

Izmir Metropolitan Municipality introduced “Crisis Municipalism” directive to fight against the COVID-19) Pandemic

Izmir Metropolitan Municipality has assessed Covid-19 in profoundly different scope and scale than any other significant emergency situations. The circumstances in the pandemic are dynamic, it keeps evolving and changing. The Covid-19 situation presents threats to the city which requires resources that go beyond what is available. That is why Izmir Metropolitan Municipality decided to change the regular modality of carrying out municipal operations and services. Municipality switched into the “**crisis municipalism**” modality to fight against the Covid-19. In order to alleviate the negative impacts of the pandemic on health, economic and social life, Municipality decided to developed new PROCESSES that will generate the best available answers.

In order to define these new processes and distribution of administrative tasks, Municipality issued a new directive entitled “**working principles of crisis municipalism**” on March 27th, 2020. At first, the directive organizes the response of the municipality through a critical incident management team. It brings together the appropriate collection of people and provides them with the necessary level of authority to commit themselves in resolving the crisis. Within this framework, the directive establishes three bodies: 1) the Crisis Management Supreme Board, 2) the Crisis Management Executive Board and 3) the Science Board.

Crisis demands the attention of multiple organizations along with the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality. That is why directive foresees a distribution of roles among organizations coming from different jurisdictions, levels of government, professions. In this regard, coordination and cooperation between district municipalities and metropolitan municipality have the uttermost importance. The Mayor of Izmir, Tunç Soyer, invited the mayors of all 30 district municipalities of Izmir to an urgent meeting to align in the fight against the Covid-19, resulting in a joint strategy against the pandemic. Article 17 of the directive entitled “institutional structuring” encourages municipal units for building task forces with innovative solutions against Covid-19. In this respect, the Deputy Mayor of Izmir, senior executives of municipal companies and the Mayor’s advisors have begun to conduct joint activities with district municipalities and relevant stakeholders. Besides aiding people in need, these activities allowed the Crisis Management Supreme Board to collect practical data for further and more effective actions.

In addition to municipal actions, the new directive of crisis municipalism guides the cooperation and exchanges with civil society and business circles. Mayor Soyer now conducts weekly meetings with the heads of leading civil society organizations before the Crisis Management Supreme Board meetings.

Below listed numbers illustrate the scope and the content of the crisis municipalism against Covid-19 from 27th of March to 10th of April:

- 42.627 food packages delivered to citizens over 65 years old and families in need with children aged between 1-5 years old;
- 40.000 families received 400 Turkish Lira direct cash financial aid;
- 12.000 families received soup and bread over ten days;
- 102.911 bottles of milk distributed to children;
- More than 300.000 masks distributed to the citizens in the public transport and open-air markets;
- 7.500 healthcare professionals offered snacks and food to better their working conditions;
- The Municipality provides accommodation to 305 healthcare professionals in 3 different locations;
- 634 people got support from the Metropolitan Psychological Support Line;
- 18.498 liters of disinfectant used to sterilize public places;
- 3.273 kilometers of streets and pavements sterilized;
- Izmir Water and Sewage Administration halted the disconnection of water services for nonpayment of 2.752 subscribers;
- Izmir Water and Sewage Administration also granted payment extensions on water bills to 45.443 subscribers;
- 4 virtual concerts and events have been organized and 13 virtual events have been foreseen to raise spirits, entertain and keep citizens connected;
- 11.260 books distributed to home staying children for recreational and educational purposes;
- 3.000 newspapers and 2.400 books distributed to home staying families for recreational purposes;
- Municipality supervised 64 open-air district markets for conformity of rules and procedures against Covid-19, such as social distancing;
- 220 rail carriages – 1.460 buses – 375 taxis – 246 service buses – 317 minibuses – 118 cooperative vehicles have been adapted for social distancing;
- 93.000 brochures – 12.000 posters – 2.500 bus stop CLPs – 755 billboards – 4.000 m² canvas – 34 mega-lights – 90.000 stickers have been used for the information campaign to encourage precaution and protection against Covid-19;
- The number of daily commuters decreased from 1.749.622 on the 5th of March to 269.136 on the 9th of April in the public transportation system.