



Strategies for Strengthening Citizen Participation



Mersin Metropolitan Municipality

Date: 07.03.2024



U.S. Mersin Metropolitan Municipality



**International
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TC Çevre, Şehircilik ve İklim Bakanlığı



Mersin

Mersin, also called as the “**Pearl of the Mediterranean**” is a “Blue” and “Green” city with a very important **commercial port** on the Mediterranean coast of southern Turkey, situated on the western part of the famous plain of Çukurova, a geographical, economic, and cultural region.

Mersin does not only offer **321 km** long sea shore with its unique natural beauties and sea, sand and sun trio but also offers variety of tourism. Approximately **108 km** of Mersin shores are natural sandy beach.

Mersin with **13 administrative** districts and a population of **1.916,432 habitants** is an important hub of Turkey's economy.





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To watch Mersin's video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7g8d8totxbk>

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



Mersin Metropolitan Municipality



UCLG Mersin e-İhtiyaçlar Merkezi

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teksin

TEKSİN Mersin application aims to enhance accessibility to municipal services, facilitate communication between residents and the municipality, and provide valuable information for navigating the city of Mersin.

Here are some potential features and functionalities of the TEKSİN Mersin application:

1. Access to Municipal Services
2. Submit Requests and Complaints
3. Stay Informed
4. Location Information and Directions
5. Public Transportation Information



Tek noktadan benzersiz çözüm merkezi hizmetinizde...

teksin

Uygulamamızı İndirin, Tüm Hizmetlere Tek Bir Yerden Hızlıca Ulaşın.





U.C. mahalle bizi bizim

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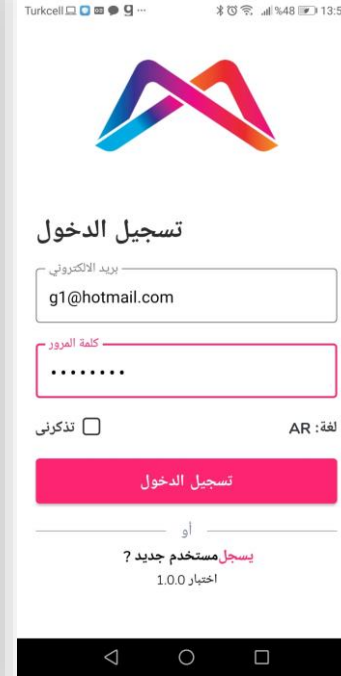
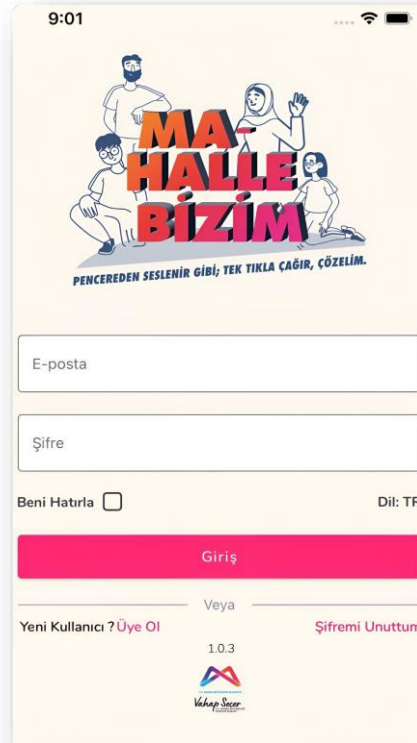
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Neighborhood is Ours

The project, Mahalle Bizim (Neighbourhood is Ours), is designed to provide opportunities for the active participation of citizens, **enable and ensure coordination between municipality and mukhtars (neighborhood representative)** and to offer guidance service to refugees in Mersin to municipal services so as to strengthen active participation in decision-making mechanisms over the application.

The application is planned to increase citizens' attention to municipal services and make them express their opinions when a decision is taken regarding their neighbourhood.





