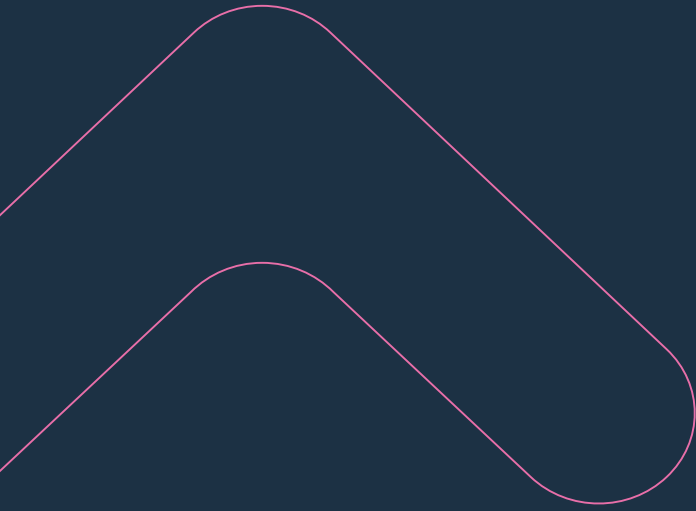




European Capital
of Democracy

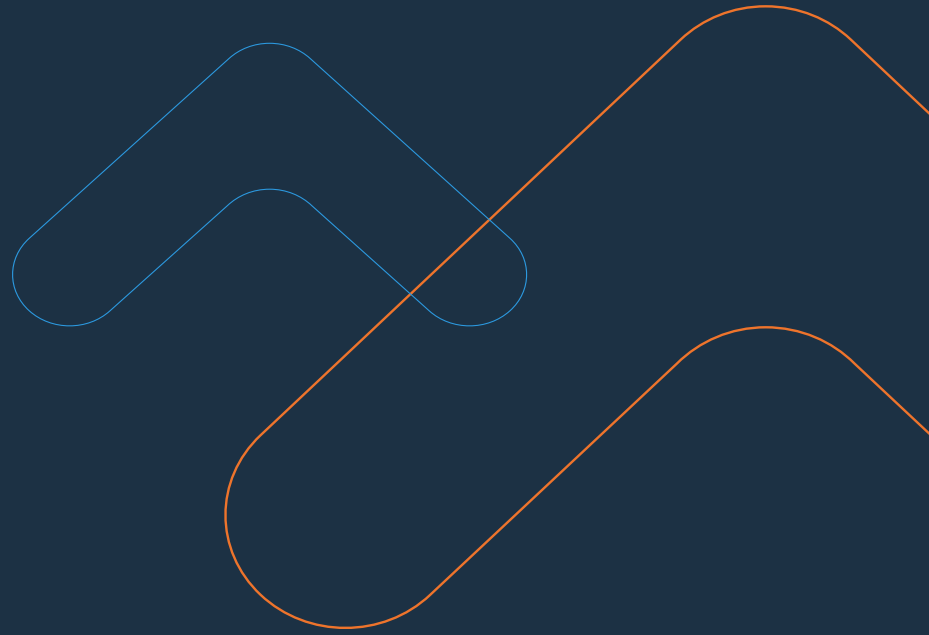


ECOD APPLICATION

Izmir

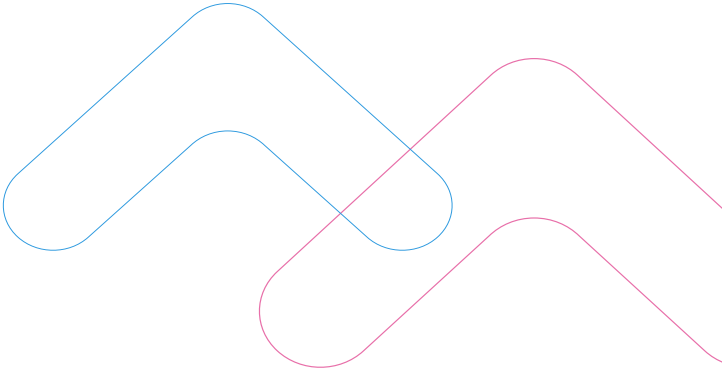
November 2023

Supporting Documents



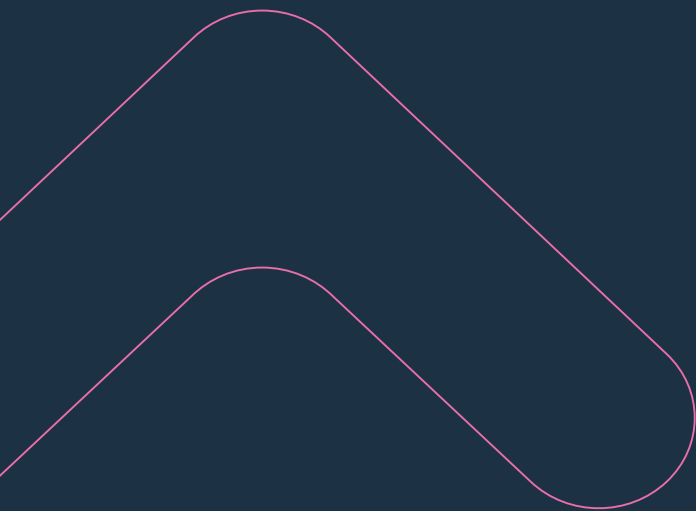
- [ECoD Compliance Guidelines](#)
- [ECoD Confidentiality Agreement](#)
- [ECoD Data Processing Agreement](#)
- [ECoD Data Security Guidelines](#)
- [Council resolution for participation](#)

Content



ECOD APPLICATION IZMIR

Mission Statement



Mission Statement

Local Democracy for Global Harmony

Teaser

Democracy is one of the leading social innovations of humanity born in the Aegean Region, where the City of Izmir stands. Izmir embraces democracy as a shared heritage of humanity and strives for further enhancement of it for the welfare of its citizens and entire humanity, supported by becoming the Capital of Democracy.

Summary

Izmir is a Mediterranean port city with an uninterrupted human settlement for 8.500 years. Home to invaluable philosophers who have helped shape the world we are living in. It is located in the Aegean where social innovations like democracy - which we need more than ever today - have come into existence.

In today's world, we live in a state of multiple and entangled crises, including energy and food insecurity, climate emergency and migration and wars. Cities respond to these global crises to temper their devastating effects on the lives of humans and ecosystems. In order to address these problems, as local governments, we need to take action. In Izmir, we find strength in our culture and inspiration through diversity. As the east point of the west and the west point of the east, from Anatolia to Mediterranean, to the world, Izmir has always been and always will be a cultural hub where humans meet, co-exist and create together.

This is why the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality developed the concept of Circular Culture during the 2021 UCLG Summit in Izmir. This concept sees culture as the mortar that bonds life together. The concept rises on four pillars: Harmony with nature, harmony with each other, with the past and harmony with the change.

All projects of IMM fall under one or more pillars of Circular Culture, leveraging democracy for all citizens of Izmir and nature. This document presents selected projects in line with the Circular Culture concept. These include the following:

1. Immediate Solutions Team, which gathers residents' input to find collaborative solutions.
2. The Izmir Economic Development and Coordination Board involves stakeholders to make inclusive decisions on development of Izmir.

Mission Statement

Summary

3. We launched a campaign against hate speech and discrimination, aiming to foster dignity and respect for all.
4. Türkiye's first Youth Municipality was established, empowering young people to shape policies and participate in decision-making.
5. The Congress for Future's Economy was characterized by its civil, transparent, and participatory nature, allowing representatives from diverse sectors to come together and shape a new economic policy.

In addition to projects implemented prior to this application, this application proposes three new programs aiming to grow local democracy in Izmir for global harmony. This will be achieved by underdation concrete actions that support all four pillars of the Circular Culture concept.

1. Welzmir Movement, a comprehensive approach involving citizens in decision-making through neighborhood councils and a participatory budget.
2. Izmir Earth Citizens, a platform for individuals to share ideas and experiences for projects aligned with the 17 SDGs, ultimately raising funds for selected projects.
3. Yamanlar Road, a significant project creating open spaces and a pathway to connect people from diverse backgrounds and districts, promoting inclusivity and community cohesion.

Democratic Ambitions

Democracy stands for a set of values based on the rule of law and fundamental human rights. More than ever today, we need democracy in every aspect of life. Yet, our civilization came to a point where we need to enhance democracy with ecological democracy and economic democracy. There is a much stronger connection between ecology and economy than the similarity of sound. It is not possible to achieve development in any economy without protecting the ecosystem. For this reason, ecological democracy and economic democracy should be applied together more precisely by reinforcing culture and therefore conception of ecology in our governance. The core objective of Circular Culture aligns with the very essence of democracy. We view Circular Culture as a vessel to strengthen democracy, as it revolves around the idea of harmony. Circular Culture emphasizes living in harmony with nature, each other, and change, while learning from the past.

Harmony with nature helps us to redefine human-nature and city-nature relations. Harmony with each other focuses on local democracy to minimize inequalities. Harmony with the past seeks to learn from history. Finally, harmony with change considers that the only constant is change and strives for a local development that is receptive to problems and innovations of our era.

Mission Statement

Democratic Ambitions

Overall, Circular Culture's pursuit of harmony encompasses the key principles of democracy, promoting inclusivity, respect for diverse perspectives, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Underpinned by Circular Culture, we embrace economic democracy as a key component that strengthens democracy overall. We implement a local development strategy extending from Izmir Port to rural areas of the province. This allows us to foster social cohesion among different sectors as well as between urban and rural areas.

