



**Expression of interest of Izmit Municipality for:**  
**The future of democracy and civic participation**  
**HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-02**

**Short description of the organisation**

*Provide a short description of the equipment available, the relations with the industry, the profile of the main researchers*

Izmit Municipality which serves a population more than 370.000 which equals a larger population compare with the forty cities in Turkey. It undertakes all local services effectively, efficiently and in harmony within its boundaries with its 1528 municipality personnel. As a center City municipality, daily population of the municipality has reached one million people which put responsibilities to provide efficient services on the areas such as health, environment, technical affairs, cultural and social affairs. As a matter of fact, Izmit Municipality was founded in the year of 1923 which is the same year of the foundation of Turkish Republic. Specifically, due to its long history which it has achieved to reach a corporate identity and until today it is able to prepare many projects on the area of its jurisdiction about the issues such as education, culture, youth, environment, disabled and disadvantaged people, and children as a target group to ensure realization of all kinds of developmental implementation. Specifically, the municipality facilitates many decision organs to chair their duties and services conferred with other civilian institutions as a center municipality. As an important municipality it has different facilities as follows: Woman Entrepreneurs Center, İzmek (Vocational Courses with 62 different branches.), History Corridor (Old Town of Izmit), 17 August Izmit Earthquake Memorial and Awareness Museum ([www.izmitdepremmuzesi.org](http://www.izmitdepremmuzesi.org)), Artificial Reality Sphere (360 degree presentation dome), 3D printer and design Center ([www.3dyazicivetasarimmerkezi.com](http://www.3dyazicivetasarimmerkezi.com)), Youth Entrepreneurs Center ([www.gencgirisimcilermerkezi.com](http://www.gencgirisimcilermerkezi.com)) Eco park (Ecological Park), Gökaypark (Waterski Center), Child Rights Schools, Addition to those the Municipality has 23 neighborhood mansions, 8 indoor bazaar, 15 thematic park, 7 sport center and 500 hundred parks. ([www.izmit.bel.tr](http://www.izmit.bel.tr))

Moreover, Izmit Municipality is the first municipality in its region, hosting and sending volunteers under European Volunteers Service program and develops projects related to Youth Program. Izmit Municipality representatives also participated many international projects all around Europe and initiated over 50 organizations to Izmit in several projects. We are also local relay of Eurodesk Turkey and in order to serve this aim we have organized several conferences and trainings for young people to let them know about European opportunities. Furthermore the Izmit Municipality R&D and Project Development Department's EU project experts continues to create cooperation ties with local and European partners through IPA and Horizon project applications parallel with municipality's strategic plan as well. With the aim of strengthening international cooperation ties for sustainable development the municipality become a member of ICLEI in 2021 as well.



## **Specific skills and proposed activities related to the topic**

***Indicate the specific skills and competence in relation with The future of democracy and civic participation***

The woman's inclusion to the daily life and sustaining equality with man in every aspect become one of the main aim of the Municipality. Our vision is to create a Female-Friendly City Izmit' where all Izmit Women are Represented Equally in Local Decision-Making Mechanisms, Have Equal and Easy Access to Education and Health Services, Participate Equally in Working Life and Enjoy Equal Opportunities, Are Not Subjected to Violence, and reorganize the city in accordance with the Use of Women.

### **Woman Entrepreneurs Center**

Izmit Municipality Women Entrepreneurs Center project aims to support the innovative ideas of women who are entrepreneurs or prospective entrepreneurs by supporting women's participation in social life and economic empowerment.

Izmit Mayor Fatma Kaplan Hürriyet, who attaches great importance to the development of women, her confident stance and her ability to stand on her own feet economically, adds strength to the women she will bring into her business life with the Women Entrepreneurs Center. Izmit Municipality, which wants entrepreneurial women to create added value in production by enabling them to develop new business ideas, provides mentorship and consultancy services to women with its 'Women Entrepreneurs Center' project.

Izmit Municipality Directorate of Women and Family Services Women's Studies activities are carried out in Woman Entrepreneurs Center. We aim to realize the equality of men and women at the local level and to place the gender approach with the understanding of local government in order to make its egalitarian policies sustainable.

In order to prepare and carry out projects in accordance with the needs of women by providing education and social services for women, children and families living in Izmit and who need to be supported, studies are being carried out. At the same time, counseling and guidance services are provided to solve problems for women, families and children. Sales opportunities are offered to evaluate the products of manual labor produced. The center includes entrepreneurship offices, workshops, microloans, family guidance center, dietician, pregnant education class, children's library and study center for kids as well.

### **Çınar Woman's Cooperative**

Çınar Woman's Cooperative were initiated by Izmit Municipality in 2020. The women of the Çınar Women's Cooperative of the Izmit Municipality sell many products such as glass ceramics, ceramics, clothing and home textile products, organic food products produced by women living in villages. Izmit Municipality aims to contribute to women's employment first by supporting Çınar Women's Cooperative with various trainings and consultations, and then to create a surplus value in the city.



### **Izmit Çarşısı (Izmit Bazaar)**

Izmit Bazaar, which will revive the local economy implemented in cooperation with Izmit Municipality and Good4Trust, has opened its doors to the whole of Turkey with the launch of the eco-friendly Izmit Bazaar online. With Izmit Çarşısı, we open free shops to local manufacturers and allow them to sell on the E-Commerce platform.

It was realized with the opening launch of Izmit Çarşısı, which was implemented in cooperation with Izmit Municipality and Good4Trust. With the opening of the Izmit Bazaar, which protects both the producer and the consumer, which is friendly to nature and people, 46 operators who registered on the Izmit Çarşısı website started to make their first sales. In addition, the fact that 35 of the 46 operators who open shops in Izmit Çarşısı are women has already shown how effective the bazaar is.

### **IzmeK (Vocational Courses)**

Izmit Municipality's vocational skills courses that touch the lives of thousands of people mainly woman and youth every year are held in IZMEK. Izmit Municipality provides services within the scope of Women's and Family Directorate. The applications for IZMEK, which will serve according to the pandemic conditions in 50 course centers and 76 branches, can be made online by form or from the Izmit Municipality web page.

### **We Empower Women in Local Government Project**

Mayor of Izmit Fatma Kaplan Hürriyet has signed the European Charter on the Equality of Men and Women in Local Life, prepared by the European Council of Municipalities and Regions with the aim of ensuring the equality of men and women in society by local authorities.

The opening meeting of the "We Empower Women in Local Government" project conducted by the Association for the Support of Women Candidates (FATE), the Municipality of Edremit and the European Agency for Local Democracy (ALDA) was held. **The "European Charter for the Equality of Men and Women in Local Life" was signed together with all the mayors involved in the project at the opening meeting held by video conference.**

Within the scope of the project, Izmit Municipality was selected as a pilot municipality. The European Charter for the Equality of Men and Women in Local Life will be implemented within the Directorate of Women and Family Services of the Municipality of Izmit. Accordingly, a "Local Equality Action Plan" will be created to improve gender equality at the local level. Within the scope of the plan, policies will be determined and implemented in the fields of education, employment, violence, participation, urban services and health for women. At the stages of creating and implementing this plan, work will be carried out in partnership with all relevant non-governmental organizations, institutions and organizations. Furthermore, thanks to the protocol we signed with the Turkish Federation of Women's Associations, we activated the "Domestic Violence Emergency Hotline" in Izmit. Our women who have been subjected to violence can receive psychological and legal support through this line.

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