T.C. Çevre, Şehircilik ve İklim Bakanlığı

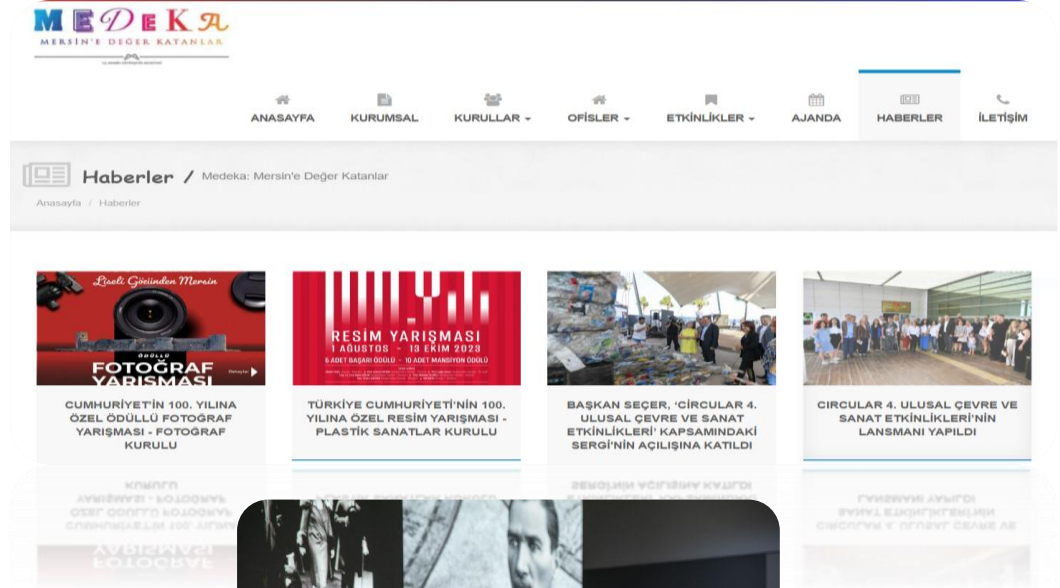
MEDEKA PROJECT

MEDEKA (high-value contributors of Mersin)

Projects were carried out to develop the city's identity and culture, creating a collective memory, organizing activities throughout the city, promoting ambassadors of the city, and encouraging, recognizing and promoting individuals, institutions and productions that have contributed and will contribute to the city.

Within the framework of the project, there are committees in various fields, where systematic work is carried out, involving experts in their respective fields.

One of the most important aspects of the MEDEKA structures is to develop the city's cultural policy with a participatory approach.





Çevre, Şehircilik ve İklim Bakanlığı

NGO MEETINGS in MERSIN

Vahap Şeçer Mayor of Mersin Metropolitan Municipality convenes 'City Participation Meetings' under the banner of 'Our Commitment to the City', engaging representatives from various social and cultural non-profit organizations in Mersin.

These representatives ask questions and submit their problems to the mayor regarding matters pertinent to the city during these gatherings.





U.C. Mersin sivil toplum kuruluşları

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Weekly meetings with women NGOs.

Women's organizations and representatives in Mersin are regularly meeting every Monday since March 7, 2023, to discuss various issues.

These meetings address topics such as protecting women's rights, ending gender discrimination, preventing violence against women, empowering women, increasing their participation in social life, and emphasizing the importance of women's political participation at the local level.

Additionally, in collaboration with women's NGOs, various efforts are underway to enhance access to educational programs for women in disadvantaged areas.



Lessons learned

- **The impact of collective action:** Organizations recognize that their collective efforts have a greater impact in addressing local challenges. In this sense, receiving their viewpoints and holding regular meetings are very important for strategy development.
- **Youth engagement matters:** Authentically engaging young people requires a genuine effort to understand their perspectives and include them in decision-making processes.
- **Sustainability is critical:** It is easier to engage with citizens through "civil projects" independent from political affection is easier way account sustainability.



Political recommendations

- **Activate and strengthen institutional structures:** It is recommended to activate and strengthen structures such as the "**Directorate of Civil Participation**" within municipalities to increase civic engagement and cooperation.
- **Organize awareness seminars for youth:** Political leaders should organize seminars in collaboration with universities to actively involve young people in decision-making processes and promote their participation in local governance.
- **Diversify participation tools:** Implement a strategy to diversify participation experiences at the local level by using various tools such as mobile applications, organizing open-door meetings, and supporting projects such as **MEDEKA**.
- **Develop a comprehensive strategy and action plan:** It is imperative to develop a comprehensive strategy and action plan that outlines specific goals and activities aimed at increasing civic participation and fostering stronger relationships between local government and civil society.

Thank your for your attention!



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T.C. MERSİN BÜYÜKŞEHİR BELEDİYESİ