In the era of the climate emergency, we need a stand for ecological democracy which is an essential component of democracy. This is only possible by developing a horizon that includes nature. Therefore, we have to rethink the rule of law and human rights together with the rights of nature. The rights of trees, mountains, lakes, plains, forests and rivers. They collectively generate our common right to live.

In Izmir, we describe another way of democracy that includes the rights of all living beings in nature. That is to say, we cannot elevate the quality of life of our citizens when we harm our city's ecosystem. The contribution of ecology in this matter results in, for example, enabling citizens from all backgrounds to have access to a resilient city where resources are better distributed. Consequently, Izmir Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) aims to create social cohesion by implementing ecological democracy as well as economic democracy underpinned by circular culture.

Achieved Successes

In recognition of our efforts, Izmir was awarded the Europe Prize in 2022. This prestigious accolade acknowledges the commendable initiatives undertaken by local authorities to uphold the principles and values of Europe. It is a testament to Izmir's commitment to becoming a city where democracy is a central focus at the local level. At the Culture Summit of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) held in Izmir in 2021, we developed a new concept for regenerating life on earth. This is "Circular Culture." This concept considers culture as the link that binds a building together, the drops of water that connect the roots and branches of a tree. Circular culture goes beyond our daily practices that temporarily fix individual problems. Instead, it seeks a holistic transformation of our lives and cities through fostering harmony between people and nature as well as the past and the future. In a city as old as Izmir, this term is like a long-lost piece of the puzzle that assists us in finding solutions to our struggles.

Circular Culture received widespread acceptance from esteemed organizations worldwide, such as certain institutions of the UN, ICLEI, C40, and others. Building upon this momentum, we initiated a program called „Cities with Circular Culture“ during the ARLEM (Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly) meeting held in Izmir.

Mission Statement

Achieved Successes

This initiative aims to provide a platform for cities to collaborate and promote Circular Culture, fostering a new perspective to live in harmony.

Accordingly, we have established successful partnerships with various intricate networks across Europe and the world to enhance our strategies and practices for sustainable development in Izmir. These networks include CittaSlow, ICLEI, ARLEM, B40, C40, UCLG, GSTC, Slow Food International, Climate Heritage Network, and more. Additionally, we are actively engaged in the candidacy process for Biophilic Cities and National Park Cities, further demonstrating our commitment to sustainable initiatives.

The Congress for Future's Economy in Türkiye was a successful democratic initiative that brought together over 180 organizations, including influential workers' unions, as well as prominent business associations. This collaboration fostered dialogue and co-operation between traditionally separate labor and business sectors. The Congress produced impressive outcomes, compiling 61 principles and 211 articles from five sectoral groups, highlighting the power of collective thinking and shared conscience. Additionally, we actively participated in the application process for the title of European Youth Capital for 2025 and 2026. Izmir emerged as one of the finalist cities in both applications, positioning strongly for the 2026 candidacy. The positive outcome was a result of active involvement from various institutions, organizations, civil society groups, and youth representatives.

Future Challenges

The global landscape has witnessed disruptions to democracy in the wake of the pandemic, with mandatory restrictions leading to a perceived imbalance between state control and individual freedoms. Additionally, inadequate policies addressing the global climate emergency have drawn criticism from the youth who feel their needs are being neglected by policymakers, resulting in ineffective measures. Consequently, democracy has faced challenges at local, national, and global levels due to country-specific events and broader global issues. The importance of local governments in rebuilding the understanding of democracy has been highlighted, recognizing their role in promoting democratic values and practices. The concept of Circular Culture addresses these issues and provides insights into the future of democracy.

These projections and aims guide the activities undertaken by the IMM. The concept of Circular Culture addresses also the following five key areas that pertain to future projections for democracy.

The first category, „Peace and Justice,“ prioritizes the well-being of the people. It acknowledges that political agendas can hinder policies that protect citizens' rights, leading to diminished hope. To address this, the IMM is implementing measures to mitigate the consequences and promote peace and justice.

Mission Statement

Future Challenges

The second category, „Gender Inequality, Children, Youth, and Disadvantaged Communities,“ focuses on addressing the challenges faced by marginalized groups. The lack of alignment between central and local governments, negative prejudices against vulnerable communities, and limited space for expression negatively impact projects. Despite coordination challenges, the IMM is working to raise public awareness and support these communities.

The third category, „Reducing Inequalities,“ recognizes the need to provide services to disadvantaged areas and address income inequality. IMM has initiated activities to tackle these risks and improve services in these areas.

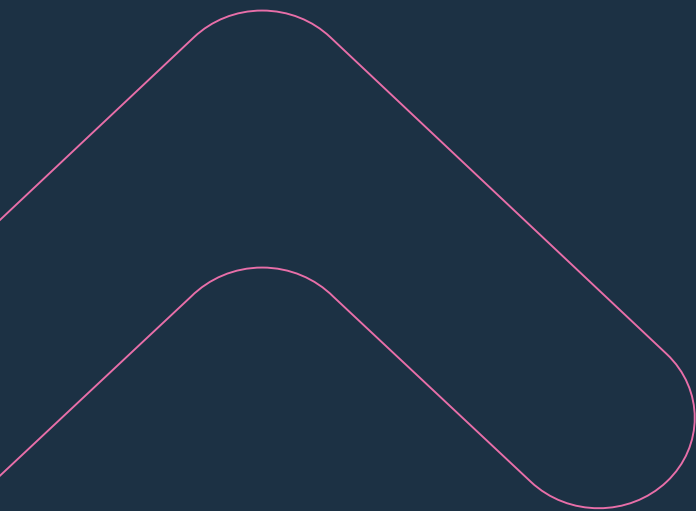
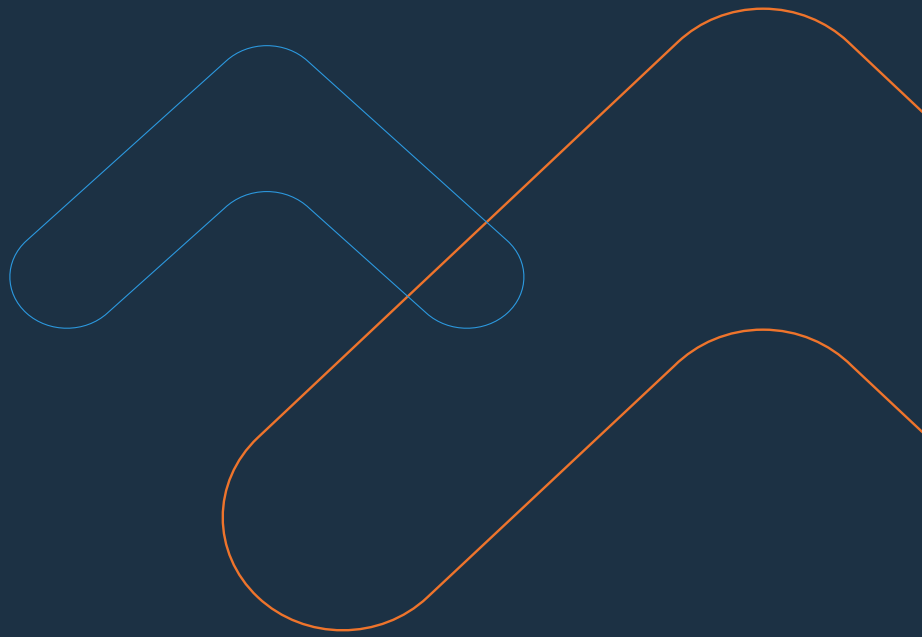
Under the fourth category, „The Right to a City and Belonging,“ the focus is on disaster management and addressing potential social order deterioration due to economic challenges. The IMM is taking steps to address these identified risks and ensure the well-being of the community.

The final category, „Digital Transformation,“ highlights risks such as cyberattacks and power outages that can disrupt digital infrastructure. The IMM is actively promoting digitalization, reducing costs, and increasing awareness of data protection and privacy to address these challenges.

In response to these global and national challenges, the IMM has taken them into account while implementing democracy-focused activities. The projects align with the identified issues in the Strategic Plan and are guided by the principles of cooperation, common understanding, and participation. Through these concepts, the IMM aims to ensure effective implementation processes and promote a circular culture of democracy.

ECOD APPLICATION IZMIR

Projects



Izmir – Project 1

BEST PRACTICE | ONE-OFF | 10.08.2022 - 21.03.2023
[HTTPS://IKTISATKONGRESI.ORG/EN](https://iktisatkongresi.org/en)

Congress for Future's Economy

Brief Description

The Congress for Future's Economy, themed „Call for Renewal,“ was held in Izmir from 15-21 March 2023. It brought together over 500 delegates from 180 institutions representing all regions of Türkiye, along with 200 experts. The congress aimed to foster a collective movement for renewal, emphasizing civil society engagement, transparency, and full participation. Following an extensive eight-month preparation process, the delegates were presented with the final declaration, comprising four parts encompassing a comprehensive set of 61 principles and 303 decisions. The congress received significant interest from citizens, with approximately 15,000 individual participation and the involvement of over 80 speakers from Türkiye and other countries. The commitment to adhere to the decisions made during the congress will be upheld, accompanied by regular monitoring to evaluate implementation progress.

Detailed Description

Around a century ago, Izmir hosted the First Economic Congress, which laid the foundation for modern Türkiye's economic structure prior to the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye. The Congress also influenced the economic outlooks and policies of various nations, as they sought a way forward amid the devastation of WWI. Following the footsteps of the First Congress, the Congress for Future's Economy was recently organized by the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality in collaboration with the Izmir Planning Agency. Today, Türkiye stands at a crossroads, with the need for a new economic policy, strategy, and action plan. Additionally, current global crises, such as the climate emergency, democracy crisis, and pandemic, demand the redefinition of several economic paradigms. The Congress for Future's Economy aimed to provide practical and long-lasting solutions to these pressing issues. The Congress preparations commenced with the meetings of three sectoral groups; farmers, workers, industrialists, traders, and artisans. The representatives of these three groups pursued the methods of the first Congress. At the end of sectoral meetings, each group prepared its declaration and shared it with the public. This part comprised the first phase of the Congress.

