

## Application Form

### PART 1: BASIC DATA

#### CATEGORIES IN WHICH YOU WANT TO APPLY THE EXPERIENCE

**1: TYPE OF EXPERIENCE:** *choose the most important element (choose only one element which you consider the most outstanding of your practice).*

<b>A) Deliberation</b> Citizen assembly / deliberation workshop / lottery / legislative theater / participatory planning	
<b>B) Decision</b> Participatory budget / referendum / consultation / participatory process with vote	
<b>C) Citizenship</b> Citizenship / community action / permanent council / civic education / associationism / other initiatives to reinforce local democracy	X

**2: TYPE OF GOVERNMENT:** *choose one only.*

<b>A) Up to 50,000 inhabitants</b> (towns, small cities, rural areas).	
<b>B) Cities between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants.</b>	<b>222.436 Inhabitants</b>
<b>C) Cities between 250,000 and 1,000,000 inhabitants.</b>	
<b>D) Large cities or urban areas of more than 1,500,000 inhabitants.</b>	
<b>E) Supralocal, regional, provincial governments ....</b>	

**Experience data:** *complete the information below in a clear and concise manner.*

<b>Title of the experience:</b> Biodegradable Waste Management
<b>Name of the city or region:</b> Mezitli, Mersin
<b>Inhabitants of the city or territory:</b> 222.436 Inhabitants

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<b>Country:</b> Türkiye		
<b>Institution presenting the candidacy:</b> Strategy Development Department - Mezitli Municipality		
<b>Website of the experience or institution:</b> <a href="https://mezitli.bel.tr/">https://mezitli.bel.tr/</a>		
<b>Profiles in social networks of the experience or the institution:</b> <a href="https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/05/10/mezitlinin-sinerjisi-turkiyeye-yayildi/">https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/05/10/mezitlinin-sinerjisi-turkiyeye-yayildi/</a> <a href="https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/06/05/mezitli-belediyesinden-cevre-gununde-sahil-temizligi-ve-kompost-dagitimi/">https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/06/05/mezitli-belediyesinden-cevre-gununde-sahil-temizligi-ve-kompost-dagitimi/</a> <a href="https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/02/24/kompost-uretimine-takim-elbiseli-kravatli-destek/">https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/02/24/kompost-uretimine-takim-elbiseli-kravatli-destek/</a> <a href="https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/06/28/mezitlide-kompost-uretimine-alman-ilgisi/">https://mezitli.bel.tr/2022/06/28/mezitlide-kompost-uretimine-alman-ilgisi/</a>		
<b>Start date of the experience:</b> 01/08/2021		
<b>End date of the experience:</b> ongoing		
<b>Budget of the experience:</b> 63.500 Euros in 2021		
<b>Type of candidacy</b> <i>(mark with an X in the right column)</i>	New experience	X
	Innovation on an existing experience	
	Continuity of an experience	
<b>Type of experience</b> <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	Participatory budgeting	
	Participatory planning	
	Standing council	
	Workshop / meeting for diagnosis, monitoring, etc.	
	Public hearing / forum	
	Poll / referendum	

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	Assemblies / Citizen juries / Deliberation spaces		
	E-government / Open government / Digital platforms		
	Citizen initiative		X
	Other (specify):		
<b>Objective of the experience</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	To achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation		X
	Including diversity as a criterion for inclusion		X
	Community empowerment		X
	To empower non-organised citizens		X
	To increase citizen's rights in terms of political participation		X
	To connect different tools of participation within a participatory democracy "ecosystem"		X
	To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		X
	To improve the quality of public decision-making through the mechanisms of participatory democracy		X
	To improve the evaluation and accountability of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		X
To improve any public policy through the active participation of the public		X	
<b>Territorial area</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	All the territory	Local	X
		Regional	
	District		X
	Neighbourhood		



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<p><b>Thematic area</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i></p>	Governance	
	Education	
	Transport	
	Urban management	X
	Health	X
	Security	
	Environment / Climate change and/or urban agriculture	X
	Civic associations, grassroots and new social movements	X
	Culture	
	Housing	
	Job creation	
	Decentralization	
	Local development	X
	Training / learning	
	Economy and/or finances	
	Legal regulations	
	Social inclusion	X
	All	
Other (write the topic)		
<b>Sustainable</b>	SDG 1 - No poverty	X

