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CONSOLIDATING ETHICS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN TURKEY (TYEC2)

TECHNICAL PAPER

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A PLATFORM FOR ETHICS

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1. Introduction

Activity 3 of the TYEC 2 project involves the development of a Platform for Ethics.

A Platform, quite simply, is a forum or network which brings together organisations, on a voluntary basis, with a common interest, to pursue agreed aims or objectives, discuss ideas and/or transfer knowledge. This broad definition hints at the plethora of forms of a Platform can take and the range of activities it can undertake.

A Platform is made up of several organisations all of whom have an interest in the topic or cause under consideration. The Platform can be led by a steering committee (for example, the European Commission's, Health Care Industries Platform for Ethics and Transparency, and Platform on Access to Medicines in Europe). These platforms can have a Board and a full time Secretariat (eg AGE) or be a looser collaboration of organisations administered on a more part time basis.

Platforms usually set out their purpose via a broad mission, cause or terms of reference, some objectives or actions and often a programme of work in pursuit of these.

There are several interrelated benefits of a Platform:

- *Sharing resources:* Often there will be many organisations with aims or interests in common. It is clearly beneficial to join up in pursuit of these aims or interests and thus share the cost and resources required.
- *Avoid duplication and enhance collaboration:* When several organisations are pursuing the same agenda it can make sense to team up and collaborate and avoid duplication of activities and effort. The platform is the mechanism for coordinating this effort and activity.
- *Increased impact and influence:* It is likely that a number of organisations, in unison, will have a greater impact, for example on policy or raising awareness, than would organisations working in isolation.
- *Sharing knowledge and expertise:* A Platform provides an opportunity for organisations to share their ideas, knowledge and experiences and so help and learn from each other.
- *Foster dialogue:* Sometimes, in pursuit of a broad objective, it might be necessary to obtain consensus on a particular issue or policy. A Platform can be a mechanism for fostering dialogue and cooperation between organisations and therefore moving toward a consensus (for example the Council of Europe's, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport).

There is no single prescription or formula for the development of a platform. The shape and activities of the platform will depend, largely, upon the purpose and resources available.

Once the broad purpose is established then a list of potential organisations, which have an interest in the topic being addressed, can be developed. When considering the activities of the platform one should keep in mind the resources available to carry out these activities; the activities must be achievable.

It is also worth remembering that a platform can be a dynamic body in that its membership, purpose, objectives and activities may change to address new challenges and changed circumstances.

The rest of this paper will focus on the plans for a Platform for Ethics in Turkey

Below are proposed terms of reference for the Platform including scope and membership. This is followed by a list of proposed activities.

2. The development of the Platform for Ethics

During the lifetime of the TYEC 2 project, the Platform will undertake its work in a two stage approach. This approach will enable the Platform to achieve some clear, short term aims and develop a solid base at Stage 1 from which to expand the size and scope of the Platform for Stage 2.

3. Platform for Ethics: Stage 1

3.1. *Purpose and scope of the Platform for Ethics at Stage 1*

The Platform brings together a range of public sector organisations, on a voluntary basis, to discuss and improve the ethical environments within public sector organisations. The work will culminate in a Memorandum of Understanding between organisations to meet criteria for the development of an ethical environment.

The Platform will endeavour to:

- develop criteria for the development of ethical environments in public sector organisations organisations;
- develop strategies within each of the organisations for meeting these criteria;
- develop and oversee an approach for monitoring progress with strategies and measure any improvements in ethical environments;
- exchange and increase knowledge of, and good practice in, ethics within organisations;
- promote effective practice and provide support for those involved in the development of ethical environments.

3.2. *Outputs*

- The development of a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation and monitoring of criteria which will aid the development of an ethical environment.
- A Platform for Ethics website including a portal
- Platform for Ethics Conference
- Awards for effective practice
- Panel discussions

Further information on the Platform for Ethics at Stage 1

This Platform would help the development, management, coordination and monitoring of ethics strategies in Turkey. In this way the Council of Ethics can help ensure that ethics is kept on the agenda of organisations in the public sector and drive improvements in ethical environments. It would ensure that those organisations involved in the Platform are signed up to achieving certain criteria and standards.

