

# STUDY OF DESIGN PARAMETER'S EFFECT ON URBAN SPACE CONFIGURATION AMONG THE ACTORS IN TURKEY

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## Abstract

The rapidly altering and differentiating discourses which have taken place within the last quarter century in urban planning have reflected on urban spaces in various forms. New trends concentrate, in particular, on placing planning in the whole picture, which reflects its holistic profile; the necessity of a design-oriented ideational substructure which uses new and different potentials is discussed herein. In this process, for all subjects of urban space configuration which include inexact uncertainty and contradiction, the best way to find a solution to flexible, knowledge questioning, recent and transformable problems is accepted as to work in association with design and planning. In this context, the objective of this article is to examine the mentioned association in the context of the "design phenomenon" specific to Turkey. This examination is done by focusing on city planners who are important actors in Turkey's urban space configuration and partake in vocational practices.

**Key Terms:** Urban Design, Urban Space, Urban Planning Actors

## TÜRKİYE'DE KENTSEL MEKÂN BİÇİMLENİŞİNDE TASARIM PARAMETRELERİ ETKİNLİĞİNİN AKTÖRLER ÜZERİNDEN OKUNMASI

### Öz

Kent planlamada son çeyrek yüzyıl içinde hızla değişen ve farklılaşan söylemler kentsel mekânlara da çeşitli biçimlerde yansımaktadır. Yeni eğilimler, özellikle planlamanın bütüne ait görünümünü yansıtan büyük resim içine oturtulmasını; bunun içinde yeni, farklı ve potansiyelleri kullanan tasarım odaklı düşünsel bir altyapının gerekliliği üzerinde yoğunlaşmaktadır. Bu yeni süreçte kentsel mekân oluşumlarının kesin olmayan belirsizlik ve çelişki içeren tüm konularında; esnek, bilgiyi ve yeni sorgulayan, dönüşebilen, karmaşıklık ve çelişki içeren sorunlara çözüm bulabilmenin temel yolu, tasarım ve planlamanın birlikteliğinden hareket etmek olduğu kabul edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda makalenin amacı söz konusu birlikteliğin "tasarım olgusu" üzerinden Türkiye özelinde sorgulanmasıdır. Bu sorgulama Türkiye kentsel mekân biçimlenişinde önemli aktörlerden olan ve mesleki uygulamaların içerisinde yer alan kent plancıları üzerinden yapılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kentsel Tasarım, Kentsel Mekân, Kent Planlama Aktörleri

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## **1. Introduction**

The rapidly changing and differentiating discourses which have taken place within the last quarter century in urban planning have reflected on urban spaces in various forms. New trends concentrate, in particular, on placing planning in the whole picture, which reflects its holistic profile; the necessity of a design-oriented ideational substructure which uses new and different potentials is discussed herein. The most important problem encountered in today's urban spaces is the inability to create qualified living spaces which are suitable to the rapidly altering global system. It is accepted that the only best way to find a solution to all the problems of urban processes, which include inexact uncertainty and contradiction, problems that are flexible, question knowledge are recent and transformable and which include complexity and contradiction, is to work in association with design and planning. Within the context of the article, the mentioned association is discussed by focusing on the basic actors involved in the scope of configuring urban space with particular reference to Turkey.

Nowadays, the active system used in urban space configuration is the "planning" system. Planning, which is related with guiding cities' configuration of physical enhancements by considering communal and economic requirements, constitutes the future of living environments. Zoning plans are separated into different stages according to the Zoning Law (law no.3194), which constitutes a large structure from country-region scale to street-parcel scale. Plans that have the characteristic of spatial contact are identified as "land use plans" and "implementary zoning plans". Land use plans determine the configuration, in entirety, of urban space's landuse distribution, main transportation system, population density of living and working fields and city blocks in general. Implementary zoning plans the besides being detailed land use planning, also constitute a detailed plan which includes the configuration of city blocks and construction conditions, construction layout, setback distances, building heights, number of floors and so on. Both plans are legally binding and describe a rigorous configuration in a spatial manner.

