing and distributing one thousand copies of the report.

Rated Number One



Sera Gulden

Two year old Yagmur is fussing at the Family Health Clinic Number 3. She has a cold and she doesn't like it here, too bright, too scary. But her mother does.

"This is a good clinic; the doctors are hands-on and take the time to talk," says Sera Gulden, Yagmur's mother.

The Guldens' neighbors agree. This primary care clinic ranked as the best government service in the city, out of 27. The 7 doctors here each carry a caseload of about 4,000 patients, many of them migrants from eastern Turkey.

It is busy here, especially before school and in the afternoons. But Dr. Sebnem Cakir says all the work gets done. "We do our job with passion, we work in a team and we all love our work."

Using the Feedback



Ziya Tay

The citizens' report cards can also improve the quality of services. Even though the clinic did well in the assessments, patients complained about the wait to see a doctor.

"The report cards told us the waiting time was too long," Ziya Tay, Manisa's health director explains. "The assessments told us we had to cut waiting time, so we came up with a new appointment system." The new system requires people call ahead, and, once they arrive, they get a ticket marking the time and their appointment.

Death Ranks High



Ekrem Akkay

Sometimes it is the details that matter. People appreciate the services at Manisa's funeral home partly because of several large sun umbrellas at the cemetery. Manisa gets hot in the summer, and the sun can be brutal.

Ekrem Akkay runs Manisa's funeral and cemetery services, which came in second in the citizens' poll of successful city services. He says

people also like the fact that his staff handles the bureaucratic side of death, and they do it with professionalism and speed.

"You take a big responsibility, letting yourself be assessed," he says. "But it is brave, and, if this is a god idea, it is because it was organized by an independent organization and free from politics."

Power to the People

It is the bigger picture, getting Turkey's 2,800 local governments to be accountable, open about their successes and failures, and make their own decisions, that's really radical here.



Mustafa Pala

"Municipalities are made up of different voices, different theories, different ideologies; with this, a culture of tolerance is created and the city is stronger because of it," says Mustafa Pala, a former city councilman who promoted the idea of the report card. One of the goals is to build an engaged and even sometimes demanding electorate, to boost interest in government and how decisions get made.

The report card was a success, Manisa residents say, in part because the assessments focused on the quality of services, not on the companies that provide it. So people were encouraged to complain if no one collected the garbage, not about the garbage collectors themselves.

Inspired by the Manisa example, Turkey plans to expand its citizen assessments to six additional cities.