

Project Management Update from Istanbul



By **İpek Sahra Özgüler**
International Correspondent
Istanbul, Turkey

This report is a contact point between Turkey and the world. As everyone knows, project management is an efficient tool to ensure that the projects are completed on time, within budget and meeting customer quality expectations. The organizations have to manage the projects efficiently in order to achieve organizational strategy and objectives through project management.

In this first report, I want to share a brief information of nonprofit organizations and their structure. Which nonprofit organizations are existing in Turkey? What did they achieve in the previous year? What will they plan to do in the next year? Then, I want to share the real experiences in project management through interviews.

My first guest is **Ahmet Taspınar**, who has over 40 years of experience in petrochemical and energy projects, and in management information systems development.

My second guest is **Ismail Mehmet Yeyinmen**. He has worked as an industrial entrepreneur involved either as consultant, advisor and/or founder CEO of many industrial establishments in Turkey.

My last guest is **Sertug Yılmaz**, a young professional. He works as project manager in the aviation sector.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS



PMI Turkey chapter was established to encourage project management workings and follow regulations under global standards supporting institutions, companies and persons who work in project management. PMI-TR develops activities in order for concerned sector use.

PMI Turkey works as a non-profit association with support of volunteers. PMI Turkey is focusing on increasing of awareness of project management, supplying project management in every disciplines that accepts it as a profession, spreading out and improving project management practices and theories, encouraging total quality and professionalism in project management, protecting and encouraging standards, ethics and accreditation conditions in project management in Turkey.

PMI Turkey is one of the non-governmental organization which is reference point to aim project management knowledge exchange. Thus it completed works on translating PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge) and PMP certification exam set into Turkish in order for project managers in Turkey to improve their competency. Institution has more than 600 members from various sectors, in particular Information Technologies (IT/IS), Finance, Telecommunication, defense and public sectors.



The activities conducted by PMI-TR are listed as following:

- Project management and personal development speakers invited to professional improvement events held in every month in İstanbul and Ankara and bi-monthly in İzmir to share their experience and changes in sectors.

Members can attend these events free but non-members can attend by paying symbolic amounts.

- A PMI educational foundation's (PMIEF) training materials were already translated into Turkish by PMI Turkey Chapter volunteers and first practice has commenced in 2014. In two primary schools, school teachers are trained by PMITR volunteers, then they have applied project management methodologies with students in their classrooms.
- International project management day event holds first Thursday of November in every year at İzmir, Ankara and İstanbul in together with other world cities. There is working to spread out this event in other cities of Turkey as well. In 2014, Lefkosa in Cyprus is included to this event.
- Translation of PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge) works are still continuing in definite periods. PMBOK 4th edition and 5th edition was already translated into Turkish.

Summary of Key Activities in 2014

- Annual Membership meeting – İstanbul, March – approx. 100 members joined
- Published “Proje Yönetimi – Analitik Yaklaşımlar” and be sponsor to this book – Ankara, Nisan
- Dance workshop – Networking event – Ankara, April – approx. 20 members joined
- Istanbul Technical University – Join Project Management Class at university, share knowledge and experience – İstanbul, March
- 1st PMIEF Project at Doga College – 7 volunteer gave training to 12 primary & secondary school teacher
- Welcome Summer Breakfast with members – İstanbul, June – approx. 40 members joined
- Karaoke networking event – İstanbul, July – approx. 20 members joined
- Ozyegin University – Join Project Management Class at university, share knowledge and experience – İstanbul, September
- 2nd PMIEF Project at Sezin College – 3 volunteer gave training to 22 primary & secondary school teacher – İstanbul, September
- Project Management Summit 2014 – İstanbul, September
- Bowling networking event – İstanbul & Ankara, October – approx. 30 members joined
- Bilgi University – Join Project Management Class at university, share knowledge and experience – İstanbul, November
- Social Media Awards – Sponsored this event which is organized by ITU students – İstanbul, December
- Monthly professional development conference activities with 2 speakers – İstanbul, Ankara – every month during the year, total 24 events organized

- Quarterly professional development conference activities – İzmir – total 3 events organized

For website, please visit www.pmi.org.tr



Since its founding in 1997, the Istanbul Project Management Association has maintained a strong dedication to spreading the knowledge and terminology for “Project Management” applications as promulgated by PMI in all project sectors. The result has been making significant progress in achieving a professional identity that is parallel to the generally accepted approaches being developed across the world.