The latest phase that the entire planning system has reached during the process in Turkey is the property-oriented parcel arrangement. In this context, the configuration process of urban space needs to take form with a three dimensional effect on parcels that are bordered inside distinct city blocks. Regarding this system, it is not possible to mention a holistic design approach. Disruption of urban context, damage to morphological continuity, destruction of cities, characteristic qualifications and characters or inability to avoid all of these undesirable outcomes entirely are the results of such a system. However, in theory and in developed western countries, planning describes a structure which includes the entire process ranging from high scale decisions to practice in which the basic objectives are, for example, to improve life quality and create livable environments. Under normal circumstances, in each stage of this process, it is accepted that the main mechanism that directs practice with a parallel theoretical substructure is the use of "design parameters". Either development plans or local plans that include all scales are considered and used together with design tools like design policies, design guides, frames, progress summaries, and additional planning guides. Indirectly, the efficiency of liveability standards on a spatial scale makes this process necessary. However, the Turkish planning system does not include this kind of structure and therefore cannot reflect it to space. As understood, it is not possible

to be evaluate and conclude a versatile and multidimensional system on one point of view. However, an important part of and actors in Turkey's planning system, in which there are no examples presented in terms of outcome practice and recent practice, are the city planners. It is expected that they will become active actors throughout the urban space configuration process. Accordingly, Turkey's urban space phenomenon, which includes several problems, is examined in the context of design parameters within the scope of this study. This examination is done by focusing on city planners, who are important actors in the process and are involved vocationally in practice. Within the scope of the study, notional explanations are considered primarily. Afterwards, the effect of Turkey's planning system on urban space and practice are examined in general terms. Finally, the findings, which are obtained during interviews with the important actors that are involved in the implementation of the Turkish planning system, are evaluated and conclusions reached in the light of all these notional frames.

## **2. Urban Space**

Urban space can be defined depending on different approaches. In urban space approaches, urban environments are subjected to "outer space" in which all environmental, social and communal conditions are constituted by structures' interaction with one another and with other elements.

The physical environment is open accessed due to its formation and because of that it can be defined as "places" and cities, towns and spaces that are mentioned within metropolitan statements in which publicity emphasis is prominent.<sup>1</sup> It describes the conditions where borders are constituted by artificial and natural environmental data like streets, buildings, surfaces, landscape elements, and natural structures and so on.<sup>2</sup> Mainly focusing on human affairs and defined with all horizontal and vertical limiters, which include the urban organizations that those affairs require,<sup>3</sup> it is examined as a notion which meets the individual's psychosocial needs just like physical needs. As understood from these definitions, urban space is a multidimensional structure which has social, cultural and psychological dimensions, although having at the same time prominent physical emphasis. In this context, revealing the conditions, which are effective on the qualification and understanding of the formation process on that side, is related with multidimensionality as mentioned.

Urban space, which is accepted as the main uniting tool in urban settlement, is a place which urbanites or different users share, transfer and relearn cultural background. Meanwhile, in terms of defining city, the cultural identities, self-improvement and human association that occur in these spaces result in gaining experience of users by being an urbanite. Urban spaces refer to all environments that are easily accessed by the public. They

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<sup>1</sup> A. Madanipour, 'Why are the design and development of public spaces significant for cities', *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 1999, 26(6), 879-891.

<sup>2</sup> J. Joedicke, *Raum und Form in der Architektur: Ä Über den behutsamen Umgang mit der Vergangenheit [Space and Form in Architecture]*, Kraemer Stuttgart, Germany 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Ş. Ö. Gür, *Mekân Örgütlenmesi*, Gür Yayıncılık, Trabzon 1996.

also include all streets, squares, spaces where there are house settlements, parks and any places that can be entered without restriction.

All outer spaces that meet these conditions can be regarded as urban space, but when the spatial dimension of planning is considered, “aesthetic concern” and “liveability standards” are separately evaluated in terms of the city planning profession.<sup>4</sup>

In urban space, “liveability standards” and “aesthetic parameters” describe a process which has existed throughout the history of settlement. A aesthetic and spatial planning, which was driven by symmetry and axis in ancient Greek cities by a narrow and organic road pattern in the middle of Medieval cities and in contrast to Medieval cities, by the wide roads, vistas and squares of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, is common in Vitruvius’ understanding of urban space, which was developed two thousand years ago on notions like “soundness”, “attractiveness” and “usefulness”.<sup>5</sup>

During this historical process, the prominent parameter of the concept of urban space is that of physical and aesthetic concerns. However, the rapid development phenomenon that arose with the Industrial Revolution reveals the fact that new approaches should be considered. Within this framework, new pursuits and approaches are adopted to develop solutions for the unhealthy and adverse environmental conditions that arose with the industrialization period. In terms of the formation of livable healthy urban environments, approaches that focus on humans and human affairs have gained importance.<sup>6</sup> In the urban spaces that are produced, factors that inspire notions like “security”,<sup>7</sup> “privacy”,<sup>8</sup> “health”, “happiness”, public spaces that emphasize urban space’s importance in urban life, factors that make it perceivable<sup>9</sup> and symbolic values that create the identity of urban space are brought into the agenda to configure urban space. Important initiatives are provided in order to deal with the social, psychological and visual impacts that are emphasized in the name of multidimensionality for urban space. For this reason, it is accepted as “a living organisms” that answers altering social-economic conditions that go beyond mere physical concerns.<sup>10</sup>

### **2.1. Design Parameters in Urban Space**

It is not regarded as a realistic or explanatory approach to explain the configuration of urban space with models and methods like a set of mathematical methods, design standards, design parameters and so on. However, a set of qualification standards has been established with regard to urban space’s approach to configuration in the context of

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<sup>4</sup> R. Krier, *Urban Space*, Rizzoli, New York 1979.

<sup>5</sup> B. Günay ve M. Selman, *Kentsel Görüntü ve Kentsel Estetik Örnek Kent: Ankara, Kent, Planlama, Politika, Sanat*, ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Yayını, Ankara 1994.

<sup>6</sup> C. Sitte, *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, Random House, New York 1965.

<sup>7</sup> O. Newman, *Defensible Spaces, People and Design in Violent City*, Architectural Press, London 1972.

<sup>8</sup> A. Rapaport, *Human Aspects of Urban Form, Toward A Man - Environment Approach to Urban Form and Design*, Pergamon Press Ltd., Oxford 1977.

<sup>9</sup> K. Lynch, *The Image of the City*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1975.

<sup>10</sup> C. Alexander, M. Silverstein, and S. Ishikawa, *A Pattern Language*, Oxford University Press, New York 1977.

liveability. In the approaches that focus on individual and communal needs; physiological, safety and security, commitment, reputation and existence (self-fulfillment) factors are visualized or perceived standards.<sup>11</sup> Instead of processes with defined borders, “multidimensional” processes describe all.

The configuration of urban space has an inevitable importance in terms of directing all the life standards of individuals apart from private spaces. Accordingly, modern period planning approaches use a set of basic parameters in order to direct spatial configuration in urban areas. These are, as follow<sup>12</sup>;

**Functional:** This is an approach that develops according to the use made of urban space by individuals. In share, the usefulness and practice at purposes for users are evaluated. It examines the relationship with “space” for the subjects of space creating factors and where they should be.

**Aesthetic:** This approach includes charm appeal, scale, convenience, dynamism and harmony parameters. It focuses on spatial design subjects like how appealing urban spaces is and provides original experiences; it is perceived and related with culture and so on. Meanwhile, basic approaches like order of urban space and identity, clarity, balance, durability, focus, unity, harmony and continuity are used.

**Technical:** the relationship of urban space with the environment includes the healthy construction of space creation with the contributions of technical sciences such as energy, construction conditions, availability, health, and climate and so on.

**Economic:** This approach is implemented according to the assumption that spatial creation processes always have a direct relationship with financial resources. In this context, the active and efficient use of financial resources as well as natural resources is inevitable. It needs to be understood throughout this process that although different meanings are attributed to urban space configuration in different periods, the main aim is to create livable urban spaces. In this context, it is understood in the light of notional descriptions that the main subject is “design” phenomenon. Within this framework, the urban structured environment’s architecture, with its visual and aesthetic values, constitutes the design process’ ingredients with mass-space-style relationships.<sup>13</sup>

### **3. Urban Space Configuration in Turkey**

“The city planning system” is the main tool used in Turkey’s urban space configuration. Many different actors like laws, regulations, enforcement tools, planning stages, local and central administrations, universities, implementers, city planners, architects and so on are included in this system. From this point of view, the understanding of city planning processes becomes more explanatory in terms of urban space configuration.