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<p><b>Development Goals (SDG) associated with the practice</b></p> <p><i>(mark with an X in the right column, more than one option can be chosen, you can also add the specific target)</i></p>	SDG 2 - Zero hunger	X
	SDG 3 - Good health and well-being	X
	SDG 4 - Quality education	
	SDG 5 - Gender equality	
	SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation	
	SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy	
	SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth	X
	SDG 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure	
	SDG 10 - Reduced inequality	X
	SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities	X
	SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production	X
	SDG 13 - Climate action	X
	SDG 14 - Life below water	
	SDG 15 - Life on land	
	SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions	
	SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals	X

## PART 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE

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Fill in the following fields clearly and concisely. You can add links, images or graphics if you consider it appropriate.

### Context:

In a **maximum of 300 words**, present the cultural, geographical, historical, institutional and socioeconomic context of the city, region or territory in which the experience takes place.

Mezitli is one of the four central districts of Mersin province, located on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. It is also one of the most developing districts of Turkey. Mezitli has a population of 222,436, a total area of 515,79 km<sup>2</sup> and an altitude of 5 m. Agriculture, tourism and logistics are the main sectors of the city. It has a temperate Mediterranean climate and spends 300 days of sunshine a year. Since Mezitli is located between the Mediterranean and the Taurus Mountains, it offers its residents the opportunity to reach both the sea and the mountainous regions in a short time. You can learn more about Mezitli from the promotional video in the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcMJPOO-lyA>.

Mezitli is a member of the Turkish Healthy Cities Association, WHO Healthy Cities Network, Eurocities, Covenant of Mayors, Milan Food Pact, UCLG and UCLG-MEWA and has signed the UN Global Compact.

### Precedents:

*Explain the precedents and origins of the experience: if it is the innovation of an existing experience, what are its origins; if it is a new experience, what are the antecedents in participation in your city, region or territory. You can also indicate if you have been inspired by experiences in other cities/countries. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

Mezitli is an agricultural city. Agriculture is one of the strongest sources of income, and throughout its history, income has been derived from agriculture. Today, despite the decreasing interest in agriculture, we should have supported and encouraged agriculture as local governments. For this reason, we have decided to develop the primary objectives of the project in a way that will directly benefit the citizens. At the decision stage, it went to the public opinion poll and the demand for the agricultural project was directly conveyed by the public. The outputs of the project were also supposed to make positive contributions to ecology and nature. The project to create compost from biodegradable waste emerged when we needed to develop an idea that supported agriculture while mitigating the effects of the climate crisis.

In our research, we have determined that more than 50% of food waste is generated directly in public markets. We started the process from the markets that are the source of waste. In the project, which proceeds entirely with the support of volunteers, the leftover vegetables and fruits are collected by the volunteers at the evening market gathering time and directed to the wild solid waste collection area by the municipality vehicle.

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In addition, vegetables and fruits that will no longer be sold in the market but are in good condition are never sent to the landfill; Vegetables and fruits that are separated by hand are either delivered to the people in need as a hot meal by going to our municipality's soup kitchen, or they are delivered to university students as fresh vegetables and fruits.

### **Objectives of the experience:**

*What is the objective listed in Part 1 that you think is the most important, and indicate other outstanding objectives of the experience. (In a **maximum of 100 words**).*

Main objectives of this projects are to achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation, including diversity as a criterion for inclusion by involving citizens from all kind of occupational groups. Community empowerment, empower non-organized citizens, increase citizen's right in terms of political participation, connect different tools of participation within participatory democracy ecosystem is aimed by letting the citizen take their own decisions and make them core of decision making process. Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms of participatory democracy and improving the quality of public decision-making through the mechanism of participatory democracy is aimed as well.