Izmir – Project 1

Detailed Description

These three sectoral declarations were presented to four expert groups during the second phase. Expert groups addressed the principles and decisions that the 3 declarations include concerning four tenets of the “circular culture” framework: Harmony with each Other, Harmony with Nature, Harmony with the Past, and Harmony with Change. The relationship between economy and ecology was discussed in the first expert meeting, “Rejoining Nature.” Experts extensively discussed 3 declarations for the far-reaching impact of the climate emergency and ecological destruction. The second meeting, “Embracing Each Other,” covered the issues of harmony with each other, namely democracy and human rights. In this meeting, the experts delineated the role of these declarations in building a social life based on tolerance and consensus. “Perceiving History” was the third expert meeting. Here, the experts dwelled upon the role of past experiences in enabling the prospects offered in these 3 declarations. In the final meeting, „Shaping Future,” the experts considered the impact of technology and innovation on the economy. In this meeting, the experts examined 3 declarations concerning various issues, such as digitalization, artificial intelligence, and big data, that will shape the world economy soon.

The main congress was held in Izmir with the slogan „Call for Renewal” between March 15-21, 2023. Approximately 500 delegates and 200 experts representing 180 organizations from all regions of Türkiye attended the main congress. The main congress sessions attracted profound interest from citizens, and approximately 15,000 individuals attended different sessions. There were more than 80 speakers. Ten of these speakers were internationally respected figures. After an intensive 8-month preparation process, the final declaration, which compiled the outputs of all the work, was presented to the delegates for voting. The introduction section of the declaration consists of four parts and 92 decisions. The workers’ declaration includes 16 principles and 51 decisions, the farmers’ declaration consists of 18 principles and 62 decisions, and the industrialist, traders, and artisans’ declaration contain 27 principles and 98 decisions. The final declaration, consisting of 3 declarations, included 61 principles and 211 articles. There were annotations from different stakeholder groups in 27 articles. The remaining articles, except for the 27 articles, were decided unanimously. Declaration aims to lay the foundation for the economic policies shaping Türkiye’s new century. The congress, a civil, transparent, and fully participatory initiative, is an invitation from Izmir to Türkiye and the world.

Contribution

The Congress for Future’s Economy project successfully gathered 61 principles and 211 articles from five different sectoral groups, encompassing a diverse representation of 180 organizations from various regions of Türkiye. This endeavor serves as a remarkable testament to the strength and influence of collective thinking and the shared conscience of the participants.

Izmir – Project 1

Contribution

Throughout the project, our utmost priority was to ensure inclusivity and engagement by involving as many individuals as possible. By doing so, we aimed to create an economic plan encompassing a wide range of perspectives and addressing all stakeholders' pressing needs and aspirations. The resulting declaration holds immense significance as it provides valuable insights into the future aspirations of Türkiye's economy. Moreover, it sheds light on the desires and expectations of stakeholders worldwide, reflecting a new and global perspective on economic development.

Collaboration

In this endeavor, we successfully fostered collaboration among over 180 organizations, encompassing influential workers' unions like the DİSK and the KESK and prominent business associations such as the Tüsiad and the Türkonfed. This collaboration united diverse and powerful stakeholders from the labor and business sectors, facilitating dialogue and cooperation among these traditionally distinct entities.

Target Groups

The project's primary focus was to benefit the citizens of Türkiye and the global community. While the project involved experts and stakeholders as the main participants, they made dedicated efforts to act as representatives of the people from their respective organizations or residents.

Communication

The Congress for Future's Economy utilized various communication channels, primarily its website (<https://iktisatkongresi.org/en>) and social media platforms, to disseminate information about its activities. A major and committed secretariat was also established to ensure widespread outreach and engagement with interested parties across Türkiye. The secretariat played a crucial role in collecting inputs and feedback from stakeholders and individuals, creating a platform for their valuable contributions to be gathered and incorporated into the congress proceedings.

Project Setup

The Izmir Planning Agency took the lead in organizing the project, with significant support from various departments of the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality (IMM). In addition to the IMM departments, companies associated with the IMM played a substantial role in the implementation process.

Izmir – Project 1

Budget

Planning Costs	Preparation meetings, caterings, welcoming of the guests	250,000€
Communication Costs	Social media, OOH, radio and TV ads	100,000€
Operating Costs	Redesigning of the congress location, catering, transfers, hosting	650,000€
Total Budget		1,000,000€

Funding

The Congress received funding from a total of 16 sponsors, including four main sponsors: Arkas Holding, an international brand with a deep-rooted history of 120 years; Türkiye İş Bankası, the dynamo of the economic independence of the young Republic; Folkart and Yaşar Holding, prominent companies that pioneered the industrialization process of our country have become the main sponsors of the Congress for Future's Economy. In addition, there were seven theme sponsors and five event sponsors. Alongside the resources provided by the IZPA and the IMM, these sponsors contributed to the funding of Congress by covering half of the budget mentioned earlier.

Programme Year Integration

Although the Congress for Future's Economy was initially organized as a single event, we strongly emphasize the importance of its continuity. We are committed to maintaining the relevance of the decisions made during the congress via the High Advisory Board consisting of congress participants and other stakeholders. We planned regular meetings to assess the progress of implementing the decisions and determine if further actions were necessary to ensure their effective implementation. We firmly believe that the Congress transcends national boundaries and is significant for the entire world. In the context of the 21st century, the traditional understanding of the economy no longer fulfills the needs of humanity while preserving nature and harmony. Thus, incorporating the project into the program year would prove beneficial not only for Türkiye but also for other nations seeking alternative approaches to governance and economic models that align with the requirements of the future.

Democracy Dimension

Participation

Izmir – Project 2

BEST PRACTICE | PERMANENT
URL1: [HTTPS://WWW.GENCIZMIR.COM/](https://www.gencizmir.com/)

The Izmir Youth Municipality

Brief Description

According to the youth vision of „Izmir’s Youth: Today’s Stakeholders“, the Izmir Youth Municipality Project aims to spread participatory democracy and enable youth living in Izmir to participate more actively in local government. Izmir Youth Municipality, conducts activities/projects to solve problems that mainly concern young people in the city with 11 commissions. The project of Izmir Youth Municipality is the first and only youth municipality project in Türkiye that was designed, prepared, and implemented by the youth itself.

Detailed Description

The mission of the IMM is to ensure that young people play an active role in the development of the city and create an urban climate where innovative ideas emerge and revitalize youth involvement in local government. The IMM and young people have collaborated to conduct two-year preparatory activities to determine the youth participation methodology, formulate a road map, and develop a model that would cover all young people living in Izmir. According to these activities, a method has been identified in which young people who are not members of any political party and who are not affiliated with an organized civil society organization can also participate in local governance. The Izmir Youth Municipality was established on 15.04.2023 with the participation of young people aged 18-30, based in Izmir. A total team of 210 people was formed, consisting of Full Members, Alternate Members, and Volunteers, who were selected by drawing lots. Although the Izmir Youth Municipality consists of a team of 210 people, all young people living in Izmir can submit proposals and projects to the Youth Municipality. Therefore, all young people can bring their ideas, projects, and proposals to life and ensure youth participation in municipal policies.

The Izmir Youth Municipality identifies the problems of the city and especially the youth and solves them with a common mind approach. The Youth Council of Izmir Youth Municipality convenes on the last weekend of every month, except in extraordinary circumstances. The Council Members of the Izmir Youth Municipality form 11 different commissions.

Izmir – Project 2

Detailed Description

They can organize activities and projects for the youth and the city within the scope of the subjects of these commissions:

- Environment and Climate Crisis Commission
- Culture and the Arts Commission
- Science and Technology Commission
- Education Commission
- Tourism and Promotion Commission
- Agriculture and Livestock Commission
- Social Services Commission
- Health and Sports Commission
- Universal Rights Commission
- Accessible Izmir Commission
- Gender Equality Commission

Commissions are the structures where the council members reveal their ideas and projects for the city's problems. Council members are responsible for the committees on which they are assigned. The committees organize online or in-person meetings at the end of each month until the Council's General Assembly convenes, where they are responsible for generating draft ideas according to their focus of activities and providing the Council with a fresh perspective on issues of interest. The decisions, requests, studies, practices, or projects from these commissions are forwarded to the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Youth Affairs and Social Projects. They are referred to the appropriate department for implementation by the municipality. The Youth Municipality enables young people to participate in democratic participation by identifying problems and proposing solutions. It also helps young people discover their potential, develop leadership skills, and strengthen social relationships. According to the provisions of the Izmir Youth Municipality, an election is held every two years in which all young people living in Izmir are eligible to participate. Young people who participate can be replaceable during these periods. Participants can change every two years, and young people with different innovative ideas are always included, contributing to the realization of new projects.

Contribution

The Izmir Youth Municipality is a project that will provide guiding outputs in terms of democratic policies, as it is a project that increases democratic awareness, enables direct participation and can involve young people who may be interested in the future administration.

Izmir – Project 2

Target Groups

The project mainly targets young people who want to have a say in Izmir's governance and who want to share ideas, studies, and projects. However, with the spread of participatory democracy and the urban projects to be executed, all individuals living in Izmir will benefit. The project is based on participation and involves a relatively low cost. Therefore, it has the potential to be implemented in all localities that want to open space for youth.