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<sup>11</sup> J. Lang, *Urban design: the American experience Van Nostrand Reinhold*, New York. 1994.

<sup>12</sup> D. J. M. van der Voordt, *Architecture in use: an introduction to the programming, design and evaluation of buildings / Amsterdam: Architectural Press 2005.*

<sup>13</sup> B. Günay, *Kentsel Tasarım Kültürü ve Yaratıcılığın Sınırları, Planlama*, TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Yayınları, 1997, 2 (16) 54-61.

City planning displays the property of being a “process” in general terms and this process constitutes all of the stages in which the purposes and goals are specified and practiced.<sup>14</sup> For this reason, it is not an indication that this process is only examined on a spatial basis since the mentioned process, from beginning to end, is concluded with urban space’s configuration decisions. Social and economic dimensions, as well as spatial ones, are also affected to the same extent. However, specific to Turkey, construction plans are not able to provide reliable outcomes from national to local plans. In particular, planning logic and construction conditions, which result from all planning processes, result in an unproductive outcome like creating a zoning lot. The formation of urban environments with adverse conditions such as a lacking of design parameters, and being distant from livable urban spaces, is an inevitable outcome.

The main purpose of the application of plans, which needs to include foresight for the future, is to provide the transformation of cadaster parcels to spaces where constructions can occur (urban lands) according to city plans and zoning legislation. This process means organizing the space with the transformation of ownership according to its shape.<sup>15</sup>

Urban space configuration is regarded as an engineering project or just a technical process, according to the context in question. For this reason, this structure, which can be successful in technical terms, does not result in spatial quality. It is very limiting to create places that are only suitable for construction and to found urban action on a parcel basis and on ownership rights borders.

Structures that shape up city morphology and the configuration of open areas formed by constructions constitute the source of the main problem.<sup>16</sup> An attitude, which adopts a narrow-scoped approach and which is founded only on a structured basis, and accordingly aims to develop a parcel suitable for zoning, is regarded as the starting point of the problem.

This approach, which also ignores the fact that the transformation of ownership and the supervision of zoning rights are design problems and that the mass-space relationship that constitutes city morphology needs to be shaped with the same design process<sup>17</sup>, becomes the main determinant of urban space configuration in Turkey.

In this sense, basic problems arise in terms of design approach in Turkey’s urban space configuration. The applied plans focus on technical processes that create more parceling plans instead of liveability and design standards. Along with the impossibility of creating public spaces, the quality of spaces is another contentious issue in this mechanical consideration. Parcel borders determine the urban space configuration and in this context,

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<sup>14</sup> R.R. Bademli, *CP 542 Urban Design and Planning Process, Lectures Notes*, Spring Semester, Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of City and Regional Planning, Ankara 1996.

<sup>15</sup> B. Günay, *Kentsel Tasarım Kültürü ve Yaratıcılığın Sınırları, Planlama*, TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Yayınları, 1997, 2 (16) 54-61.

<sup>16</sup> A.V. Moudon, “Urban Morphology as an Emerging Interdisciplinary Field”, *Urban Morphology*, 1997 (1) 3-10.

<sup>17</sup> B. Günay, *Şehircilik-Planlama-Tasarıma-Mimarlık-Peyzaj, Planlama*, TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Yayınları, 2006, 4 (38) 19-22.

technical disciplines are more dominant (topographical engineers, civil engineers, and technicians) compared to spatial design disciplines (urban designer, architect, city planner, landscape architect). Accordingly, this kind of process limits the development of urban spaces which feed on design elements and the achievement of liveability standards. This is because an approach which is based on the sharing of created spaces as a result of the transformation of a cadastral parcel to a zoning parcel directs the urban space configuration, rather than an approach that is based into on creating qualified space. Thus, the configuration of urban space can never be transformed into to a design problem. Although the system seems to function in itself, it is clearly understood that it displays a weak infrastructure.

When the planning process in Turkey is considered from this viewpoint, the differences in urban space configuration approaches in Turkey and those in developed countries are easy to perceive. The main reason for these differences is due to the fact that in Western Europe and the United States, in particular, urban structured environment configuration is directed by design guides and design guidelines, while in Turkey “quantitative” supervision consideration shapes the configuration of the urban structured environment.<sup>18</sup>

Another reason why urban space cannot be configured in a qualified way is that value increase phenomenon of land configures the areas. This unhealthy process which progresses on an “income” basis, is supported by Zoning Law, no.3194. Spaces that do not include infrastructure, social reinforcement, and identity besides distorted and unhealthy arise in this process.