### **Methodology:**

*Describe the methodology of the experience: phases of the process, participation channels. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

With the project we started on August 19, 2021, Mezitli Municipality employees and approximately 200 Mezitli volunteers collect organic waste from certain market places. Each market place has a specific coordinator and volunteer group. Volunteer groups, mostly retirees and women, regularly participate in waste collection in the same market place every week. In addition, fruit and vegetable wastes from contracted markets and the "Excess Food" application are brought to the composting area.

Waste collected from markets and gardens is transported to the composting area. In order to obtain quality compost, it is important to separate the wastes adequately. It is necessary to separate metal, plastic, battery, food and fish wastes. In the second stage, the shredding process is carried out, which accelerates the composting work. Then, the green and brown wastes are proportioned and heap is made, and the heaps are mixed. Stacks are formed in the form of triangular prisms. When the heap has the ideal humidity (40-70%) and the right

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green-brown ratio, the temperature of the heap rises to the desired level in a short time. Compost is formed in 6-8 weeks.

Within the scope of the Biodegradable Waste Management Project, the fruit and vegetable wastes released in 19 bazaars of Mezitli Municipality and the fruit and vegetable wastes (green wastes) from the contracted markets and the garden pruning wastes (brown waste) collected from the field are blended in certain proportions to transform them into soil improving material (compost). works are carried out.

### **Innovation:**

*Explain what you consider as the most innovative aspect(s) in the practice. (In a **maximum of 150 words**).*

- The compost produced has many benefits; It improves the structure of the soil, provides aeration of the soil, neutralizes the toxins in the soil, regulates the pH balance of the soil, accelerates the growth and strengthens the plant, prevents erosion, if used regularly, it changes the microclimate within 4 years and provides the rainfall pattern.
- Wild storage areas are one of the most important reasons of global warming because methane gas from organic waste is 20-25 times stronger than carbon dioxide and causes greenhouse gas formation when mixed with the atmosphere. With this project, the amount of solid waste going to the wild landfill is reduced, our garbage collection vehicles make fewer trips, the amount of fuel consumed is reduced, and accordingly, carbon emissions from traffic and landfills are reduced. In addition, the project contributes to the reduction of the carbon footprint of Mezitli.

### **Inclusion:**

*Point out the importance of including as many groups and diverse populations as possible, and how you have achieved it. (In a **maximum of 150 words**).*

In our project, mostly retired and women; A group of approximately 200 volunteers, who come together from different professions such as professors, cooks, doctors, teachers, nurses, regularly takes part. Our volunteers also produce and sell saplings from wastes such as avocados, olives, mulberries, and provide educational scholarships and food support to students in need. In our project, cooperation is carried out with the public, private sector and some NGOs.

We Improve Life Environment and Climate Association (YİÇİDER), Mezitli Volunteers and City Council Women's Working Groups. Goodwill Association, Basic Needs Association, Surplus Food Association. Studies are carried out in cooperation with researchers from Mersin University, Sabancı University, Aksaray University, Isparta University of Applied Sciences and Adiyaman University. Borusan and Sabancı Holding. Collaborations are carried out with nearly



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120 private sector representatives, large and small, among them in markets such as Metro, Migros and A101.

### **Communication:**

*What has been the strategy and communication channels of the experience for engaging the population. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

A public opinion poll was conducted directly during the decision-making phase of the project and the framework of the project was determined in this way. In the planning part, since almost all of the project was carried out by volunteers, the communication of the participants with each other was of great importance in terms of the impact of the project. Since the purpose was common, the volunteer project participants had no problems in integrating and the process with almost zero problems in communication.

### **Articulation with other actors:**

*Explain how the experience was articulated with different actors and simultaneous or pre-existing processes. What roles did these participants assume? Explain the degree of success of this articulation. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

The most crucial role about this project was belong the volunteers from very different backgrounds and occupational groups. Waste collecting duty conducted among university professors, cooks, musicians, health care workers, teachers, municipal workers, business people, managers etc. all by voluntarily and they have organized among each other without any further help. Municipality took role here on transfer of the wastes and post-collecting era. After wastes are collected on a specific area, the right temperature is measured on a regular basis, if the temperature was not right, it has been interfered at the right time; so the maturing process of biodegradable wastes followed from a very close perspective. That was one of the most important steps of having a successful outcome. Having a mutual purpose and collective consciousness was the leading success factor about this project.

