

IZMIR

Feedback from the European Volunteering Capital 2022 Jury

Izmir shows great potential to respond to the 5R policy priorities, although the jury found a lack of consistency in some of its proposals. The **recognition system** for volunteers is provided on the **online platform** at www.bizizmir.com. It generates points for those participating in volunteering activities which can be exchanged for discounts or rewards. The validation of volunteers' skills and experience is also organised on this platform. Although the jury regards this platform as **an innovative example**, some more approaches in the field would be welcome.

The municipality demonstrates **professional methodology for volunteer management**, including intake, training, mentoring and supervision, but information on supporting volunteer managers is missing. The measures the city is taking to promote and ensure quality volunteering are focused on analysing volunteers' needs and potential, a thorough examination of the areas for volunteer placement, and very precise matching. However, the jury would like more details as to how such engagement is promoting volunteering.

Izmir boasts a strong tradition in youth volunteering demonstrated by large events implemented with the help of volunteers and structural support through a volunteers' centre set up in a renovated gas-coal factory. Although it delivers a variety of volunteer services to different vulnerable groups, there is little detail on how the municipality measures the value of volunteering. The city demonstrates a **significant network of partners and stakeholders**, but their contribution to the development of volunteering in the community is not mentioned. The enabling environment for volunteering is guaranteed by organising a variety of motivational activities and events for volunteers. The city is collaborating with NGOs with different scopes of activities, and strategic municipal documents are being developed with them. The jury would appreciate more concrete examples in this field.

The city hosts a **Eurodesk Contact Point** which is a good source of information on EU volunteering opportunities. Information is lacking on its concrete financial support for volunteer organisations and initiatives. Izmir has long-term experience in implementing a **variety of volunteer programmes** focusing on different target groups and needs, recently reflected by the **impressive volunteer mobilisation** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The city covers some of the volunteers' costs, although volunteering time is not considered as an in-kind-contribution for grants supported by the municipality. The **Village Tale Project** is provided as a good example of collaboration with the business sector, whereby employees were allowed to volunteer during their working hours.

The jury was surprised by the lack of specific information on the strategies implemented for integrating refugees and migrants through volunteering activities. Since Turkey has a significant number of refugees either passing through or settling in the country, the jury believes that Izmir has

some achievements in the field. However, these are not clearly described in the application form and details of the inclusiveness of volunteering activities are also lacking.

The municipality's dedication to young people's development is impressive, and they are also the main target group for the city's policies and activities in the volunteering sector.

Izmir demonstrates a very good approach to **promoting the European Solidarity Corps** programme as well as to helping young people to participate in its activities.

Finally, although the jury found **the city's strategy** interesting and well adapted to recruiting young volunteers, it is quite limited to youth rather than applying to the needs of the community as a whole.

For more details about the European Volunteering Capital Competition 2022 read [here](#)

The logo features a central orange circle with the text "Izmir candidate 2022" in a dark blue banner. Below this, the words "European Volunteering Capital" are written in a large, bold, blue font. The background consists of concentric, light blue circular lines. Logos for "Europe for Citizens" and "IZMIR BÜYÜKŞEHİR BELEDİYESİ Turkey" are positioned in the top left and right corners, respectively.

Previous European Volunteering Capital Winners

2021: Berlin, Germany	2017: Sligo, Ireland
2020: Padova, Italy	2016: London, UK
2019: Košice, Slovakia	2015: Lisbon, Portugal
2018: Aarhus, Denmark	2014: Barcelona, Spain

Logos at the bottom include: Centre for European Volunteering, EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING EUROPEAN NETWORK, European Commission, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, European Committee of the Regions, and COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE.