



# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

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Today's problematic subject concerns the existing stock and its spatial quality problems.

There are a number of different approaches to improve the quality of existing housing stock with user participation

Regeneration policies for the existing housing stock can create opportunities for improving spatial standards, and can preserve the social-cultural and economic value of the stock.

There are some factors which are important to develop a participative housing regeneration strategy.

These factors are directly related with the users' characteristics, specialities and their ideas.

The type of the participative organization can be defined with the users and their behaviours.

## OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. User Participation in Housing Regeneration Projects in European Countries
3. Tendencies of User Participation in a Housing Regeneration Project in Istanbul
  - 3.1. 4th Levent Neighbourhood
  - 3.2. In-depth Interviews and Questionnaires
4. Conclusion

# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 1. Introduction



Existing housing stock is an important source for sustainable development approach. In particular, modern architectural stock built between 1930 and 1970 is very important for cultural, social and economic sustainability.

**AIM OF THE STUDY:** In this research, user participation strategies and tools are examined and the results of the in-depth interviews and questionnaire on a modern housing settlement, 4th Levent, which was built in 1954, are analysed. User participation tendencies and their importance to the regeneration strategies of modern housing settlements and quality improvement organizations are researched through this analysis. It is our contention that historically significant housing estates can be protected and regenerated with the user participation. With this study it is aimed to define the relationship between users' characteristics, behaviours and their tendencies on participative regeneration.

**METHODOLOGY:** The method of this study includes a literature review, in-depth interviews and a questionnaire (with users) analysis. Firstly, a historical literature review was carried out on modern housing stock in Europe and Turkey, followed by an examination of housing regeneration approaches and user participation tendencies in European countries. After that, in-depth interviews and a questionnaire were carried out to understand the participation tendencies of the users in 4th Levent neighbourhood.

# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 2. User Participation in Housing Regeneration Projects in European Countries

In European countries there are a great deal of social housing units in the form of mass housing stock that was designed and constructed between the 1920s and the 1970s. Sustainability of the space quality in the urban environment relates to how to re-use the existing building stock. It can be provided by the countries' visions and public/users' consciousness of the modern housing stock.

There are some organizations and initiatives that are helping for sustainable quality of environment:



When we look at housing regeneration examples, it can be seen that the main common idea from the examples from Europe is that the projects were realized with user participation. Users explained their ideas to the authorized organizations and commissions. During the design and construction process, they also attended to the projects.

# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 2. User Participation in Housing Regeneration Projects in European Countries, Germany



STEFAN FORSTER | ARCHITECTURAL SURGERY | LEINEFELDE HOUSE 8-3



The general approach of these projects is about active user participation. Users are the most important actors in the regeneration process, from design to construction, when solving quality problems.

# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 2. User Participation in Housing Regeneration Projects in European Countries, France



Lacaton & Vassal | Le Torre Prete  
PLUS | 21st Milan Triennale Exhibition "Design after design"



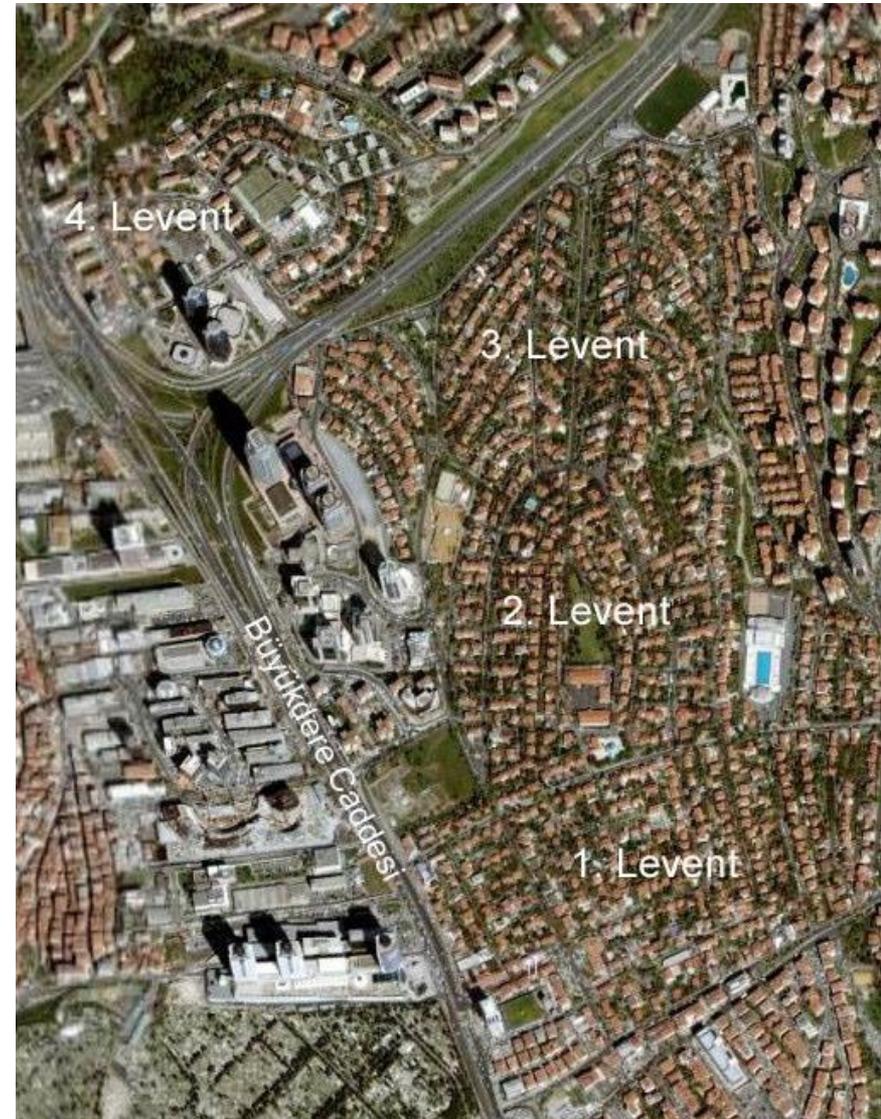
# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 3. Tendencies of User Participation in a Housing Regeneration Project in Istanbul