The Istanbul Project Management Association (www.ipyd.org), completed its legal establishment on 18 March 1997 with the efforts of 27 founders. It was created to ensure project management as a profession, to develop and promote project management theory and practices, to promote professionalism and quality in project management, ensure ethics, professional standards and the promotion and protection of the accreditation conditions. Currently, the association has more than 480 members in various sectors such as Construction and Contracting, Telecom, IT and Finance.

The association works with the Project Management Institute (PMI, www.pmi.org) and provides information about the world of international project management to its members.



IPYD organizes interest group meetings as well as the International Project Management Congress 'Dynamics' every year. It aims to bring all project management professionals together to share experiences and best practices via symposia, monthly meetings and ad hoc discussion sessions.

For website, please visit www.ipyd.org



Project Management Association was established on 23 October 1995 as the first organization on project management in Turkey. The primary objective of PMA is contributing to establishment, development and application of the principles of project management in public and private sector in Turkey. The main goals are as the following:

- Providing trainings about project management
- Assuring the deployment of Project Management Knowledge by arranging seminars, forums, symposiums and meetings and forming Special Interest Groups
- Having collaboration with national and international level associations, foundations, public and private sector organizations
- Supporting Project Management principles to be taught in master courses.
- Converting well accepted project management terms into Turkish and forming the base of Turkish Project Management Terminology

PMA organizes periodic panels and conversations in subjects related to varying aspects of project management. Professionals from varying sectors join and contribute to these activities. Some recent panels and conversations are given below.

- "‘Control’ As a Misunderstood Management Function" - December 2014
- "Project Preperation For EU and Project Cycle Management" - December 2014
- "Enneagram" - November 2014
- "PRINCE2 Project Management Methodology" - April 2014
- "Risk Management" - March 2014

Currently 127 professionals are members of the PMA. These members consist of the executives, engineers, architects, economists, students, and other

professionals. There are 4 Special Interest Groups which are established based on the requests of the members. Interest groups aim;

- to establish a platform in which knowledge and experiences can be shared
- to form solution environments for the current problems
- to raise awareness for the sector professionals about their interest areas
- to make a contribution for extending the technological developments across the country

The following Interest Groups are effective at present:

- Energy
- Risk Management
- Defense
- Communication

Beside the activities above, PMA provides training and consulting services. Some of the training and consulting services that PMA provides are listed below.

- Turkish Naval Forces
- Ministry of Defence
- TUBITAK UAKE
- Electric Manufacturing Co.
- Turkish Aerospace Industry
- HAVELSAN
- ASELSAN
- VESTEL
- MARCONI Communication
- CENTRAL BANK OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
- ESDAS Inc.
- Undersecretariat for Defence Industries
- Turkey Atomic Energy Authority
- Turkish Land Forces
- Ankara Chamber of Industry

For website, please visit www.pyd.org.tr



UPYE (International Project Management Institute) was established in 2010 in order to extend the Project Management knowledge in Turkey. As an NGO and a non-profit organization UPYE's vision is to be an internationally recognized Turkish organization which shapes the future of project management globally.

UPYE was established by 10 co-founders with background and expertise from different industries which include construction, real estate, information technology, energy, marketing and nanotechnology, and currently it has more than 300 online professional and student members.

One of the major points that distinguish UPYE from other similar organizations is that the solution and event partners of UPYE are universities. UPYE completed many seminars and organizations in the last 5 years and Bogazici University was the host and the major supporter of those events. In addition, Ozyegin University was another university that organized an important together event with UPYE about real estate industry in Turkey in 2014.

“Project Management from Different Perspectives”, “Construction Cost Management”, “Integration and Communication Management in Construction Industry”, “Institutionalization and Human Resources Management in Construction Industry” and “The Past, Today and Future of Real Estate Industry in Turkey” were some of the major events the UPYE successfully completed.

For website, please visit www.upye.org

The other nonprofit organization is TPMYE (Turkish Professional Project Managers' Institute).



INTERVIEW WITH AHMET N.TASPINAR

- Can you introduce yourself to the *PM World Journal* readers please?

My name is Ahmet N. Taspinar, PMP, REP. I have been a PMI member since 1977.

- Can you explain your background and your career?

I am a Turkish - American, with a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering and an MBA. My project management experience includes 40 years as project team member, leader and manager in the petrochemical, energy and information systems sectors.

Since my retirement from Pacific Gas & Electric Company of San Francisco, CA, in 1993 I have worked as a trainer / consultant in the US, Mexico, Turkey, Germany, Azerbaijan and South Korea.

- Can you explain a little about your project management experience as volunteer?

Since I joined PMI in 1977 I have been on the founders team of the New England and Mexico City Chapters; I also have worked as volunteer for those plus the Houston, Northern California (now SF Bay Area) and Silicon valley Chapters. I was one of the founders of IPYD, which started out as the PMI Istanbul potential Chapter.

- Can you explain a little more about IPYD? Which activities and ongoing projects are done by IPYD?

IPYD is the largest and most active of the 4 project management volunteer groups in Turkey. Its activities include DYNAMICS 20XX, the annual global project management symposium, held in Istanbul with speaker and attendee participation from Europe, the Americas and Asia, monthly meetings to present topics of interest to the project management community of Turkey, and free coaching sessions to people preparing to take the PMP Exam. IPYD also collaborates with other PM associations in Turkey to celebrate the annual global PM Day every November.

IPYD manages all their developmental work as projects and programs, with chartering, planning and controlling carried out in compliance with the PMI processes and policies. The association is run by a board of seven members, plus six reserve members, elected every two years in May.

➤ How do you see IPYD in the year 2015?

Planning for DYNAMICS 2015, scheduled to be held on April 16 - 17, 2015, is underway with the location, participation terms, and the organization contractor already established. The project team, formed in June 2014 has completed the development of the event website, and is nearing finalization of sponsors, speakers and the event program. Our targets are to have 40 speakers from at least five different countries, and an attendance of 400 +

Professional Development has been a leading area of activity for IPYD since its beginnings. Under the direction of one of the association Vice Presidents training, informational meetings and coaching / mentoring sessions are being held in the three largest cities of Turkey. Plans are on the boards for extending activities to other cities of Turkey.

➤ What is your opinion about project management activities in Turkey?

Since the initial attempts to bring the voice of PMI to Turkey in 1995, formal project management processes have taken root in the financial, engineering, telecommunications and IT sectors of the country. However many family-owned businesses, particularly in the construction sector, lack the desire to adhere to the PMI principles, but their numbers are gradually declining as younger generations take control.

An encouraging development is the growing interest of the public sector in formal project management, which started in 2010, after the global congress of IPMA was held in Istanbul.

➤ Thank you Mr. Taşpınar.



INTERVIEW WITH ISMAIL MEHMET YEYINMEN

- Can you introduce yourself to the *PM World Journal* readers please?

Born and raised in Istanbul, Turkey. Technology and management have been my central interests since my early career where I have pursued my education to its highest level accordingly. I graduated from Mechanical Engineering School of Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey which was the oldest American College abroad. I earned BS. and MS. in ME in 1963 and 1964 respectively. I pursued my graduate studies at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana on Fulbright scholarship and received PhD. Degree from its Mechanical Engineering Department in thermal science in 1967. In line with my personal objectives of entrepreneurial activities, I attended Harvard University, Cambridge Massachusetts on United Nations Scholarship to study on “Developing Countries and Industrial Projects” and received MPA in 1972.