Collaboration

The Izmir Youth Municipality can form an external advisory board within the scope of the activities it plans to carry out. Through the content of the activity, universities, businesspeople, lawyers, and farmers, among others, can accomplish their activities together with many institutions and people from the city, and a mutual learning path can be created. Therefore, according to their expertise, everyone living in the city can be considered a potential project partner.

Communication

Young people carry out general communication and promotion activities per their demands. However, support is being provided by professional staff within Izmir Metropolitan Municipality as per young people's needs. Throughout the IMM, all facilities are available for the dissemination of visibility activities. The activities performed within the Council are followed up by young people, and the process and results are evaluated and reported. Thus, by creating an institutional memory, each activity provides experience transfer for the next actions.

Project Setup

Young people are fully responsible for carrying out the project under their leadership. During both the creation and execution of the project, the IMM Youth Affairs and Social Projects Branch Directorate supports young people in creating the necessary physical space. Additionally, it is responsible for providing the required budgets and other resources. IMM facilitates the implementation of projects by effectively communicating the activities proposed by the Izmir Youth Municipality to the appropriate departments and units. Additionally, the relevant directorate is responsible for secretarial procedures to ensure the sustainability of the activities of the Izmir Youth Municipality. The Izmir Youth Municipality may establish an advisory board to support its activities. The Izmir Metropolitan Municipality endorses the creation of a network in the formation of the advisory board. We believe this effort will allow the establishment of a network structure throughout the city.

Izmir – Project 2

Description

The Izmir City Council and Youth Council are structures designed to enable young people from civil society organizations in Izmir to participate in local government actively. Izmir Youth Municipality is a project created to activate unorganized youth to participate in decision-making mechanisms in local government. Therefore, the two projects support each other and aim to ensure that all young people actively participate in local government. While the Izmir Youth Municipality includes civil society organizations in general, the 11 established commissions especially work in collaboration with such organizations to carry out their respective functions. In addition, representatives of youth chambers and civil society organizations are invited to meetings according to the activities being conducted, and ideas are exchanged.

Budget

Planning Costs	Research and meetings	1,500€
Operating Costs	Catering, transfers, allocation of the meeting places	25,000€
Communication Costs	Social media ads, Introduction-Event	500€
Extra Budget	Allocated for unexpected or unforeseen events	10,000€
Total Budget		37,000€

Funding

No additional funding has been provided by any organization other than the IMM during the project implementation phase. Young people are encouraged to apply for funds and grants of their choice or make sponsorship agreements. They have the right to cooperate with public or non-governmental organizations for additional funding.

Programme Year integration

The project's initiative and internal decisions belong to young people. However, Izmir Youth Municipality will be involved in the ECoD program in line with its main aims and objectives. It will perform according to the working subjects of the commission.

Democracy Dimension

Community

Izmir – Project 3

INFORMATION CAMPAIGN | ONE-OFF | 01.06.2022 - 15.12.2023

Communication Campaign Against Hate Speech and Discrimination

Brief Description

Izmir has a rich historical structure, cultural diversity, and an enormous historical past that requires citizens from diverse cultures, religions, and ethnicities to live harmoniously. A „Culture of tolerance“ has enabled citizens to live peacefully and participate in governance despite prejudices. The IMM believes that peace and justice are the basic principles of the city. The organization promotes social inclusion policies, eliminates stereotypes, prevents hostilities, and counters radicalization. Accordingly, the IMM and UNHCR have initiated the „Communication Campaign for an Inclusive City against Hate Speech and Discrimination.“ The project educates Izmir’s residents about hate speech and discrimination and decreases prejudice in Izmir. It also indicates that an inclusive discourse in the city is possible. The campaign includes panels, focus groups, report analysis studies, workshops, and training sessions. A social media campaign is also held to raise awareness.

Detailed Description

Global climate change and human-caused wars forced people to leave their homes and migrate for a better life in a democratic and equal society. Unfortunately, these people face discrimination and hate speech today. These minority groups suffer from bullying, exclusion, and marginalization in the countries and cities they live in, which also reduces their visibility. Despite global problems, most minority groups live in Türkiye, especially in the metropolitan cities of Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. Izmir is home to multiple minorities, including Syrians, Somalis, Afghans, and refugees from different African countries. Economic, social, and ecological problems in Türkiye have increased hateful speech and discrimination against these groups by the local community and refugee groups. Hate speech and discrimination have increased steadily, which lead to the transformation from verbal to physical. Discrimination has started to be directed especially against women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ groups, and also groups of different ethnic origins and beliefs. Collaboration was conducted with the UNHCR to raise public awareness about minority groups and prevent discrimination and hate speech. In addition, it helped raise public awareness of the possibility of living in a loving and respectful environment.

Izmir – Project 3

Detailed Description

The activities are as follows:

- Opening Meeting and Panel: Opening meetings and panel discussions were held on June 20, 2022, to discuss hate speech, hate crimes, and freedom of expression. It was announced throughout the city that hate speech and discrimination must be combated to promote democracy and coexistence among citizens.
- Focus Group Studies: Focus groups were established to uncover problems facing groups who are discriminated against (a. Gender, b. Sexual Orientation, c. Refugees, d. Religious beliefs, e. Ethnicity).
- Report and Analysis Study: Reports and analyses were prepared following relevant meetings and focus groups.
- Campaign Interim Meeting / „We Have a Word for Living Together“ Panel:
- The „We Have a Word for Living Together“ Panel presented the campaign's outputs and report during Human Rights Week on December 9, 2022. There were three sessions on the panel: one where experts in their fields discussed discrimination and hate speech, another with participants from different ethnic and religious groups living in Izmir, and another discussing activism through art.
- Non-discrimination workshops with municipal staff were organized as two workshops. 40 municipal personnel attended these two workshops.
- Combating hate speech training for municipal staff was organized into two workshops. 240 municipal personnel attended these workshops.
- Organization of external coordination meeting: In 2023, district municipalities will collaborate on information dissemination and coordination between municipalities.
- Meetings with NGOs to enhance cooperation with local/national/international NGOs to combat discrimination and hate speech are also key project activities. A meeting was held in July 2022, and another is planned for 2023.
- A comprehensive visual communication campaign against hate speech and discrimination will be implemented with the assistance of experts and academic consultancy, based on the impact of social media, as hate speech against refugees can result in death and limit IMM's ability to provide refugee services. The IMM plans to produce six short videos for display in public spaces (subways, ferries, etc.), use an awareness video on discrimination and hate speech in the municipality's in-service training, and share it with NGOs.
- A social media campaign will be run through 2023 to enhance the impact of a visual communication campaign with the support of academic consultancy. Social media campaigns include content production, creating social media posts, and designing visual content.
- An event to promote short videos about combating hate speech to share the videos will be performed within 2023.

Izmir – Project 3

Contribution

The campaign's main purpose is to support a pluralistic and rights-oriented discourse and a peaceful urban culture that fights against hate speech and discrimination based on human rights and values and aims to see, understand, and make sense of events from different perspectives. A participatory approach to the project aims to draw a road map with all the components of the city and support the creation of an inclusive language and policy. The campaign's overall goal is to strengthen the ground for dialogue in the fight against hate speech in Izmir, to ensure encounters, and to develop communication materials that explain the possibility of a new discourse for an inclusive urban culture. A key feature of the project is that it contributes to social peace by strengthening the bridge among citizens and reducing racist speech. The panels held with the participation of organizations that tackle societal discrimination and advocate for rights also emphasized tolerance.

Target Group(s)

This project targets all of Izmir's residents. The project has no specified target because discrimination and hate speech may originate in different groups. Discrimination and hate speech is mostly about internalized prejudices and ignorance, not deliberate decisions; fighting discrimination and eradicating ignorance causing stereotypes is essential. This implementation can spread in Türkiye and the world because discrimination and hatred have no particular origin.

Collaboration

As part of Izmir Metropolitan Municipality's previously adopted „Living in Harmony“ approach and actions to ensure community cohesion, it is aimed at removing hate speech and discrimination from society and guaranteeing the unity of the society.

Communication

All awareness-raising activities initiated with the participation of local institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local people, have contributed to supporting a democratic and equal life in line with the project's objective. It also contributed to the development of a more equitable approach in local administrations. Hence, citizens of Izmir must receive equal services and improve service opportunities without hate speech and discrimination. This project promotes diversity and inclusion by identifying and promoting positive behavior. Accordingly, short videos created during the project will be shared in public spheres such as subways, busses, and ferries. As a part of the project, social media posts are also created and shared via the directorate's social media account. Monitoring and evaluation might be challenging as the project targets a large audience.

The UNHCR is IMM's partner in developing refugee-inclusive policies and capacity development activities. The UNHCR has expertise in working with national/local authorities, especially municipalities, on social cohesion. In this project, the UNHCR

Izmir – Project 3

Project Setup

is responsible for financial management. It covers the expenses of the Directorate of Urban Justice and Equity's Refugee Desk Project Coordinator, the project's two academic consultants, and the social media consultant. It also organizes tenders and contracts with film production companies for videos and catering firms for workshops and panels. The outputs created during the project are approved and used by the IMM and the UNHCR. The project on hate speech and discrimination, collaboration, and cooperation was conducted with Prof. Dr. Sevda Alankuş, Lecturer at Yaşar University's Faculty of Communication. The partnership raises awareness of minority groups through digital activism and provides local administrations with democratic services.

Description

The panel „We Have a Word for Living Together“, jointly organized by the UNHCR and the IMM, invited diverse non-governmental organizations, private sector enterprises, universities, and all community organizations engaged in minority integration. The scope of this activity ensures the interaction of all community organizations that contribute to the integration of these minority groups into society and their access to the services provided by the local government. Furthermore, focus groups were conducted with the participation of various civil society organizations that aim to eliminate discrimination and hate speech linked to five topics (gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, religion-belief, refugee) to increase interaction and to accomplish effective work. Consequently, local governments and civil society organizations have made joint efforts to improve the living conditions of minority groups in Izmir by ensuring that minorities' democratic and equal rights are respected.