As a solution to this problem, emphasize on high scale plan decisions’ numerous reflection on urban space is necessary. Form of urban space intervention is constituted by subjects like site selection, landuse planning, size-intensity, transportation-circulation system, economical- communal problems and infrastructure. However, it is seen that the part-whole relationship is plucked in the reasonable age of enlightenment. The union of plan decision and urban space is painful and unhealthy. Mechanical planning consideration is dominant in urban space configuration, in which landuse and zoning rights are at the forefront and are for removed from design concerns. It is clear that Turkey urban space configuration, beyond drawing parcel-based plans and then taking action for land arrangement, needs to be seen to be making an effort to establish an environment that satisfies the biological and psychological needs of people and the creation of architecture and landscape of this environment’s spatial structure. It is understood that with the acceptance of stylistic concern as being an inevitable part of for urban life in contradistinction to being a mere aesthetic concern, it is possible to produce more qualified spaces.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.1. Turkey Actors**

Turkey’s urban space configuration is founded on the independent operation of the actors that act within the process in present planning-practice consideration. Structure, which

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<sup>18</sup> T. Ünlü, “Kentsel Mekânda Değişimin Yönetilmesi”, *METU Journal of Faculty of Architecture*, 2006/2, 63-92.

<sup>19</sup> B. Günay, *Şehircilik-Planlama-Tasarlama-Mimarlık-Peyzaj, Planlama*, TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Yayınları, 2006, 4 (38) 19-22.

expresses a technical process, is examined as the forming of the maximum income-oriented construction architecture according to the generation of zoning plans and created parcels. In this process, several disciplines have to act separately within the framework of legal and administrative authorizations.

However, although the fact that urban environment's success is based on interdisciplinary cooperation<sup>20</sup> is accepted, this approach is not yet implemented in Turkey. In this sense, it can be easily said that the approach, which favors specialization in contrast to the interdisciplinary property of the process, is one of the factors that create unsuccessful urban environments.

The presence of different disciplines, and thus the presence of different actors, is natural. However, the "city planning" profession, which is one of the main actors, and its professionals in this process that displays various and complex structures constitute the main subject of this article. City planners who direct urban space configuration in this context will be evaluated according to their activity in the process. This research and evaluation, which is conducted in those that practice the profession, and the creation of spatial configuration factors will be examined in terms of "design". This examination's main purpose is to discuss the reduction in the city planner's role to simply providing a "zoning plan draft" in urban space creation. This situation created and is still creating important problems for urban spaces.

In this study, which summarizes urban space configuration and its reflection on space, an examination of the actors who are present in the planning system will be made in the following section. In this study, the approaches of the actors, who play role in the practice process of the profession, on the decision process are evaluated. Also the "design" phenomenon in general, the effect of design parameters on creation processes like spatial plan decisions, its approach, effect and contribution and so on are examined from the point of the people that practice the profession. The design phenomenon, which is very crucial in terms of livable urban space construction, can be reflected on urban space only with the contribution of people who practice the profession. In this context, the actors that are selected specific to Turkey are examined in this study.

### **3.2. Selection of Actors**

City planners, who complete a 4-year-old undergraduate degree course and conduct vocational practice, are the most important actors in the construction of urban space. In this respect, in order to examine urban space configuration in terms of "design parameters", detailed interviews are conducted with people who practice the profession and the findings that are obtained are evaluated. The setup of these interviews, evaluation criteria and conclusion are included in the following sections in detail.

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<sup>20</sup> A.V. Moudon, "A Catholic Approach to Organizing What Urban Designers Should Know", *Journal of Planning Literature*, 1992, (6), 331-349.

### **3.3. Research Method and Subject Selection**

In the content of the article the controlled and purposeful “interview” is included, which is used to learn the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of people who are the subject of the social reality. A method is used in which questions are asked in advance of the interview after selecting interviewees with the guidance of instant questions that are prepared beforehand. An approach that aims to reveal the person’s experience, feelings and thoughts is used and then these data are interpreted according to topic groups. In this context, the subjective thoughts of different people who practice the profession about the phenomenon, advances and processes that are examined in this article are studied systematically.

In Turkey, after four years of undergraduate education students graduated with the title of “City Planner” and immediately start their professional life with the means of competence. During their education, requisite internship involving specific periods is done either in private or public institutions. There are several alternatives for planners when they start their professional life. A list of the main institutions is given below;

1. Private institutions,
  - a. Urbanism offices,
  - b. Architecture offices,
  - c. Construction companies,
  - d. Consultancy companies,
  - e. Real-estate and REIT companies,
2. Public institutions,
  - a. Municipalities,
  - b. Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning,
  - c. Development Agencies,
  - d. Ministry of Development,
  - e. Other Ministries,
  - f. Provincial private administrations,
  - g. Universities
3. CSOs
  - a. International CSOs and Institutions (UNDP, REC, WWF, etc.)
  - b. National CSOs and Institutions (STGM, TEPAV, TESEV etc.)<sup>21</sup>

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21 N. T. Köroğlu, *Şehir ve Bölge Planlama Eğitime Eleştirel Bir Bakış: Karar Odaklı Eğitim*, 2. Kentsel ve Bölgesel Araştırmalar Sempozyumu, Bildiri Kitabı, 607, Ankara 8-9 Aralık 2011.

The selection of subjects for the study was made with the acceptance of the results' external validity in mind or, in other words, generalizability was related with the quality of subject selection. In this way, interviews were conducted with 32 people, this can be accepted as quite a high number of subjects in terms of the in depth interview method, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Since no statistical generalization can be done in this sense the aim was to select subjects who are more holistic, in depth and context oriented instead of having merely statistical representability. For this reason, people who could provide extensive knowledge about the research subject were chosen.

In order to understand how design parameters reflect on urban space configuration, subjects were selected from the above mentioned institutions. Those selected were evaluated by accepting that they are actors who have a direct influence on urban space arrangement in terms of practice fields and activity. In this context, those who were interviewed in depth were examined in terms of the organizations and institutions that direct planning by dividing them into two groups which are public, (this group was divided into two groups as municipalities and ministries), and private. The number of people interviewed was equivalent to the proportional distribution of the members of Chamber of City Planners according to the places in which they work. When the distribution of member numbers is considered by percentage, the percentage of people who work in private institutions is close to 40%, on the other hand, the percentage of people who work in public institutions is close to 60%. The actors, who are authorized and competent in spatial planning, of the above mentioned institutions, (which are divided in two groups as private and public institutions) were included in the evaluation and in those terms, public institutions were evaluated as two subgroups, that is municipality and ministry. The vocation percentage of these two groups, according to the member data of the Chamber of City Planners, is 40% for municipalities and 20% at ministries. The number of subjects that were selected according to these proportions is seen in below Chart 1.

**Chart 1:** Number of people who were interviewed in depth, face to face<sup>22</sup>

<b>Institution Interviewed</b>	<b>Public Institution</b>		<b>Private Institutions</b>
	Municipalities	Ministries	Urbanism Offices
<b>Number of Persons Interviewed</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>

<sup>22</sup> U. Doğan, *Evaluation of Design Issue in the Scope of Urban Planning Education*, PhD Thesis, İTÜ, Graduate School of Science, City and Regional Planning, İstanbul 2014.

While limiting the people interviewed, an evaluation was made on the topic groups that are included in the article. These limitations are as follows:

- Those interviewed need to be graduates of City and Regional Planning Department,
- They need to have at least 5 years professional experience at the institutions in which they work,
- Actors who work in large cities like Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir, in which there is the opportunity of several professional practices and which include different dynamics, were preferred.
- Limitations as having authority to sign and being a member of the Chamber of City Planners (There are 700 members of the Chamber of City Planners and 430 registered city planning offices according to 2014 data, Table (5.2)) were set.

**Chart 2:** Distribution of registered offices by cities, 2014 ŞPO (Chamber of City Planners)<sup>23</sup>

REGISTERED OFFICE	NUMBER	DISTRBUTION BY CITIES	NUMBER
Class A	81	İstanbul	87
Class B	23		
Class C	38	Ankara	118
Class D	44		
Class E	83		
Class F	161	İzmir	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>430</b>		

In this context, in detailed interview, which was done with 32 interviewees, individuals were expected to correlate their work environment with knowledge, experience and professional practices and to evaluate spatial practice in terms of design parameters and its reflection on space. The same questions that were prepared beforehand were asked to participants and they were expected to share their experience. Emerged topic groups were evaluated and presented in a matrix system.