- Can you explain your background and your career?

Technology, science, research and project development have been areas where I always seek new opportunities to get involved with. I have tried academic career first; taught in universities in the USA and Turkey. However, the excitement of entrepreneurial activities attracted me more towards such projects where major portion of my career has revolved around entrepreneurship. My connection with academia has been always alive and fed me with new ideas and methods. I was the director of Foreign Investments Section in State Planning Organization of Turkish Republic from 1968 thru 1971. This overlaps with the Second Five Year Development Plan which indicated “Industrial Development of Turkey” as the first priority. Foreign industrial investments were key elements. I was involved in the initiation of almost all major automotive industrial projects as well as its supporting supply chain industries. Since 1972, I have worked as an industrial entrepreneur involved either as consultant, advisor and/or founder CEO of many industrial establishments in Turkey.

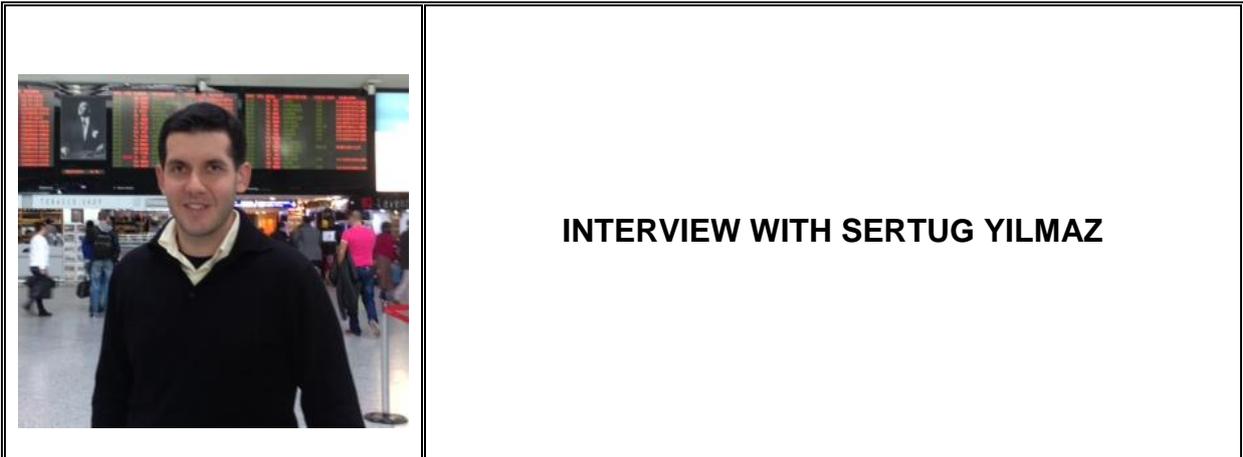
- Can you explain a little about your project management experience as volunteer?

Almost all of my career I have been involved with project management. Until 1989 when I learned about PMI, my field work experience and personal skills had been the base of my project management methodology. I became a member of PMI in 1990 and a strong advocate of PMI Guidelines. My company which provided computer assisted application services in management and engineering, became a center of excellence in project management. We provided a complete and online project management service offering with then the best professional project management software ARTEMIS running on an extended DECSYSTEM (Digital Equipment) platform. Construction companies were our first customers. We introduced PMI methods and provided project management service with ARTEMIS on DIGITAL EQUIPMENT platform to leading construction companies such as TEKFEN, DOĞUŞ, ENKA and KUTLUTAŞ. Our team included expat members from the USA with extensive experience in project management. Implementation was not easy. The new rules and discipline of computer data structure had been accepted either reluctantly or discarded by the field people in those well established companies. Nonetheless, the difficult, but unavoidable introduction of project management in Turkey was made. Newly established software groups became more enthusiastic of this wave and continued their support as extended users even today.