Izmir – Project 3

Budget

Planning Costs	Research	25,000€
Operating Cost	Fieldtrips, focus groups, catering, transfers	35,000€
Communication Costs	Social media, OOH and TV ads	10,000€
Extra Budget	Unexpected or unforeseen events	10,000€
Total Budget		80,000€

Funding

The UNHCR fully funded the project, and none of the municipality's budget was utilized.

Programme Year Integration

There will be a presentation or workshop on common false facts as part of the presentation of this project at a conference. The project can be integrated into the Truth, Lies, and Democracy Challenge as a possible part of the project. This challenge will include the results of the focus groups and concepts in the project's field report as well as the results of the focus groups. Misunderstood concepts (hate speech, discrimination, stereotypes, prejudice, etc.) and common false facts about refugees and other disadvantaged groups in Türkiye may be served as questions or news, and correct answers may be expected from the event participants. Aside from this, necessary work will be carried out for minority groups in the context of hate speech and discrimination. The project aims to ensure that citizens of these groups can raise their voices in local government and benefit from all services provided by local government.

Democracy Dimension

Empowerment

Izmir – Project 4

BEST PRACTICE | PERANENT

Immediate Solutions Team

Brief Description

The Immediate Solutions Team (IST) was established to identify service deficiencies in under-served areas of the province of Izmir and to eliminate possible injustices by ensuring citizen participation. Problems relating to municipal services that are to be resolved are analyzed and transferred to the relevant department based on the information received from each household by the team visiting each residence and trying to find solutions to them through a participatory method. In the neighborhoods, field researchers learn the expectations of each household regarding municipal services and analyze the problems. With the problems submitted to the Mayor's Office as a report, the relevant departments of the municipality identify the problems on-site. The Mayor's Office holds a meeting with the relevant departments regarding the decisions made in the area where a tour is organized, and the distribution of tasks is determined. Then, the solution phases for the specified problems begin.

Detailed Description

The IMM dedicates to raising public service standards by focusing on people-oriented, people-focused practices and activities that make people's lives easier. The project aims to convey opinions and suggestions from the field to the appropriate authorities. The Immediate Solutions Team (IST) was established to identify services and missing local service activities identified by citizens living in underserved areas of the city and to eliminate injustice in services through social participation. The activities performed by the team align with IMM's vision of fair and equitable distribution of the city's welfare and contribute to increasing the service intake of citizens living in these areas and giving them a say in identifying the services to be provided at their discretion. The system, which was established in line to quickly find alternative solutions to the needs of disadvantaged neighborhoods and touching all segments, is structured into 4 stages.

1. Strategy; As a first step, the Immediate Solutions Field Research Team thoroughly examines the neighborhood under consideration. They conduct a comprehensive analysis of the regions that are lagging in terms of service.

Izmir – Project 4

Detailed Description

2. Exploration; After the strategy meeting, the municipality gathers feedback and expectations from various stakeholders, including headmen, associations, and residents of the neighborhood. This is being done by conducting door-to-door visits and engaging with people along the designated routes for field research. The team identifies problems categorically by taking notes and documents them.
3. Planning: These requests are then categorized into infrastructure, transportation, and others, which are presented to the Mayor as a report. The work to be conducted at the next stage is discussed in a meeting with officials of all municipal departments included in the team, and a time-bounded action plan is prepared.
4. Implementation; As a final step, the Mayor and the team visit the neighborhood where the work is conducted and listen individually to the citizens. Upon completion of the visit, the implementation program is assigned to the implementation teams, and plans are initiated in practice.

In line with the activities completed so far within the scope of the project, a total of 17,794 interviews were held in 6 districts and 34 different neighborhoods, reaching 60,142 people. A total of 266 neighborhood headmen were interviewed in person, and surveys were conducted to get to know the headmen and the neighborhood, to measure requests and expectations regarding local services, and to identify neighborhoods where the IST could conduct their research. Headmen were asked questions about the demographic structure of the neighborhood, problems of the community, which are issues promised to be addressed by the IMM. Moreover, they were also asked about activities implemented by municipalities in the district, and the priority problems of the area. The activities implemented by the IST so far are as follows;

- Recreation area and renovation activities,
- School construction/school renovation,
- Creating sports fields for young people (basketball court, astroturf, etc.),
- Open-air cinema,
- Construction/renovation of the marketplace,
- Construction/renovation of recreation areas, playgrounds,
- Mosque cleaning and renovation,
- Transportation-related works (increasing the frequency, creating new lines),
- Rainwater line construction/infrastructure works,
- Cleaning of canals and steam,
- Road, sidewalk, and asphalt renovation work (speed bumps, vehicle bridges, and traffic signs, among others.),
- Social assistance and home care services for those in need.
- Rubble disposal to designated landfill and demolition of abandoned buildings.

In addition, the IST monitors all problems and requests submitted to the Municipality's citizen communication center and visits the relevant places where problems occur.

Izmir – Project 4

Contribution

In identifying service gaps, the IST project strives to be a service that emphasizes democratic approaches at the managerial level, with the direct participation of citizens living in disadvantaged areas, on service injustice and strengthening communication between the parties. Despite other methods, ensuring citizen involvement in the decision-making process through on-site identification and communication in the service areas is important, promoting equality. The results of the sociological research that emerged from the social networks established for the studies will be presented to citizens as a service, providing data for future studies and making the project sustainable. The IST aims to expand the activities from the local level to enable citizens to achieve equal urban welfare by enriching it with international experiences and exchanging experiences and knowledge.

Target Groups

IST targets citizens living in underprivileged areas with limited social opportunities. Hence, the citizens will eliminate service deficiencies with social participation. In total, the project covers 11 metropolitan districts. The current project promotes the direct involvement of residents in the region. This project can be implemented by any administration that forms teams to establish direct communication with citizens.

Collaboration

IST was created to ensure that citizens have equal access to urban welfare, the identification of problems, direct contact, and efforts to find a solution at the metropolitan level based on the individuals' needs. Thus, instead of collecting and evaluating the requests and complaints submitted by citizens, using direct communication resources contributes to citizens becoming more involved in local governance. Citizens in the study regions have the right to equal representation, and the same perspective prevails in the evaluation processes. It is important to identify the location, determine the affected areas based on population density, and assess the urgency of the problems identified to ensure a fair distribution of services. The IST informs the citizens and relevant headmen's offices about solved or unresolved problems as part of a transparency principle.

Communication

In the approach of direct participation of citizens as a local service concept, citizens' active participation in the identification of existing problems is at the forefront of communication channels. The number of household visits is planned to be increased to increase the number of problems that are being identified at the local level. Collected field data is categorized into relevant areas such as infrastructure and transportation.

Izmir – Project 4

Communication

Municipal departments are informed about the findings, and an action plan is developed based on the information collected. The coordinator team monitors the progress on solutions to problems. Subsequently, citizens and relevant neighborhood headmen are informed about the solved or unsolved problems. Data from the study area is used to develop general projects in neighborhoods with limited social opportunities. Moreover, citizens can follow the project on <https://twitter.com/AcilCozum> and <https://www.instagram.com/acilcozumekibi/> accounts.

Project Setup

IST, including representatives from all departments and companies of the IMM, employs diverse and specialized personnel. The Immediate Solutions Team is managed by the Directorate of Strategy Development and Coordination Branch, and research and coordination personnel are involved in the process. The team, formed as a large organization encompassing many departments within the IMM, includes 11 members and ensures coordination with each department. Problems identified through direct communication with citizens are transferred to the relevant department for resolution, while the IST is still responsible for coordinating and following up the process. Therefore, every relevant department of the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality is included in the problem-solving process, with investigations performed for any issues that require immediate attention.

Description

According to the objectives of the IST, IMM seeks to improve the team's communication and cooperation capacity by collaborating with civil society organizations and the communion on projects and activities among headmen and public meetings, and the renovation of schools and religious buildings. Developing a solution process that involves the city's stakeholders to the greatest extent possible, while ensuring the citizens' direct involvement during the identification of service deficiencies is important regarding social networks and dialogue with NGOs. After meetings held by the IST, the social activity or education areas requested by the neighborhood residents are evaluated with the relevant NGOs or institutions, and activities are initiated to reach solutions after the necessary sociological survey. These sociological surveys also serve as data for future service activities. IST also occasionally meets with civil society organizations at events in the form of opening ceremonies.

Izmir – Project 4

Budget

Planning Costs	Bilateral meetings, field trips, organizational and sociological research	100,000€
Operating Cost	Facilitation and coordination of people's requests to the Municipality for organizing field trips	650,000€
Extra Budget	Unexpected or unforeseen events	250,000€
Total Budget		1,000,000€

Funding

The Izmir Metropolitan Municipality implements the project by using its resources together with its personnel. There are no co-financing sources other than the financing sources provided by the IMM.

Programme Year Integration

The IMM initiated the project in 2019 to increase service capacity for the community and to allow disadvantaged areas and local people to participate in the management of services. Accordingly, during the European Capital of Democracy program, the IST project will improve service capacities in disadvantaged regions. IST contributes to the city's social, economic, cultural, environmental, and tourism dimensions by boosting its service capacity in the city center and these regions. Furthermore, the initiatives are intended to strengthen the communication between the IST project administration department, disadvantaged areas' headmen, and public relations departments and increase the service capacity of local government. Thus, the effective efforts of the headmen and IST team in these areas will enable citizens to contribute to municipal governance and ensure the continuity of democratic governance.