#### 3.4. Research Questions, Findings and Evaluation:

During the process of interviewing the actors, which took approximately 3 months, each actor was interviewed in depth for 1 hour. Resulting from these interviews, the basic

<sup>23</sup> U. Doğan, *ibid*, 2014.

questions listed below were asked and the findings obtained were summarized under questions in order of proportions. Each answer of the participants filtered according to opinions that are in the objective of the study.

Is the design phenomenon effective on Turkey's urban space configuration?

Only 6% of participants think that the design phenomenon has an effect on urban space configuration in Turkey. The remaining 94% do not think that design parameters are effective on urban space configuration in Turkey. It is a worth-emphasizing and stunning fact that those who accept that design parameters have an effect on spatial configuration also accept the design phenomenon as a physical act of land arrangement.

What are the causes of inefficiency?

Inefficiency of design parameters on spatial configuration is interpreted according to the personal experience of the participants. In this context, the main causes are listed below:

- Turkey's zoning legislation and legislative regulations: the mentioned legislation is limiting and narrow scoped, thus it does not give any opportunity to the idea of design,
- Income oriented planning approach: the regulations that are made are mainly aimed at maximizing profit,
- Lack of awareness and lack of knowledge: not perceiving the importance of the design phenomenon on spatial level.

Should the design phenomenon be effective? Why?

Although all of the answers to this question have similar qualifications, personal reasons may differentiate. For example, while 100% of participants emphasize that the design phenomenon should have an effect on spatial configuration, the answers to the question "why?" differentiate in terms of priorities. Reasons such as; high life quality and standards, healthy environment, aesthetic needs, identity, sense of belonging, history, culture, sustainability, economy and dynamism constitute the main notions in the answers that differentiate.

Do you consider yourself, as an important actor in the design parameter's reflection on space process, adequate in the context of "design knowledge" in urban space configuration?

While 81% of participants consider themselves adequate, 19% do not consider themselves adequate. Participants who consider themselves adequate believe that their design knowledge, which they gained during graduate and undergraduate education, sufficiently reflects on spatial processes. Those who do not consider themselves adequate believe that

this knowledge is no longer valid because of lack of city to put their knowledge into practice, another group stated that the design knowledge given during their education is inadequate.

When you evaluate urban space configuration in terms of design parameters, what are the problems in your opinion?

Although the findings obtained stated several opinions, in general the same problems emerged. These problems are as follows:

- Different bodies are active in positions of authority instead of design discipline specialists (For example, urban designers, architects, city planners, landscape architects etc.). These bodies are more involved with political and income oriented pressures,
- Economical factors will always be a condition in the creation of urban environments with high quality standards,
- Turkey's zoning legislation does not display a structure that includes design phenomenon within its legal frame work. It constitutes a system which provides the sharing of land with a mechanical hierarchical configuration, and it is unable to create a direct connection between the third dimension and livable space configuration.

The current law and regulations create problems specific to Turkey and thus the limitations that exist are due to legislation. Another topic is the zoning plan approach that directs Turkey's urban planning system. Zoning legislations, which are accepted as the product of an approach that does not allow for the design phenomenon in planning practice, is inflexible, and tries to direct urban spaces with strict rules, describe only a technical process. According to this point of view it is a very likely that the expectations these planning approaches are quite limited in terms of design practices. Another problem underlined is that urban income and political processes affect the planning profession as a pressure factor. It is accepted that due to that pressure, this rant oriented approach is dominant instead of the priority to create healthy and functional urban spaces in which the design idea is dominant.

- A space configuration in the context of design parameters is expected either from central or local administrations or from the majority of society. The main criterion that constitutes the expectation in general terms is the increase in value that can be achieved or, in other words, income oriented approaches.

Do you have the opportunity to apply the design-oriented knowledge and experience that you have professionally?