- Can you explain a little more about IPYD? Which activities and ongoing projects are done by IPYD?

In 1990s, new ideas about implementing computer applications were being introduced in many areas. A lot of people were excited about starting such endeavors. It was in this environment where I met my dear friend Haluk Doğançay. His company was involved mainly in construction management and he was also using ARTEMIS. We had neighboring offices and became the “Founding Fathers” of IPYD. After hopeful, but disappointing events for almost seven years, we established IPYD officially in 1997. Having the honor of being the first Chairman, I have passed the flag to my colleagues in the first general assembly. Our aim was the same as PMI; having Project Management accepted as a Profession with well-defined skills in line with professional certification. In this context, I hoped that the first local chapter of PMI could be established in Istanbul, Turkey immediately. But legal requirements and lack of enthusiastic support by our members prevented this objective from becoming reality.

- Thank you Mr. Yeyinmen.



- Can you introduce yourself to the *PM World Journal* readers please?

I am Sertug Yilmaz and I work as project manager at TAV IT Project Management office. I am graduated from the Baskent University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems. I earned Cisco certified Network professional (CCNP) in 2011 and PMP in 2013. Even though I work in a high technology environment, I still love studying, learning new things and new challenges.

- Can you explain a little about your background and your career?

I started working at TAV Airports as special airport management systems administrator in 2005. I was working for projects in order to increase customer satisfaction and software development projects to increase company revenue. By this way, I had the opportunity to manage several projects in different airports for 5 years. Working with complex environment helped me to increase both my communication skills revolving around different cultures and project management ability. While investigating on projects, I saw there is much more about technology itself or management practices. During that time, I became familiar with Project Management Institute which offers valuable lessons for project managers and became a certified Project Management Professional (PMP). Finally, I was installed in PMO and began my journey to company success. At the moment, I am responsible for managing all projects which are take place in my portfolio, coaching for other PMs, helping projects to meet their budget and customer management.

- Can you give more information about your project management experience?

I am a project management professional with 7+ years of experience in airport systems. I have participated in different international and domestic airport projects. Around the world, my company provides many supportive IT services in software development, network systems and project management. Over the years, I have gained extensive experience in IT project management. Especially on my current

role, I have responsibilities like managing a pool of projects for establishing strategically important company objectives. By this way I have gained experience on portfolio analysis, budget planning and motivating people for the delivery of shared goals.

➤ What has changed in your life after having PMP certification? Is it worth taking it?

I have been enjoying every moment as project manager. I would like to say that, in the case of project management there is a big difference in doing something with knowledge and without knowledge. Once I learned good project management and started applying it to my life, I started achieving more.

➤ Thank you Mr. Yılmaz.

About the Author



İpek Sahra Özgüler

Istanbul, Turkey



İpek Sahra Özgüler graduated from the Istanbul University with the Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering and from Middle East Technical University with an MSc degree in Software Management. She became a certified PMP in January, 2012 and a certified SCRUM Master in 2014. İpek works as project portfolio manager at TAV IT Project Management Office. TAV IT is a core technology provider and systems integration company specialising in aviation. It delivers turn-key airport systems and infrastructure solutions for various parties at airports, including airport authorities, airlines and ground handling companies. Her main responsibility is to move the organization to the future by executing the organization's strategy through portfolio management. Before joining TAV IT, she worked for global multinational companies and leading local companies such as Coca Cola, Deloitte, Turkcell Superonline and Havelsan. Over the years, she has gained extensive experience in managing various medium and large scale projects, programs and portfolios.

Her article named "When I Decided to Develop Multi Processing Project Manager's System" published in the book "*A Day in the Life of a Project Manager*". She has published several articles in the *PM World Journal* and one in PMI's *PM Network* magazine. İpek is actively involved in sailing, writing and discovering new cultures. She can be contacted at ipeksahra@gmail.com.