Democracy Dimension

Community

Izmir – Project 5

BEST PRACTICE | PERMANENT

[URL: HTTPS://IZMIR.SK/EN/CULTURE-AND-COMMUNITIES/CULTURAL-SERVICES/IZMIR-CITY-FOUNDATION](https://izmir.sk/en/culture-and-communities/cultural-services/izmir-city-foundation)

Izmir Economic Development and Coordination Board (Known as IEKK, Acronym in Turkish)

Brief Description

In line with the participatory democracy and governance approach, Izmir Economic Development Coordination Board is a democratic institution intended to identify ideas, plans, and initiatives for Izmir's economic development and enhance its effectiveness on a national and international scale. 83 representatives of institutions and organizations will have a major impact on Izmir's economy, making this a democratic platform where matters of contention related to economic development are addressed and discussed. Also, it is the first initiative in Türkiye with its supra-political structure involving various interest groups.

A key objective of the Board is to mobilize a sense of unity in Izmir, discussing the economic developments taking place in the city and the projects that need to be implemented on a certain platform. The Board is not restricted to evaluating and discussing projects but also takes active steps to implement them by informing the public about solutions to problems.

Detailed Description

The Izmir Economic Development and Coordination Board promotes unity in Izmir's economic development groups by discussing, debating, and advocating solutions for the city's economic development. Besides bringing together investors who are significant contributors to Izmir's development, this meeting promotes unity and consensus, gathering representatives of professional chambers, businesses, and associations in the spirit of collaboration and political sense. The Board's key objective is to involve relevant individuals, institutions, and organizations in the city's economy, to empower it to operate more rationally, monitor its development, and make appropriate interventions in partnerships with relevant organizations. Furthermore, it is intended to be a practical tool for improving economic conditions and increasing public awareness and education.

Izmir – Project 5

Detailed Description

These objectives determine the Board's institutional structure:

- Actively using Izmir's strengths and resources for the benefit of its citizens,
- Providing a platform for communication, information sharing, and collaborative work for individuals, institutions, and organizations which are influential in local development,
- Coordinating efforts toward the development of the city,
- Building consensus and creating synergy on issues of concern to the city,
- Enhancing national and international effectiveness through the development of ideas, plans, and projects,
- Implementing and supporting projects in line with identified priorities,
- To inform the public about the issues of concern and how to address them.

The Board Secretariat examined the strategic plans of all institutions and articles from national strategic plans applicable to Izmir. Then, the secretariat created a „List of Izmir's Priorities,“ identifying the most significant issues Izmir is facing, and this is monitored by the central government. The Izmir Metropolitan Municipality (IMM)'s EU Grant Projects Branch Directorate provides the Working Group's secretariat and organization. Organizing the agenda and communication is managed by the Secretariat.

Board members are neither elected local administrators nor senior government officials in the metropolitan area, nor political figures. The IMM Mayor is the honorary chairperson. The Board's secretariat and its meeting chairs are composed of representatives from NGOs and the various business sectors. Boards are designed to be completely independent of central government administrators.

A total of 119 Board meetings were held. Besides the priority issues, many aspects of the city's economic, environmental, sports, social, and cultural life have been discussed, and collaborative projects and research have been performed. Meanwhile, contributing Board members and other organizations inform the Board about their initiatives and activities and receive members' opinions and feedback.

Board maintains its effectiveness and sustainability, which ensure longevity, as with previous structures that engaged local actors' participation in Izmir. The „Working Principles of Izmir Economic Development and Coordination Board“ regarding its formation, objectives, duties, governing bodies, and operating procedures of the governing bodies have been prepared and approved by this Board to ensure institutionalization and the operation of the Board based on certain principles. A logo, tagline, visual materials, and a website were developed as part of the Board's visibility objectives.

Izmir – Project 5

Detailed Description

The Board's contribution to the city is not only finding solutions to existing problems with a common mind but also shaping the future and development of the city. These members are ecologically sensitive, have an urban consciousness, and understand the value of acting with a common mind and creating awareness in the city with their projects and initiatives.

Contribution

The board's mission, which formed through the cooperation of different mechanisms, is to contribute to society's empowerment and relevant parties central to this democratic participation model. The Board follows the metropolitan development model used in developing countries, where metropolitan area leadership coordinates local and regional development. This is the first organization in Türkiye to implement an economic development model. The Board does not function under any central governmental power. This is an effort to spread local development to the region by coordinating businesses and NGOs in the city by including private sector and civil society representatives from within the province and the nearby region. Additionally, the focus of the Board extends beyond economic development, where economic development work is conducted considering environmental, cultural, sports, tourism, and social development issues.

Target Groups

The project aims to serve the residents of Izmir (with a total population of 4,486,845). It functions as a centralized platform, facilitating communication, collaboration, and information exchange among key stakeholders such as investors, professional chambers, businesses, and NGOs. By promoting engagement and information sharing, the platform fosters development and consensus on matters that affect the entire province, while organizing meetings lays the foundation for project advancement.

Collaboration

Since its launch, IEKK Board members have discussed the challenges and the projects developed and implemented in the city. The projects receive the participation and assistance of the city's economic actors. Many Municipality projects are revised and implemented by considering the Board members' suggestions and opinions. Meanwhile, Board members' project proposals are being evaluated by the relevant departments of the Municipality, after which appropriate actions are taken. The IMM demonstrates one of the most significant examples of participatory democracy with the „Leave Your Mark on Izmir“ project. The project is designed to guide the city's strategic plan for the next 10 years through project proposals that are submitted by Izmir residents through social media. Project proposals submitted to the „Leave Your Mark on Izmir“ application under the tagline „Dream for Your Street, Neighborhood, District, City!“, are evaluated for the aspects of functionality and feasibility.

Izmir – Project 5

Communication

The Board seeks to create a platform for communication, information exchange, and collaborative activities among people, institutions, and organizations with a local influence. It is also a priority to achieve consensus and create synergy on city-related issues, and efforts are made to achieve these objectives. It also aims to provide information to the public and strengthen public participation. Alongside above-mentioned goals, it builds effective communication with citizens and city administrators. These efforts are leading to a more democratic city administration. The Municipality's web page <https://www.Izmir.bel.tr/> and local newspapers, magazines, and publications promote the activities and projects that will set an example for Türkiye through the news about the Board.

Project Setup

The institutional organization of the IEKK Board consists of the General Assembly and Working Groups.

- **General Assembly:** It is the main organizational body of the Board by which monthly meetings are held under the frame of an agenda, and relevant decisions are taken. The sessions are led by a meeting manager elected each year.
- **Working Group;** „The IEKK Working Group“ has been established to identify the agenda items to be discussed at the Board and to monitor the execution of the agenda items carried out. The Working Group consists of 13 General Assembly members. The Working Group meets every month one week before the General Assembly meetings and sets the Board agenda.

Description

The Board Secretariat is directed by the EU Grant Projects Branch Directorate of the IMM. The organizational aspects of the meeting are coordinated in cooperation with the Protocol Branch Directorate of the IMM. The General Assembly convenes by simple majority and decisions are taken by majority vote.

The IEKK Board is a local development model that functions from local to regional, national to global under the leadership of civil society organizations. The majority of the Board's members are representatives of prominent private sector business executives and NGOs in the city and region. The monthly General Assembly meetings are attended by 13 NGO representatives. As with other members of the board, NGOs also have an opportunity to participate in exchanging information and ideas on local development priorities and agendas and developing joint work.

Izmir – Project 5

Budget

Planning Costs	Meetings with members, catering, and meeting hall negotiations.	1,500€
Operating Cost	Meeting hall expenses and catering twice a month	25,000€
Communication Costs	Social media, OOH and TV ads	500€
Extra Budget	Unexpected or unforeseen events	1,000€
Total Budget		28,000€

Funding

As part of the project, the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality implements it using its resources and staff in conjunction with the local government agencies. Besides the resources of financing provided by our municipality, there are no other sources of co-financing/funding available.

Programme Year Integration

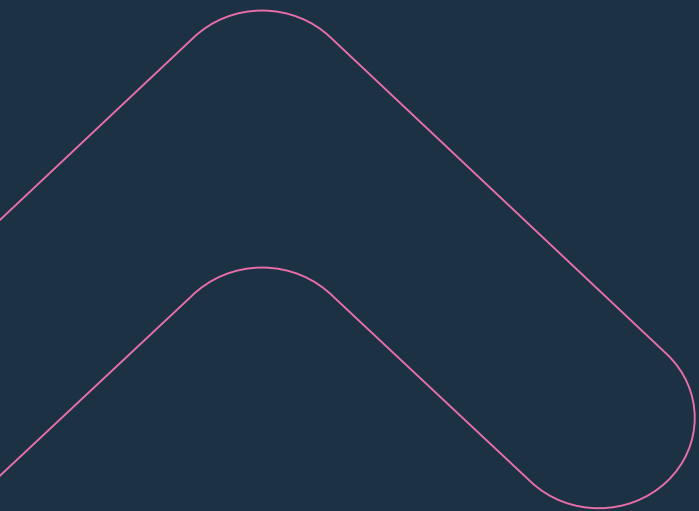
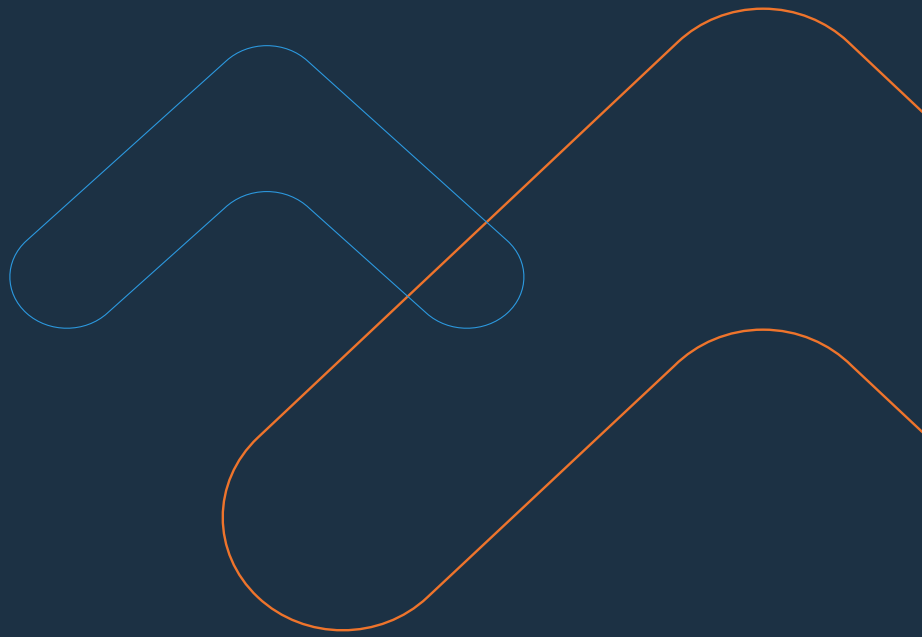
In Izmir, the IEKK Board application is designed to improve the city's economy, social activities, and local government functions. The European Capital of Democracy will have to produce beneficial results for people and organizations such as companies, industries, stock exchanges, and chambers influenced by the city's management. The practice of the IMM increases interaction and communication in the city, contributes to the economic growth, and helps the municipality to use its resources adequately. It is envisaged that during the European Capital of Democracy program, Board practices will continue to be conducted. The aim is to improve its practices and reach the people living in the city. In addition, it focuses on increasing the number of Board representatives and including headmen (mukhtar) at the level of local authorities. Hence, it is expected that the problems and services required in Izmir will be addressed through different representatives and various methods.

Democracy Dimension

Participation

ECOD APPLICATION IZMIR

Project Ideas





Izmir - Project Idea 1



DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: COMMUNITY

Welzmir Movement

Challenge

Izmir is an 8,500-year-old city that shelters diverse cultural practices underpinned by living in harmony. Democracy was born in the Aegean, of which Izmir sits at the heart. The metropolitan area of Izmir comprises 30 district municipalities with a population of approximately 4.5 million residents. Democracy, when implemented effectively, offers the potential for every individual to participate in decision-making processes that directly impact their daily lives. However, the reality is that achieving widespread citizen engagement in contemporary society is an immense challenge. This challenge is not unique to our city; it is prevalent in democratic nations and cities worldwide, with only a few exceptions.

The Izmir Metropolitan Municipality is implementing a project called the Immediate Solutions Team, focusing on closely connecting with residents, understanding their aspirations, and translating them into actionable policies. This project prioritizes citizen engagement and ensures their voices are heard in decision-making. With these efforts being the foundation, the municipality aims to establish the Welzmir Movement, enabling citizens to participate in local decision-making actively and advancing toward more inclusive democracy.

Solution

The Welzmir Movement is dedicated to enhancing citizen participation in local governance at the neighborhood scale to promote the cultural, economic, and social development of the city. Their primary objectives include empowering residents through the establishment of neighborhood councils and strengthening participatory budgeting.

Izmir - Project Idea 1

Solution

By doing so, diverse community perspectives are considered in decision-making processes, leading to comprehensive and inclusive policies that address specific neighborhood needs. Moreover, the implementation of participatory budgeting allows residents to influence the allocation of public funds for local projects, positively impacting their quality of life. Thus, the program strives for growing synergy among individuals and organizations passionate to improve the quality of life in Izmir. The movement also facilitates communication and collaboration through effective dialogue platforms among residents, neighborhood councils, local authorities, and stakeholders. Transparent information sharing and collaborative decision-making result in informed and inclusive outcomes. Welzmir actively promotes community engagement, empowering residents to shape their neighborhoods and contribute to the city's overall development. By harnessing collective efforts and embracing innovative methods, Welzmir aims to create a more inclusive, accountable, and responsive local governance system, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for all Izmir residents.

Impact

Citizen participation is of utmost importance in the project, as it envisions the active involvement of residents in municipal councils, allowing them to actively participate in decision-making processes that directly affect their living environment and day-to-day life. The participation phase is anticipated to commence prior to the establishment of the neighborhood councils. This phase will involve conducting briefings for district mukhtars (local authorities) and engaging them in informing residents within their districts about how the implementation process will go ahead. Considering Izmir's population of nearly 4.5 million residents and its 30 counties and 1294 districts, the initial phase is planned to take place in 4 districts. Subsequently, the project seeks to expand participation, reaching a target of more than 15 counties across Izmir where residents could actively contribute to the decision-making process. Based on the insights gained from the data collected by the Immediate Solution Team, it is evident that each district within Izmir has its unique set of requirements and expectations from the municipality. Therefore, the project's objective is to address these district-specific needs by formulating tailored policies resulting from collaborative efforts within the neighborhood councils.

Implementation

The dissemination of the project will involve local representatives, such as headmen, local municipalities, and online platforms, along with the Immediate Solutions Team. They will visit households, emphasizing the importance of resident participation in decision-making and promoting democracy and active engagement. Adequate funding will be allocated for the project, and the municipality is prepared to make further commitments if necessary. The municipality's primary focus is actively involving residents of Izmir in the democratic process and ensuring its successful execution.

Izmir - Project Idea 1

Implementation

The main objective is to encourage citizen participation throughout Izmir, recognizing it as a crucial aspect of democracy. Inclusive platforms will provide citizens with a conducive environment for freely expressing their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. These platforms will serve as channels for citizens to share their opinions, contribute policy suggestions, and offer unique perspectives and insights.

Active citizen engagement will enable residents to address district challenges and leverage collective wisdom and creativity for effective and sustainable solutions. The goal is to create a participatory democracy where residents feel empowered to shape their communities through engagement and shared decision-making.

Support

Regarding consultation, we focus on investing resources into participatory design, ensuring a dynamic and engaging design process, and identifying and implementing enhancements through active citizen participation. This approach emphasizes the importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making, fostering collaboration, and continuously seeking opportunities to enhance the project through involvement. Additionally, an operational secretariat will be established that will play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth implementation of the citizen engagement process. This secretariat will serve as a reliable point of contact for citizens, providing them with the necessary information and addressing any inquiries about the process and the project. It will be a valuable resource for citizens seeking to learn more about the project and actively participate in relevant councils. By offering guidance on participation opportunities, the secretariat will facilitate the identification of citizens keen on contributing their insights to specific areas of interest within the project.

Video Link

N/A

Images

N/A

Izmir - Project Idea 2

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: SUSTAINABILITY

Izmir Earth Citizens

Challenge

Sustainable development is a complex and multifaceted endeavor that aims to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. However, it faces numerous challenges on various fronts. Often, economic development is pursued at the expense of natural resources and ecosystems, leading to environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity. In addition, need for social equity and lack of inclusion poses a significant challenge that must be considered throughout sustainable development. It is vital to enable an inclusive governance approach to distribute the benefits of development equitably among all members of society to ensure long-term sustainability. Suppose humanity fails to attain sustainable development in the near future. In that case, it is undeniable that we will encounter many challenges like, environmental degradation, economic instability, health risks, erosion of cultural heritage, socioeconomic disparities, and more. Izmir already faces some of these challenges, such as environmental degradation, health risks due to the loss of green spaces, and the effects of the climate crisis. Thus, to address these pressing challenges, IMM has demonstrated the political will to intervene and establish a platform where citizens, non-governmental organizations, companies, business associations, and other entities can actively contribute to projects implemented by the IMM and its affiliated entities.

Solution

Izmir Metropolitan Municipality will initiate the "Izmir Earth Citizens" program in order to raise direct cooperation between the private sector and Izmir Metropolitan Municipality for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. The program is based on an online platform through which the private sector and the local government can mutually support each other's projects that are in line with 17 SDGs. The Izmir Earth Citizens

Izmir - Project Idea 2

Solution

program allows citizens, companies, civil society organizations and the local government to develop a common agenda to implement and fund Izmir's projects that support SDGs. Any of these stakeholders can become an "Izmir Earth Citizen" via investing in a project that aligns with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Herewith, local governments and civil society organizations will be able to propose an SGD project through the program's portal, that is subject for funding or in-kind support. Any project or support suggested to this scheme is subject to be verified by the Secretariat of IZPA.

With this program, we aim to collaborate with different stakeholders to address local and global challenges simultaneously. By enabling diverse contributions for related projects, we revitalize Anatolia's "imece" culture, which is key for a strong local democracy.

Impact

The active involvement of various stakeholders such as citizens, non-governmental organizations, business associations, and others is crucial for the success of this project. It is vital to highlight the importance of contributing to initiatives that align with the 17 global goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for effective change. Once the online platform is launched, the participation phase is scheduled for late 2023. The upload of all active projects by the IMM will follow this phase. With Izmir's population reaching nearly 4.5 million residents and our aspiration to attract participants globally, our initial goal is to engage 50,000 individuals who will actively contribute to the projects through the website. Subsequently, through an extensive campaign, we anticipate a significantly higher participation rate. The United Nations report on sustainable development and our planning agency (IZPA) emphasizes the necessity of sustainable development for Izmir, Türkiye, and the world. Therefore, this project aims to address the need for SDGs specifically tailored for Izmir and contribute to sustainable development efforts. We will develop a platform that allows everyone to collaborate and work together for the greater good.

Implementation

The project will primarily utilize digital platforms and various communication tools to ensure widespread awareness and engagement. A comprehensive approach will be adopted, including social media engagement, captivating advertisements, and informative videos disseminated across every available screen. This multifaceted communication strategy aims to inform and inspire citizens to actively participate and create a shared understanding of the project's significance.