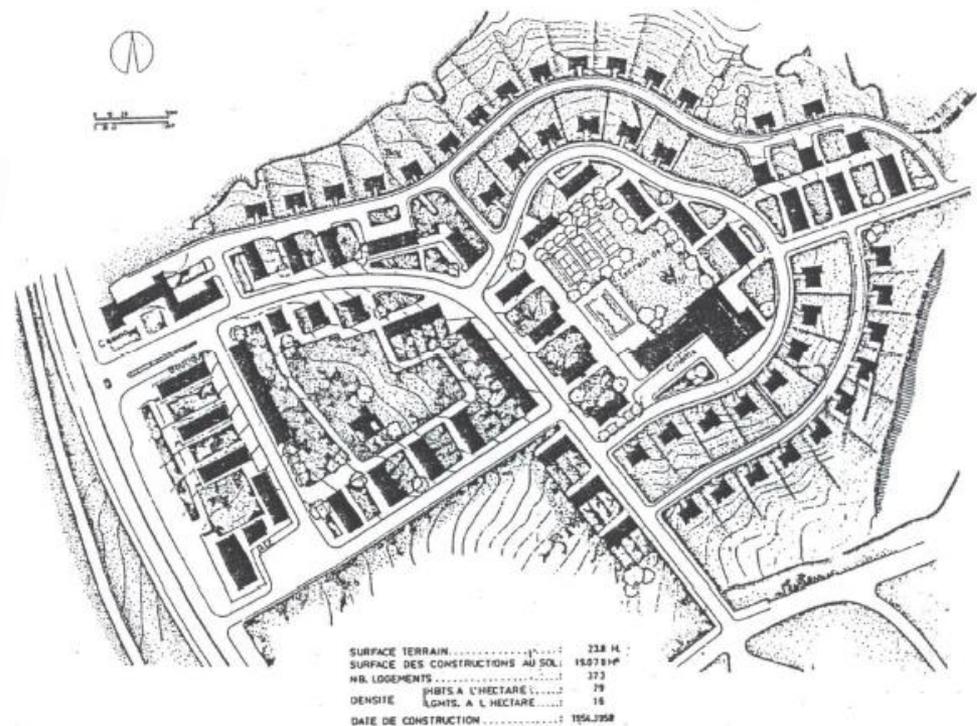
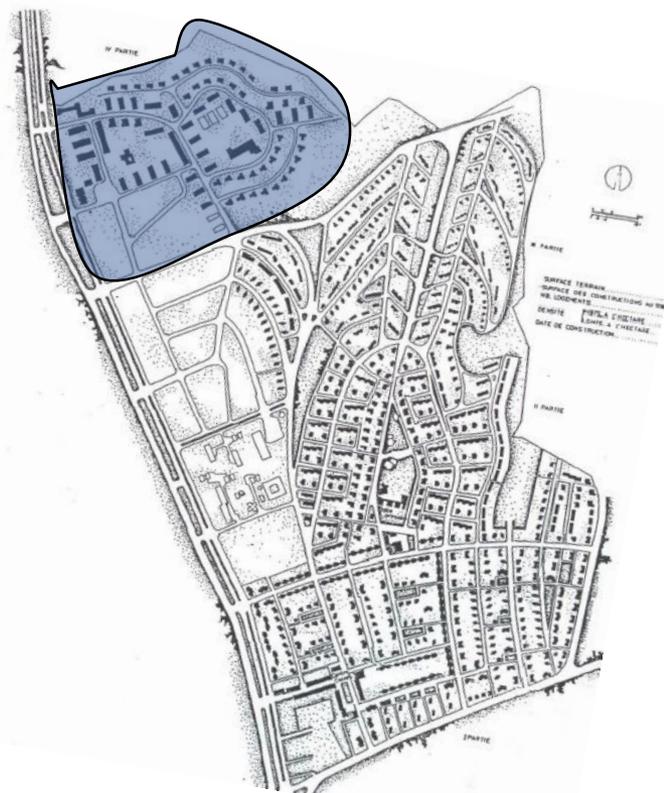
### 4th Levent Neighbourhood



Levent is one of the main business districts in Istanbul today. It is located on the European side of the city and is the home for a number of Turkey's well-known office developments and skyscrapers. The Levent District has one of the first modern housing estates in Istanbul, designed by Prof. Dr. Kemal Ahmet Aru. The construction of the settlements was undertaken in four sections, starting in 1951 and completed in 1958.



### 4th Levent Neighbourhood



**Architect: Prof. Dr. Kemal Ahmet Aru**

**Financer: Turkey Real Estate And Credit Bank**

**345 UNITS, 70 SHOPS, PARKING AREA FOR 90 CAR, CINEMA FOR 550 PEOPLE, SERVICE STATION, SPORT CLUB, TENNIS COURTS, SWIMMING POOL, CASINO, NIGHT CLUB, KINDERGARTEN, MANAGER BUILDING.**

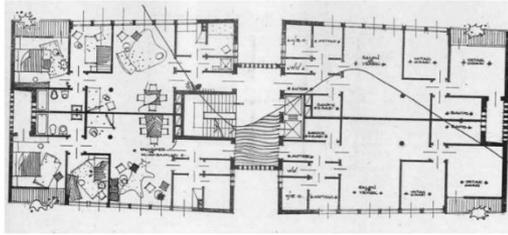
# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 3. Tendencies of User Participation in a Housing Regeneration Project in Istanbul

### 4th Levent Neighbourhood



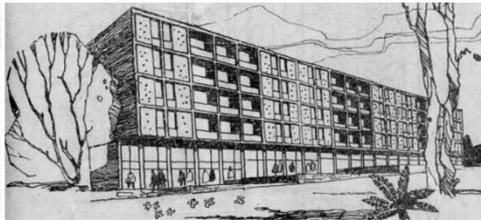
A Blok, Görünüş



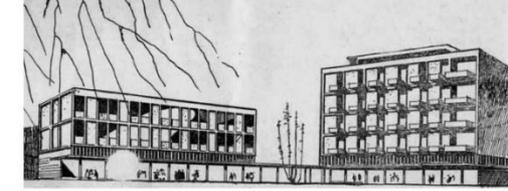
A Blok, Kat Planı



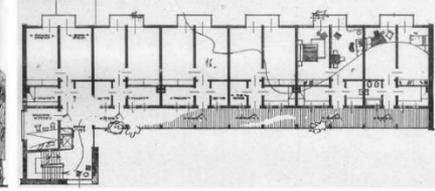
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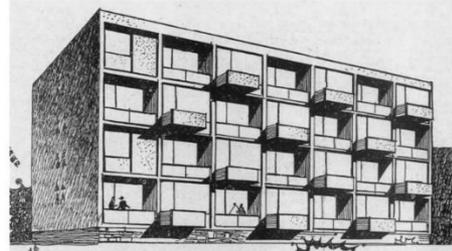
5 Kattlı Bloklar, Görünüş