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### Evaluation:

*What evaluation mechanisms have been implemented? Develop whether the citizenry has participated in the evaluation of the practice. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

Since the results of the projects are measurable, evaluation process turned out truly transparent. Developing biodegradable wastes by volunteered groups and distribute the goods in favor of local producers, especially local women producers gave us measurable results. The producers that received biodegradable wastes and use it by cultivation within standard soils, observed that they have harvest 30%-40% more than usual, the green space of Mezitli increased as the last 2 years. As side benefits, this project supported also local producers and helped them enlarge their producing capacity, created more business chances in the agriculture industry. During the waste collection, number of volunteers increased day by day with the positive effect of knowledge sharing, experience exchange and positive contribution, also socialization among different group of people. The positive effect of the project was also seen by residents of Mezitli, by advertising the success of the project and create an impact of neighbour cities. All these indicators shows us the result of the project is beneficial on the ecological and economical side, and also consolidative power has an positive impact on residents, in order to contribute more volunteered projects.

### Impacts and results

*Describe the impacts and results of the process. How many people have participated, and what are their profiles? What have been the impacts on public policies, the functioning of the administration, and the citizenry? (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

In the manner of general volunteered projects, number of participants grew day by day by the spill-over effect. End of the first 3 months, more than 500 different volunteered have been took a role in the waste collecting, and volunteered regular waste collectors reached the number of more than 300 people. Distribution of the biodegradable wastes reached more than 100 producers and with the multiplier effect more than 500 people benefit from biodegradable waste as producers. Besides, Mezitli with 222,436 residents took the advantage of greener urban spaces, increasing workforce, more women producer in the market so this leads women empowerment and positive role models, so more and more women contribute into business world.

Volunteered project helped a lot in the field of getting public bodies and residents together, encouraging residents cooperating with administration. During the project citizens involved in the public policies a lot and this lead them to be more active for further projects and their personnel enterprises in the field of agricultural business ventures.

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### PART 3: EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

*A summary of the experience: origins, objectives, operation, results, monitoring, and evaluation. (Do not hesitate to repeat aspects that have already been written before. This summary will be shared on the digital platform for open evaluation and in the publication of the award). (In a **maximum of 500 words**).*

Biodegradable Waste Management project aims to decrease climate change effects by supporting local agriculture, to enrich the soil by 100% natural methods consequently to increase ecological production, to improve number of fruit and vegetable producers -especially women producers and local businesses, to integrate public bodies and residents more, to encourage residents into volunteered services more etc.

The main idea of the project is created by the need of ecological solutions to get agriculture more active in the rural and residential areas. In the same way as every project of the municipality, this project should have been also created in the perspective of sustainable development goals, so it has been decided as nature friendly, aimed to reduce climate crisis effects on a local and global scale. We have determined that more than 50% of wastes derive from fruit and vegetable neighbourhood markets, and this bio wastes are interfuse with nonutilisable wastes so all the wastes go misuse. So we have started the project directly from the source of the bio waste gathering point, and started a campaign of volunteered in the field of ecological consciousness, so a lot of residents from very different groups would like to work after their working day directly in the neighbourhood markets. The idea of collecting wastes as a group of different occupational groups and by that keeping the environment clean that they live in, reducing the climate crisis effects and contributing into local economy convinced the residents automatically.

Every day after 7 pm as soon as neighbourhood market got closed, volunteered workers started working; swiping the floor, separating bio wastes and others, eliminates vegetables that still can be eaten. Approximately one and half an hour later, municipal cleaning services arrives and takes the separated bio wastes to the controlled disposal of waste area. In 6 to 8 weeks of periods biodegradable wastes turns into compost and distributes to producers in Mezitli. After distribution, composted soils gets more fertilized and produce more products, therefore there is more products, producers and green urban spaces now.

***We invite you to share annexes that allow you to better illustrate your experience: videos, photographs, documents... These can be sent through a file transfer service, such as WeTransfer, Dropbox or Google Drive.***

**Thank you for participating!**