Izmir - Project Idea 2

Implementation

Adequate funding will be allocated, and the municipality is committed to securing additional resources if necessary. The goal is actively involving Izmir's inhabitants and global citizens in pursuing sustainable development objectives. The municipality seeks to inspire satisfaction by providing a platform for active participation in shaping the future. The project's vision revolves around Earth citizens' active involvement and participation. It aims to cultivate a sense of ownership and accomplishment by allowing individuals to contribute their ideas, resources, and efforts toward sustainable development. By empowering citizens, the municipality fosters a bond, pride, and collective responsibility toward constructing a brighter future in Izmir and worldwide while engaging in sustainable decision-making processes.

Support

To establish a platform accessible to people worldwide, we will collaborate with the Izmir Teknoloji (<https://www.izmirteknoloji.com.tr>). The extensive experience of both parties ensures the effective implementation of this project idea. Leveraging the municipality's considerable workforce, we will develop a platform that showcases all projects and enables contributions from individuals across the globe.

Video Link

N/A

Images

N/A

Izmir - Project Idea 3

DEMOCRACY DIMENSION: PARTICIPATION

Welzmir Movement

Challenge

Izmir is an 8,500-year-old city that shelters diverse cultural practices underpinned by living in harmony. Democracy was born in the Aegean, of which Izmir sits at the heart. The metropolitan area of Izmir comprises 30 district municipalities with a population of approximately 4.5 million residents.

Democracy, when implemented effectively, offers the potential for every individual to participate in decision-making processes that directly impact their daily lives. However, the reality is that achieving widespread citizen engagement in contemporary society is an immense challenge. This challenge is not unique to our city; it is prevalent in democratic nations and cities worldwide, with only a few exceptions.

The Izmir Metropolitan Municipality is implementing a project called the Immediate Solutions Team, focusing on closely connecting with residents, understanding their aspirations, and translating them into actionable policies. This project prioritizes citizen engagement and ensures their voices are heard in decision-making. With these efforts being the foundation, the municipality aims to establish the Welzmir Movement, enabling citizens to participate in local decision-making actively and advancing toward more inclusive democracy.

Solution

The Welzmir Movement is dedicated to enhancing citizen participation in local governance at the neighborhood scale to promote the cultural, economic, and social development of the city. Their primary objectives include empowering residents through the establishment of neighborhood councils and strengthening participatory budgeting. By doing so, diverse community perspectives are considered in decision-making processes, leading to comprehensive and inclusive policies that address specific neighborhood needs.

Izmir - Project Idea 1

Solution

Moreover, the implementation of participatory budgeting allows residents to influence the allocation of public funds for local projects, positively impacting their quality of life. Thus, the program strives for growing synergy among individuals and organizations passionate to improve the quality of life in Izmir.

The movement also facilitates communication and collaboration through effective dialogue platforms among residents, neighborhood councils, local authorities, and stakeholders. Transparent information sharing and collaborative decision-making result in informed and inclusive outcomes. Welzmir actively promotes community engagement, empowering residents to shape their neighborhoods and contribute to the city's overall development.

By harnessing collective efforts and embracing innovative methods, Welzmir aims to create a more inclusive, accountable, and responsive local governance system, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for all Izmir residents.

Impact

Citizen participation is of utmost importance in the project, as it envisions the active involvement of residents in municipal councils, allowing them to actively participate in decision-making processes that directly affect their living environment and day-to-day life. The participation phase is anticipated to commence prior to the establishment of the neighborhood councils. This phase will involve conducting briefings for district mukhtars (local authorities) and engaging them in informing residents within their districts about how the implementation process will go ahead. Considering Izmir's population of nearly 4.5 million residents and its 30 counties and 1294 districts, the initial phase is planned to take place in 4 districts. Subsequently, the project seeks to expand participation, reaching a target of more than 15 counties across Izmir where residents could actively contribute to the decision-making process. Based on the insights gained from the data collected by the Immediate Solution Team, it is evident that each district within Izmir has its unique set of requirements and expectations from the municipality. Therefore, the project's objective is to address these district-specific needs by formulating tailored policies resulting from collaborative efforts within the neighborhood councils.

Implementation

The dissemination of the project will involve local representatives, such as heads, local municipalities, and online platforms, along with the Immediate Solutions Team. They will visit households, emphasizing the importance of resident participation in decision-making and promoting democracy and active engagement.

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Implementation

Adequate funding will be allocated for the project, and the municipality is prepared to make further commitments if necessary. The municipality's primary focus is actively involving residents of Izmir in the democratic process and ensuring its successful execution. The main objective is to encourage citizen participation throughout Izmir, recognizing it as a crucial aspect of democracy. Inclusive platforms will provide citizens with a conducive environment for freely expressing their thoughts, ideas, and concerns. These platforms will serve as channels for citizens to share their opinions, contribute policy suggestions, and offer unique perspectives and insights. Active citizen engagement will enable residents to address district challenges and leverage collective wisdom and creativity for effective and sustainable solutions. The goal is to create a participatory democracy where residents feel empowered to shape their communities through engagement and shared decision-making.

Support

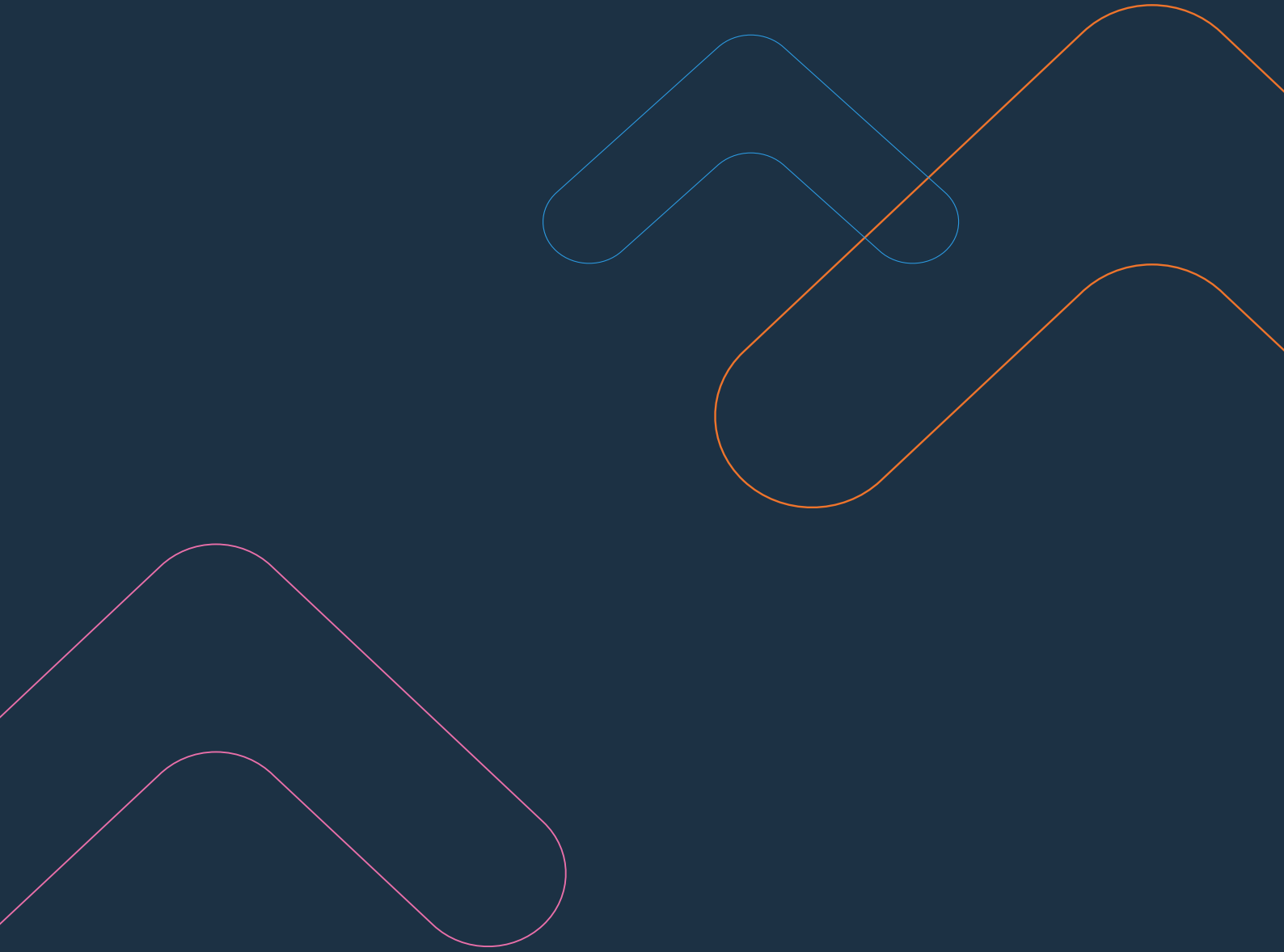
Regarding consultation, we focus on investing resources into participatory design, ensuring a dynamic and engaging design process, and identifying and implementing enhancements through active citizen participation. This approach emphasizes the importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making, fostering collaboration, and continuously seeking opportunities to enhance the project through involvement. Additionally, an operational secretariat will be established that will play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth implementation of the citizen engagement process. This secretariat will serve as a reliable point of contact for citizens, providing them with the necessary information and addressing any inquiries about the process and the project. It will be a valuable resource for citizens seeking to learn more about the project and actively participate in relevant councils. By offering guidance on participation opportunities, the secretariat will facilitate the identification of citizens keen on contributing their insights to specific areas of interest within the project.

Video link

N/A

Images

N/A



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