This Platform would also help ensure the promulgation of work already being undertaken within the TYEC 2 project to promote ethical environments. Of particular relevance is the work to identify the components of an ethical environment, work to develop the Land Registry as an Island of Integrity and work to develop and implement Action Plans to address recommendations from research undertaken as part of TYEC 1.

It is likely that the work at Stage 1 will include guidelines and strategies covering the following areas: the role and activities of Ethics Commissions, the role of leadership, and the internal processes for embedding standards within organisations including recruitment, induction, training and monitoring of standards.

The work of the Platform will be undertaken mainly via regular meetings of the Platform. These meetings will ensure that knowledge and information is shared and a means of mutual support for participants as they seek to develop ethical environments within their organisations. These meetings will be supplemented by knowledge exchange workshops. In these workshops speakers will be invited to the Platform to talk about components of ethical environments and/or the development and monitoring of strategies. These meetings will provide an opportunity for members of the platform to share knowledge and experiences.

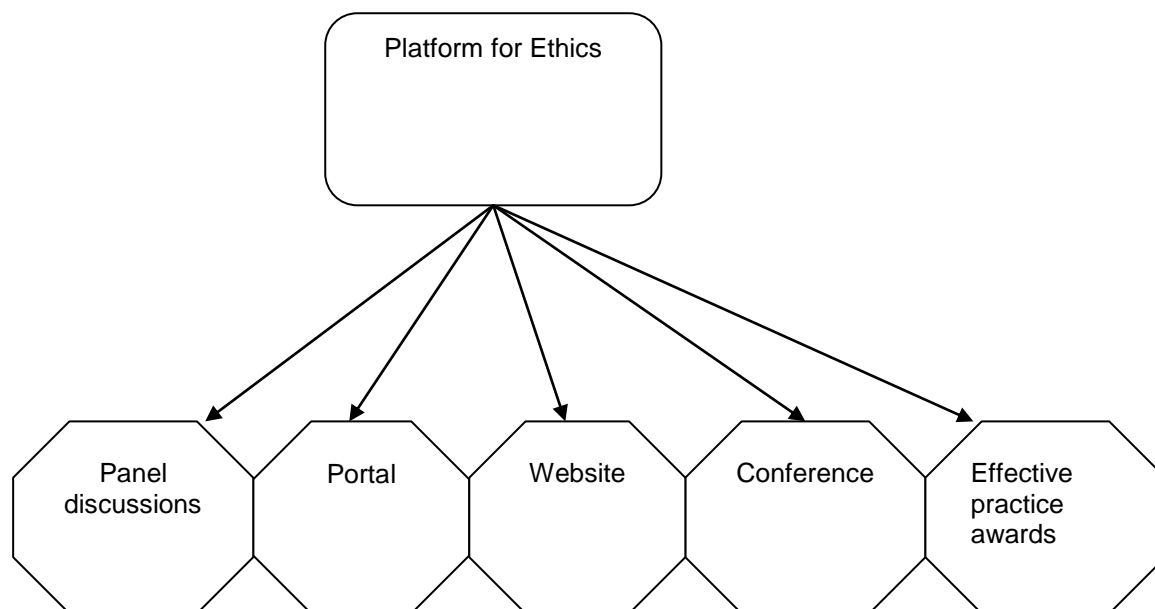
3.3. Membership of the Platform for Ethics

Representatives from the following organisations would be invited to join the platform. The Council of Ethics would Chair these meetings:

- General Directorate of the Land Registry
- General Directorate of Local Authorities
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Ministry of Family and Social Services
- General Directorate of Turkish Radio and Television Corporation
- Turkish National Police
- Public Procurement Authority

3.4. Activities of the Platform for Ethics at Stage 1

Diagram 1 shows the activities that will be undertaken, at stage 1 of the development of the Platform for Ethics. This is followed by a brief consideration of those activities.