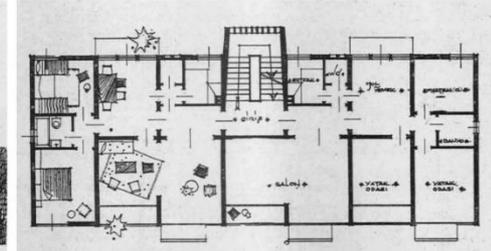
P ve R Bloklar, Görünüş



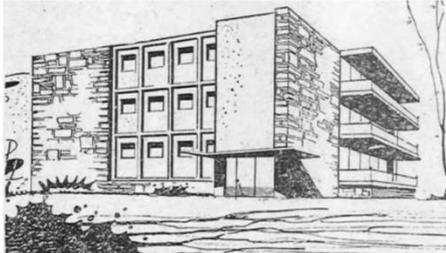
P ve R Bloklar, Kat Planı



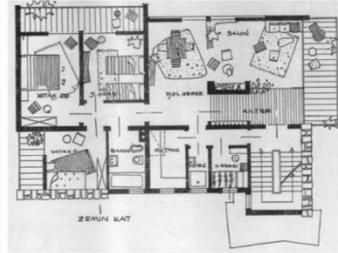
Park Blokları, Görünüş



Park Blokları, Kat Planı



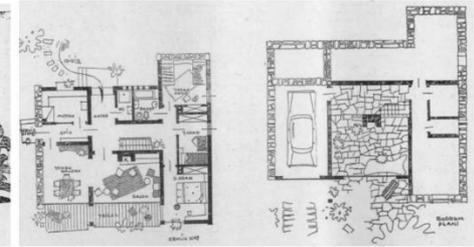
D Blok, Görünüş



D Blok, Kat Planı



K Tipi Evler, Görünüş



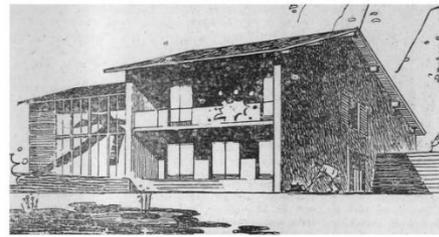
K Tipi Evler, Kat Planları



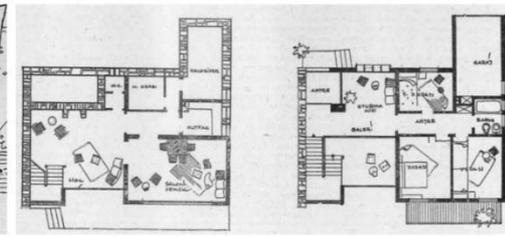
O Blok, Görünüş



E Blok, Görünüş



L Tipi Evler, Görünüş



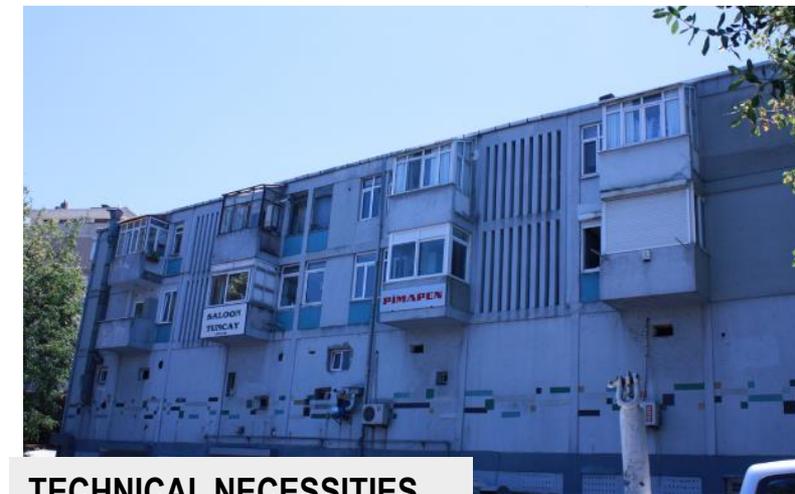
L Tipi Evler, Kat Planları

# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 3. Tendencies of User Participation in a Housing Regeneration Project in Istanbul

### Case Study

#### Site Observation-In-depth Interviews-Questionnaires



**TECHNICAL NECESSITIES**



**ADDING SPACE / VOLUME**



**FENCES FOR SECURITY**



#### In-depth interviews

After site observation, four users were chosen through which to understand the spatial quality problems and participation idea for improving quality in the area. Users were involved with in-depth interviews whereby they remarked on their actual needs. They talked about the necessity of regeneration approaches for improving quality.

As they are renovating their houses with individual ideas and initiatives, so the different design and construction techniques will occur in the same area. This causes a decrease in the total architectural quality of the neighbourhood, and it loses the unique characteristic and value of the site and its buildings.

During the in-depth interviews, users said that social synergy could make the decision-making process easier if the users acted together with the same aim. They criticized the lack of societal culture. They needed to create a systematic decision-making process. With the in-depth interviews, it was seen that the neighbourhood has a lot of spatial problems that need to be solved. The users are volunteers for participation on the program that will organize the regeneration.

### Questionnaires

Questionnaire was carried out with users of the 4th Levent. The dwelling units have two main purpose of use: offices and private residences. The questionnaire was undertaken with 40 house users and 52 office users. Participation ideas and behaviours were searched.

- *user profile (age, gender, education),*
- *ownership details,*
- *duration of use/occupancy,*
- *membership of a neighbourhood society,*
- *awareness and consciousness of the users,*
- *sense of belonging,*
- *the idea of leaving the neighbourhood*
- *the idea of participation*

were asked.

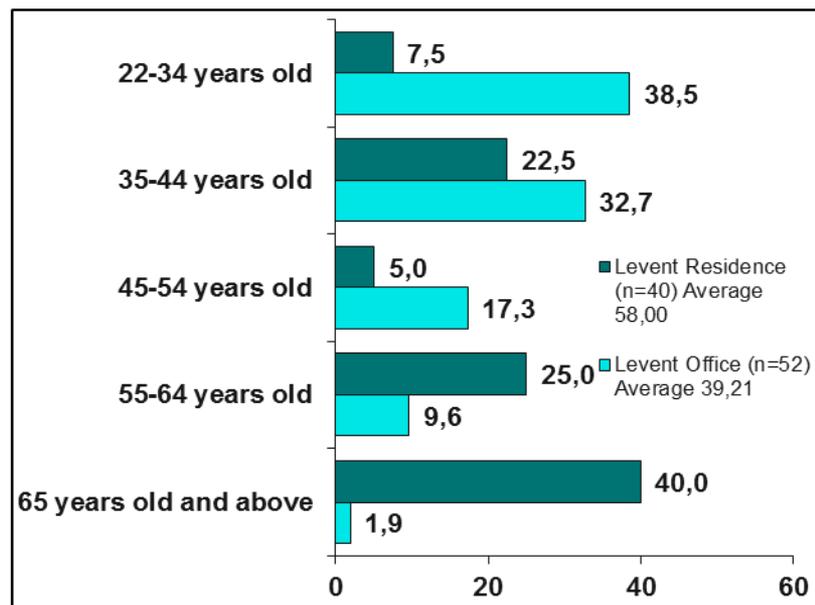
# USER PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING REGENERATION PROJECTS

## 3. Tendencies of User Participation in a Housing Regeneration Project in Istanbul

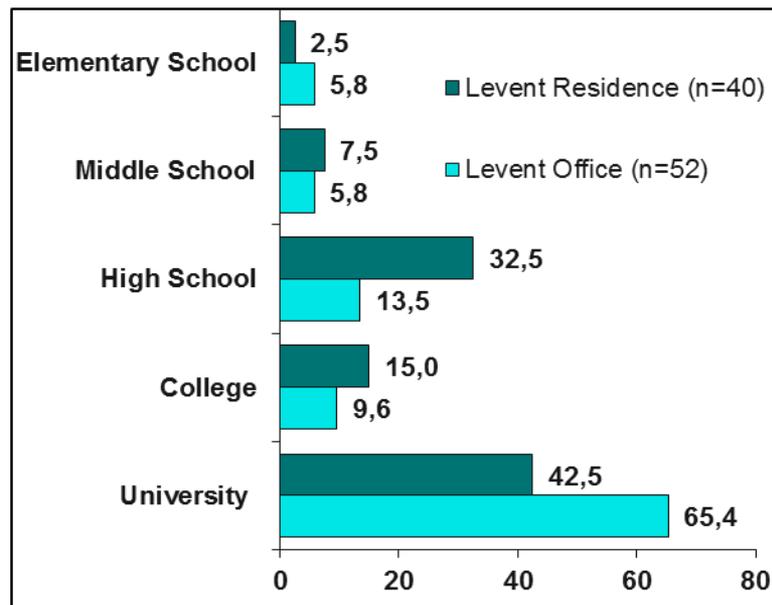
### Questionnaires

#### User Profile (age, gender, education)

The questionnaire was conducted with 92 users in total: 40 were residents (house users), 52 were office users. While the women users' percentage was 52.5%, the office users' percentage was 42.5%. Of the residents, 40% were 65 years old and over, while the office users' ages were generally between 22-34 and 35-44 years old. 42.5% of house users had graduated from university, while 65.4% of office users had graduated from university. It was seen that the user profiles were different between office and house users: the residents were older than the office users.