Six percent of participants stated that they have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and experience; on the other hand, 94% stated that they do not. It was indicated by the majority of the participants that this is mainly because there are no such expectations to do so. Zoning legislation and communal expectations are put forward the main reason for this situation. It was stated that a professional life that develops with high scale technical processes instead of a design perspective of spatial planning and previously set application standards is not digressed from. Under these circumstances there is no way that the design phenomenon can be integrated into the planning process.

As a person who practices the profession, how do you think the situation should be improved, what are your suggestions and opinions?

The participants, the majority (94%) of whom thinks that the design phenomenon has no effect on urban space configuration, gave some suggestions and opinions.

-As mentioned, Turkey's zoning legislation, which was previously emphasized as a problem, needs to be reconsidered in this context.

-It is clear that there is a serious problem in terms of legislative regulations. It was suggested by all participants that by including the design phenomenon's importance in legal regulations and by overcoming a narrow scoped zoning arrangement logic, approaching the desired level or at least western standards may be achieved in urban spaces.

-Also, it is suggested that if academic and professional environments interacted more, the knowledge generated in an academic environment would reflect on professional practice. The need was also mentioned to raise communal consciousness, by overcoming the acceptance of planning as a single dimensioned process, which is income and political oriented.

-It is crucial that all administrators have the required consciousness in terms of design phenomenon. All administrators like mayors, zoning directors, planning board presidents etc., who have authority in urban space configuring actions, need to be experienced in design discipline topics and have the guidance of relevant professional bodies.

-In all practices, social utility needs to be at the forefront. It is important to leave behind the parcel based consideration which ignores the environment and only aims at maximizing profit.

#### **4. Evaluation of the Findings and Conclusion**

The most basic property of the qualitative data that were obtained by the interview technique is that it is oral. There is a need for markedly different methods other than merely analyzing the data obtained by the qualitative research method and techniques since the data oral. In these methods, analyzes are conducted by words and phrases instead of numbers. Different parameters are taken as reference while analyzing verbal data. As a method, the following stages are used on narrowing the data by filtering, presentation of the data and illustratively evaluating the outcomes; on illustrative manner.

-The presentation of data stage involves the selection of the important parts of raw data, which are tens of pages long and focuses on specific points, simplification and summarization methods. In this process, some actions are done like arranging raw data, separating unnecessary parts and using only the important parts.

-Raw materials are indicated by evaluation within the framework of research question according to specified categories. Information that is related to notion, theme, judgment and conclusion are presented in a holistic manner with matrix methods. **(Table 1)**

-In the evaluation stage, the interaction of phenomenon and actions is examined and interpretations are made within the context of cause effect relationship.

In this research, the expectation from city planners seems to be an area that involves a totally technical process including the preparation of zoning plans according to legislation, reconditioning, and transferring to a digital environment, preparing reports and opinion letters and that can be specialized in a few months. Instead of planners taking decisions in public authorities, company owners and property owners are the decision makers. In these terms, the process remains inside the island-parcel scale. Planners are considered as technical personnel who cannot use the knowledge and experience that they obtained during their education and they are completely left out of the decision making process.

No definitions or legal obligations about urban space configuration in planning system are included in the Zoning Law (law no. 3194) which manages planning practices. No provisions in the legislative documents or legal foundations about the position, stage, and qualification of design phenomenon in the planning process are made in this law, although it constitutes the legal framework of planning actions. Thus, it does not seem possible to talk of a planning and design union since it is not required legally and there is at present no such consciousness. Yet, the design parameters of urban space configuration are examined in a wide range including historical environment, housing zones, multifunctional open areas and city centers, and favors planning in urban practices. These parameters cannot be transformed into practices, regulations and guide notes and thus unqualified urban space creation is inevitable.

To sum up, urban space configuration is discussed in the scope of the study, by considering the actors in the process within the framework of the current planning system in Turkey. It is an inevitable fact that in the planning approach involving these actors, consideration of zoning parcel creation will create a serious qualification problem in terms of omitting urban space creation, although it seems to serve the real owners and interests in the short term. It is clearly observed that this structure has adverse effects on estate values in the long term. On contrary to this negation, besides central and local administrations, all the relevant actors need to accept the need to consider urban space configuration in the context of a design problem. The necessity to evolve urban space configuration to the sum of values that will be obtained in long term by discarding the “parcel” concept in ideational and practical terms, is a good starting point.



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