3.4.1. Panel discussions

Once the criteria and strategies have been agreed, and the Platform members are satisfied that significant progress has been made within the Platform organisations, a panel discussion will be held with invited media, where the criteria and strategies specifically, and ethical environments more generally, can be discussed and debated. This panel discussion could also feature the TYEC 2 work being undertaken to identify the components of an ethical environment and the Island of Integrity work at the Land Registry. The intention is to generate a debate around ethics issues.

3.4.2. Conference

This conference would be a one day event and include some key note sessions. The conference would be an opportunity to report on progress on the development of ethical environments amongst the Platform members and to showcase and promote other activities such as the development of elearning courses.

The event would bring together key stakeholders – in particular those responsible for ethics within ministries on a day to day basis – and provide an opportunity for them to learn, network and exchange knowledge and experiences. It would also help establish an ‘ethics community’.

3.4.3. *Awards for effective practice*

Public sector organisations would be asked to submit written examples of good practice in the maintenance of ethical environments and/or the promotion of ethics beyond their organisation. Evaluation of these submissions could be undertaken by a group from the Platform of Ethics or a group of appointed ‘judges’ and awards presented at the Conference. Categories and evaluation criteria would need to be developed. A suggestion is to have a very broad category (or categories) such as ‘Innovations in Ethics’ and/or ‘Activities of Ethics Commissions’ and broad criteria for evaluating the submitted examples such as ‘Impact on ethical environments.’

In the interests of generating publicity it would be beneficial if the awards were presented by a relatively high profile person. Consideration should also be given to having the awards (co)sponsored by a journal or organisation(s) with an interest in public administration.

The winners of the awards would have their effective practice shared on the website.

3.4.4. *Development of a Website*

The website will be a mechanism for:

- Promoting the criteria and strategies for the development of ethical environments
- Promoting the awards for effective practice
- Promoting the conference

In terms of the awards for effective practice the intention would be to present the winners on the website as case studies, including pictures of the receipt of awards at the conference.

3.4.5. *Portal*

The website will also include a portal. The intention is to provide a support forum for those public officials with an interest or concern in developing ethical environments in the public sector. The portal will, at Stage 1, be targeted at ethics trainers and Ethics Commission members, but will be available to all.

It is intended that the portal be used to develop a virtual community of practitioners where they could discuss the criteria, and exchange knowledge, share problems and solutions and generally use the community as a forum for supporting each other in the pursuit of the development of ethical environments.

The activities and conversations on the forum would be monitored by the Council of Ethics with the intention of identifying and topics on which there is a particular demand for guidance and to correct any poor advice. The Council of Ethics could also use the portal to inform the virtual community of any key developments and/events.

4. Stage 2 of the Platform for Ethics

At this stage the Platform will be opened up to organisations outside of the public sector. As well as increased membership the scope of ambition of the Platform will expand.

4.1. Purpose and scope

This platform brings together a range of organisations on a voluntary basis which are dedicated to enhancing collaboration in the field of ethics, the promotion of ethical environments in the workplace and raising awareness of ethics amongst the workforce and the public more generally.

Scope

This platform brings together stakeholders to:

- Exchange and increase knowledge of, and good practice in, ethics within organisations;
- Promote ethics within organisations;
- Raise awareness of the importance of ethics amongst the public;
- Act as a forum for the development of ethics projects and research;
- Provide expertise and comment on ethics policy.

4.2. Membership of the Platform for Ethics

It is suggested that, in the first instance, a pool of 30 representatives from academia, the public sector of which 10 members stated above and private sector be invited to join the platform. The following suggested organisations will be in addition to those included at Stage 1:

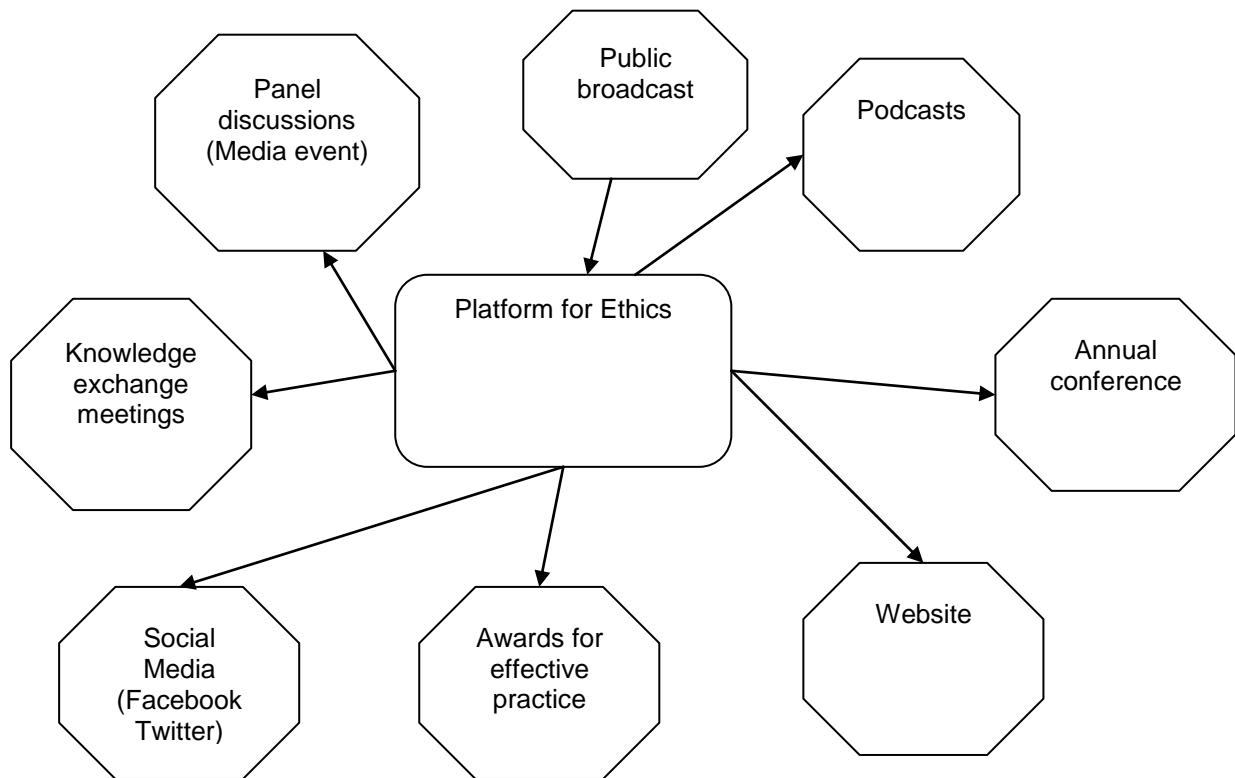
- Council of Ethics (Chair)
- NGOs (including Transparency International, TEPAV, TESEV, etc.)
- Business Associations (including TÜSİAD, MÜSİAD, etc.)
- Professional Associations (including Ankara Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
- Individual companies including Siemens
- University research centres
- Approximately five academics

The intention is that the representatives of these organisations would elect a steering committee who would determine the terms of reference of the group, its programme of work and agenda for meetings. The exception to the elections would be the Council of Ethics, which would be the sole permanent member of the Platform steering committee. The steering committee would be made up of 10 members (so nine would be elected). Half of the membership of the Platform would change every 12 months, with no members (aside from the Council of Ethics representative) staying beyond 12 consecutive months. The Platform will be administered by the Council of Ethics.

4.3. Activities of the Platform for Ethics at Stage 2

Below is a diagram which summarises the key activities of the Platform at stage 2. Further information on the activities is provided in the section 'activities of the Platform for Ethics'.

The key activities of the Platform for Ethics at stage 2



4.3.1. Knowledge exchange meetings

These meetings would enable members of the Platform to develop ideas for and content for the upcoming activities. The meetings would also enable Platform members to provide updates on ethics related developments in their organisations/field of expertise.

These meetings will provide an opportunity for members of the platform to share: knowledge and experiences relating to the promotion of ethics in their organisations and beyond; updates of projects and research on ethics. Such a forum will ensure that knowledge and information is shared rather than lost, help keep ethics issues on the agenda of organisations, be a source of information and a means of mutual support for participants as they seek to promote ethics in their organisations.