Age

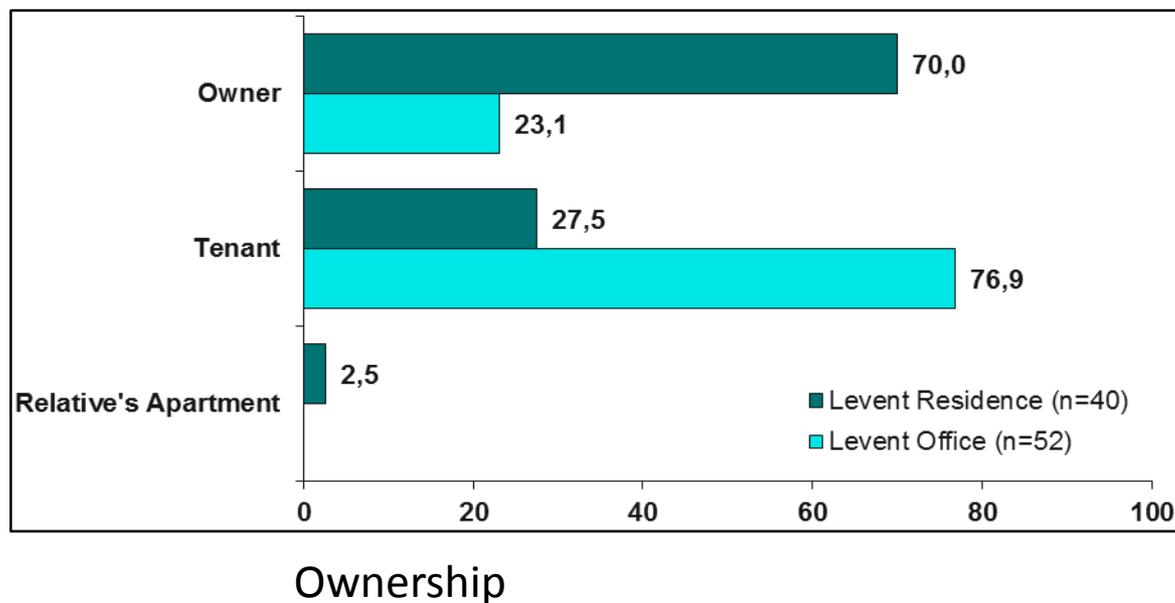


Education

### Questionnaires

#### Ownership Status

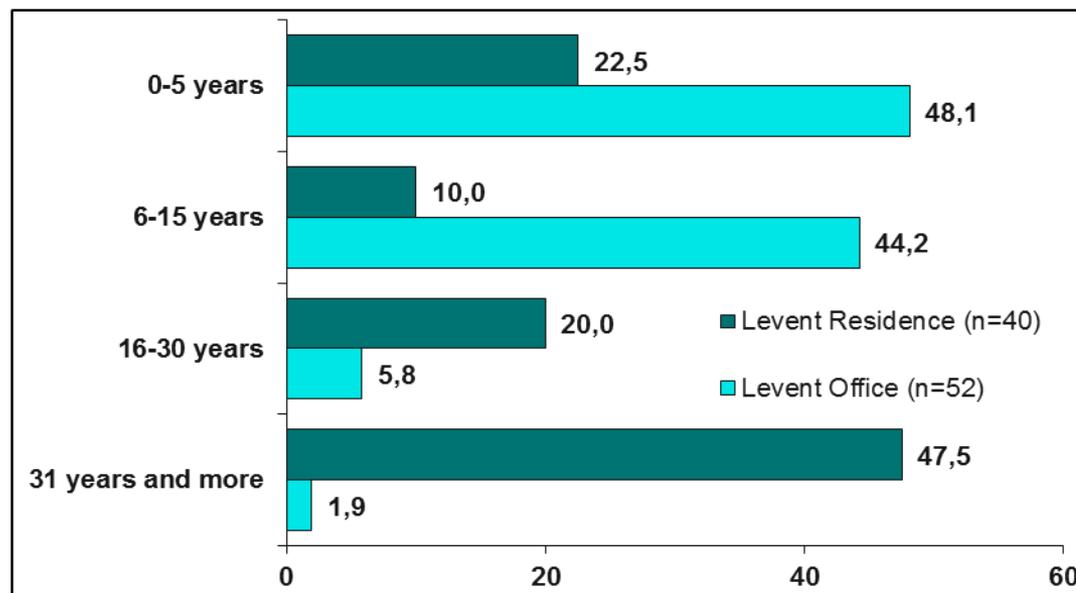
Ownership status is a very important definitive factor to understand users' behaviour. It was seen that the owners' and tenants' tendencies and behaviour were not similar. 70% of the residents that responded to the questionnaires were dwelling units' owners, and office users accounted for 23.1%. Office users were mostly tenants showing that they have the ability to leave the neighbourhood. So it can be said that the possibility of leaving the area is a problematic factor in participation requests (demands). Tenants generally feel that they will move from the neighbourhood one day so they cannot be given the same importance as owners. It affects the participation tendencies of the users.



### Questionnaires

#### Duration of Use / Occupancy

The duration of use/occupancy is as important as ownership status. If the period is short or long, it can affect the feeling of belonging. This was seen in the results, whereby the terms of the habitation of residents' and office users are different. 47.5% of residents had been living in the neighbourhood for 31 years or more. Office users have been living in the area for between 0-5 and 6-15 years. The term of residence is helpful to understand the user profile and their tendencies.

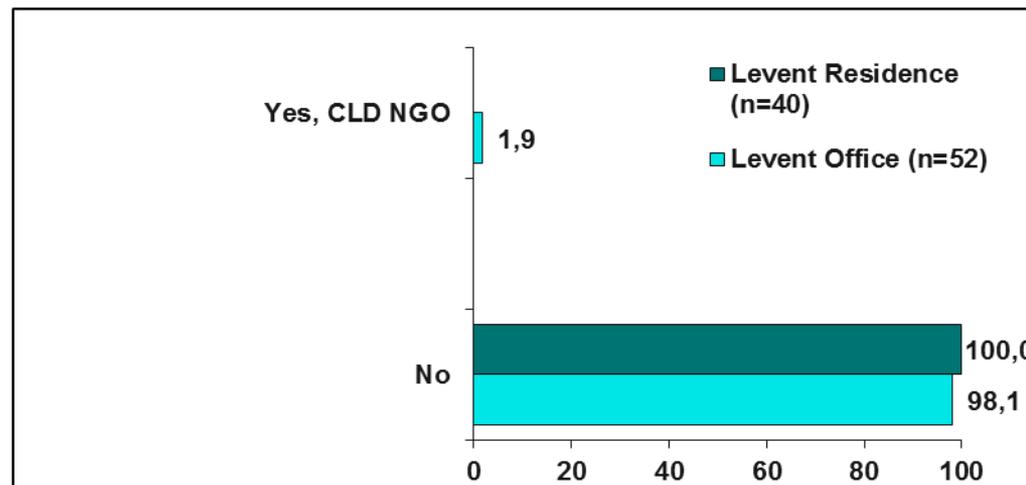


Duration of use

### Questionnaires

#### Membership of a neighbourhood society (NGO membership)

It is necessary to understand the participation tendencies of the users by searching community consciousness. In the Levent neighbourhood, there is a society that brings users together in every decision or special organizational, activities, but it is not obligatory to be a member of the society. Members want to create a neighbourhood consciousness and feeling of belonging to the area. The existence of a non-governmental organization such as this society in the area helps to organize any quality strategies on the buildings. It was seen that there was only one member among the total 92 users surveyed. It can be said that the society of the neighbourhood is not suitable for all users. There should be several NGOs in the neighbourhood because there are different users who have different ideas and behaviour.

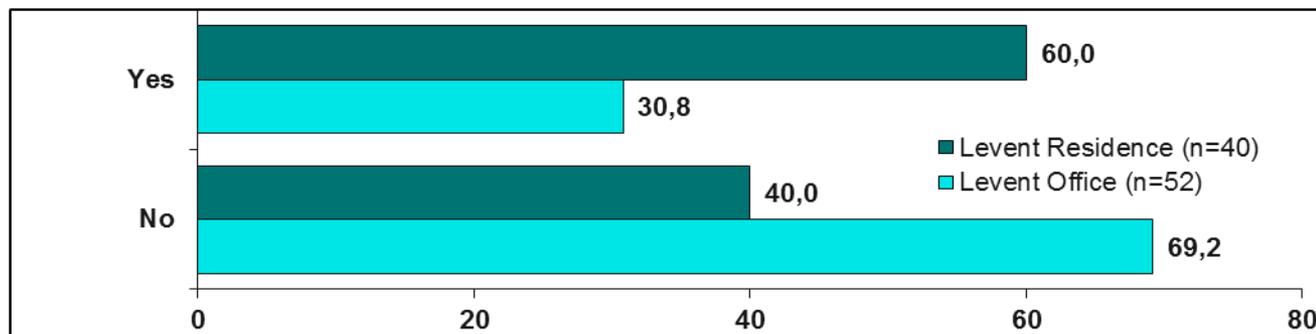


#### Awareness and Consciousness of the Users

The area on which the research was carried out was the first neighbourhood designed by modern movement ideas in the 1950s. It is a kind of modern architectural heritage for Turkish urban history. The area was listed as an urban preservation area in 2008 due to this unique character.

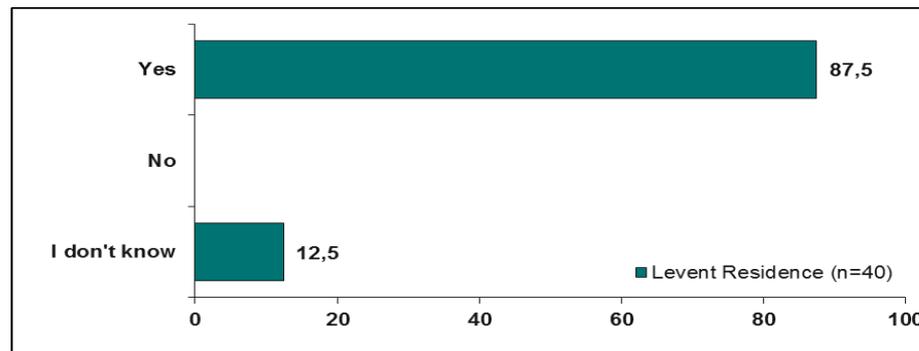
This research aims to test consciousness and the degree of awareness about the following two factors: *Do you know that the neighbourhood is an important modern architectural heritage? Are you aware of this information?* In the results, 77.5% of the residents and office users replied yes to the question. They were aware of that the buildings in the neighbourhood are a part of Turkish modern architectural heritage.

The other question concerns the actual news and urban decisions about the area. Users gave the following information about their news gathering behaviour. While 60% of the residents followed the news, 30.8% of the office users followed the actual activities on the site. It can be said that residents were more willing than the office users to claim the area.



#### Sense of Belonging to the Neighbourhood

The question regarding a sense of belonging was only asked of the residents in Levent. 87.5% of the residents replied that they felt as though they belonged to the neighbourhood. In the research, it was seen that another part (12.5%) of the residents was unstable. Understanding the sense of belonging factor is important in organizing regeneration organizations. If people feel that they are a community, they can come together easily and can make decisions about their neighbourhood.

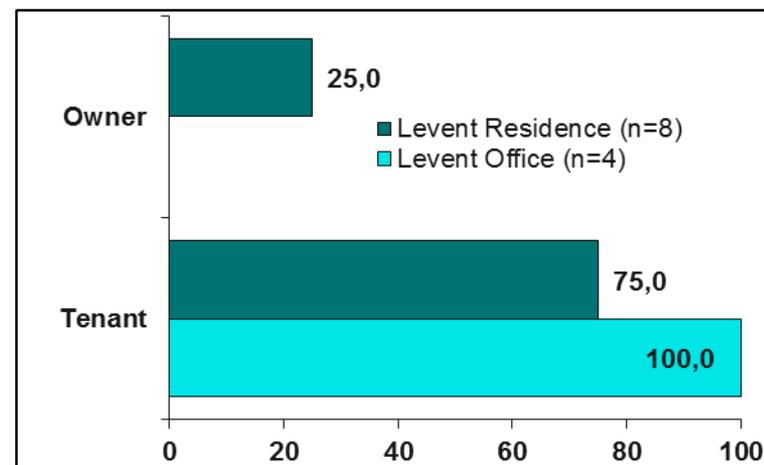
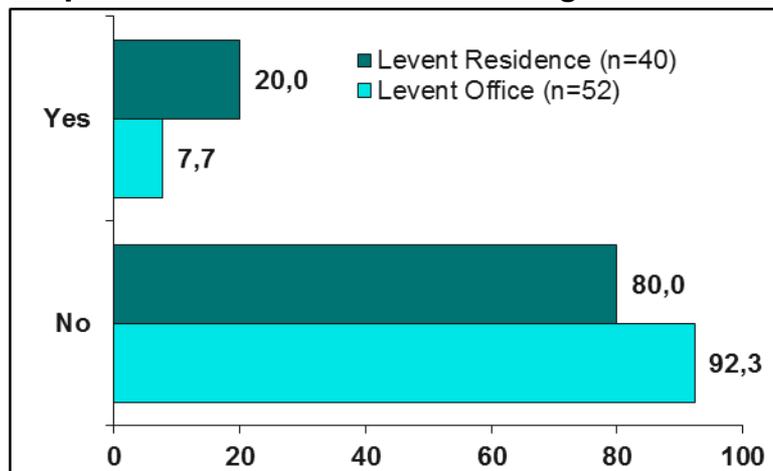


Sense of belonging

### Questionnaires

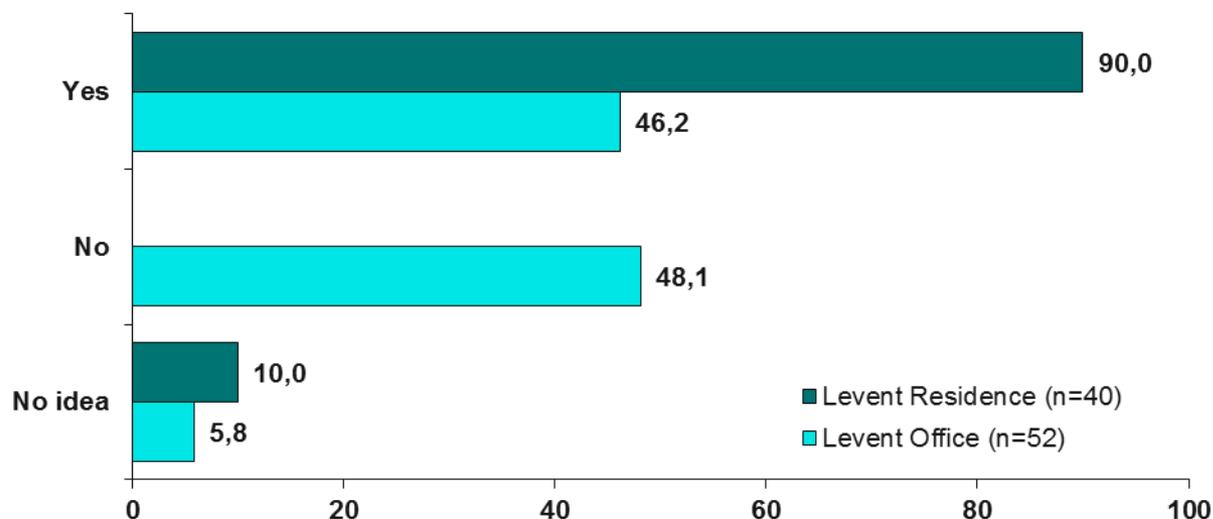
#### The Intention of Leaving the Neighbourhood

The idea of leaving the neighbourhood is related to that of ownership status and a sense of belonging. If users cannot have suitable economic conditions, or do not like the area, they do not feel themselves a member of the community, etc. Increasing house prices can cause residents to leave the neighbourhood. If the users want to leave an area, it is expected that they would not want to participate in the project or activities in the neighbourhood. The question regarding leaving the neighbourhood was asked of both residents and office users. Over 80% of both residents and office users did not want to leave the area. This also related to the ownership status of the users. According to the answers, the tenants mostly had the idea of leaving the neighbourhood. 75% of the tenants of the residents stated that they wanted to move to another place; while 100% of the tenants of the office users wanted to leave. In this situation, it is expected that the office users would be unwilling to participate in organizations. So, the function is a kind of decisive factor to understand participation tendencies in a housing settlement.



#### Tendencies for Participation

The questionnaires concluded with a question about the participatory idea: *What do you think about the participatory approaches in the regeneration strategies for improving the quality of the space in your neighbourhood?* According to the answers, while 90% of the residents wanted to participate in the regeneration organizations, 46.2% of the office users wanted to be in the organizations



In detail, it was expected that there would be differentiations in the participation tendencies according to the ownership status. All of the home owners wanted to participate (100%); 63.6% of tenants wanted to join regeneration organizations and 50% of office owners wanted to participate. In comparison with the residents, the office users' tendency was seen as weak as the owners were more willing to participate than the tenants.

## 4. Conclusion



It can be said that the most important actors are the users in the regeneration strategies. They can realize the spatial quality problems and can make decisions about their units. While formalizing participation type and defining the communication tools and instruments, we need to learn about the user profiles. User profile has the potential to define the strategy with different characteristics. Residents and office users' participation tendencies are different because the relations with their units (residence or office) are different. Office users give less importance to their places than residents; they feel that they are temporary in the neighbourhood. Ownership status also affects the participation. Owners are the most important characters in the program. Regulations should encourage them with funding or bank support so they may feel more willing to regenerate their houses. Owners' behaviour are more positive than that of tenants.

Before starting regeneration implementation, it is important to create a team/group from the users to understand the problems. In order to improve the participatory group's consciousness and awareness, workshops and educational programs should be organized. A well-organized regeneration strategy cannot exist without user participation. From the very beginning, through to construction and management, the strategy needs users' ideas, stories and decisions about their places.



thank you...