4.3.2. Panel discussions

This will be a relatively formal event where the panel and other invited guests (eg experts and/or other interested parties) will discuss and debate ethics issues in front of an invited audience. The event will be chaired by a neutral party skilled in facilitating debate. There will be one or two prepared speeches followed by a response from a panel of experts and interested parties. The session will also include an opportunity for the audience to raise questions. The intention is to generate a debate around ethics issues.

Media will be invited to attend and report on the debate. The intention is that the media coverage that accompanies this discussion will help keep ethics on the agenda, promote the importance of ethics and raise the profile of ethics issues and the Council of Ethics. The discussion will also be included on the website (see section on website).

Possible topics for discussion:

- What are the benefits of ethics in the workplace?
- How do ethics impact on performance?
- Can ethics help improve public trust in organisations?
- Are ethics in the workplace important?

4.3.3. Development of a website

The website will be further developed to be a mechanism for promoting the outcome of research, sharing information from panel discussions and knowledge exchange seminars, and any ethics events. It will also be a mechanism for sharing effective practice on ethics identified via research and also an annual competition to identify effective practice (see section on 'awards for effective practice.'). In these ways the website will be a mechanism for promoting ethics and many of the products and tools developed as part of this project.

The website could also include links to other organisations with an interest in ethics, for example Transparency International.

4.3.4. Annual conference

This conference would be expanded to cover the importance of ethics within the public and private sectors.

Speakers could be from a range of organisations including NGOs, and private sector organisations.

4.3.5. Social Media

Facebook and Twitter are means by which an increasing number of people, especially young people, share information and keep abreast of developments. It would be a low cost way for the Platform for Ethics to promote awareness of the website and ethics issues and developments.

4.3.6. Awards for effective practice

The awards could be expanded to include examples from both the private and public sectors and also from NGOs.

4.3.7. Podcasts

A podcast is a digital media which would enable the Platform to create broadcasts which could be downloaded as an MP3 onto any device which can play MP3s (for example an iPod and mobile phones). It is another means of raising the awareness of and promoting ethics issues and the work of the project. Key benefits of this medium are the relatively low costs of producing and disseminating a broadcast, the control that the Platform could have over content and the potential to maximise the benefits of panel discussions and research. A benefit to the listener is that they can download the podcast and listen at time and place of their choosing.

The podcasts would be downloadable from the website and could be advertised via Facebook and Twitter. People could either subscribe to the podcasts so that all new podcasts are downloaded for them automatically, or simply download individual podcasts of their choosing. The suggestion here is that the panel discussions could be broadcast and a podcast(s) could be made of the effective practice in ethics which has been identified. The latter podcast could take the form of an interview.

4.3.8. Public broadcast

As part of the TYEC 2 project a public broadcast will be developed which will stress the importance of ethical environments within Turkey, highlighting the implications of poor ethical environments and the benefit of good ethical environments. The broadcast will be shown on national television as well as be hosted on the website.

5. Conclusion

The Platform for Ethics would provide a mechanism for sharing knowledge and experiences of developing ethical environments within organisations, raising awareness of ethics amongst the public and supporting trainers and ethics commissions.

The two stage approach would enable the Council of Ethics to focus on the public sector in the first instance, driving up standards, establishing criteria for good ethical environments and creating a virtual community of public officials with an interest in ethics issues. This would then be a launch pad for a wider Platform that would seek the promotion and awareness raising of ethics more generally amongst the public.

The intention is that the Platform at this stage would become a ‘hub’ for the ethics community in Turkey and, aside from the activities outlined in this report, would become a catalyst for creativity, support and joint working in the development of ethics promotion and awareness raising activities.

6. Timeline

	Stage 1						Stage 2					
	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Panel Discussions					x							
Meetings to develop criteria and strategies	x	x		x								
Knowledge Exchange Meetings								x		x		x
Portal							x					
Annual Conference							x					
Awards for Effective Practice							x					
Website							x					
Social Media									x			