

From Nursing Home to the Living Center: Elderly Care in Samsun and a Foresight for the Future Architecture

Alper BODUR
Ondokuz Mayıs University

Abstract: Nursing homes in Turkey are one of the places where the seniors try to live their life peacefully as getting older. A healthy life is not only the elimination of physical needs at the maximum level but also the ability to maintain spiritual, social and other beings at the highest level. Many factors such as social and cultural habits, economic conditions, nutrition are influential in keeping a healthy life. The study aims to evaluate nursing homes in Samsun Province and to propose an “Elderly Living Center” as a new alternative to the institutional care models like nursing homes by analyzing the perspective of elderly care in Turkey. Accordingly, an analysis was carried out on the places to be in an “Elderly Living Center” and how the relations should be realized in between. Researches on the subject and current situation of nursing homes in Turkey and especially in Samsun province were examined. The results of 19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Interior Architecture, 2017-2018 Spring Semester Graduation Project were also analyzed. In doing so, an assessment was made on the recommendation of the “Elderly Living Center.” One of the significant outcomes of the study showed that the design understanding in areas where seniors will be able to live healthier seems to change from nursing home to the life center.

Keywords: Nursing home, Life center, Elderly

Introduction

In the world, people live longer, birth rates are decreasing, and thus the elderly population continues to rise concerning its share in the numerical and total population (Ercan Şahin ve Emiroğlu, 2013; Altay et al., 2016; Sevim, 2017). The reasons for this significant increase in the elderly population are as follows: improvement of social conditions, medical care, nutrition, increased educational opportunities, improved housing conditions, etc. (Kutsal, 2009). According to the data of the World Health Organization, there were 600 million people over 60 years of age in the world in 2000. It is estimated that the population will be doubled in 2025, and the community over 60 will find 2 billion in 2050 (Ortabağ et al., 2011; Miranda et al., 2016). The increase in the elderly population gains importance as one of the most critical social problems of the world as a whole, especially in developed countries (Çağlar, 2014). It is inevitable that this increase will continue in the following years. For this reason, it is inevitable that new approaches such as prolonging the retirement age and the construction of new insurance systems will be emerged (Sevim, 2017).

There are many definitions related to the concept of the elderly in the literature. As Kurt et al. quotes (2010), World Health Organization describes aging as “a decrease in the ability to adapt to environmental factors”, while OECD defines it as “people over 65 years of age that is a heterogeneous group of people changing behavior and needs” (Kurt et al., 2010). When considering definitions related to the elderly, it is possible to say that the emergence of two essential perspectives. The former emphasizes the negative aspects such as loss of senses and abilities, being closed to change, which can be defined as the specific losses of old age. The latter emphasizes the positive aspects such as experience that can be seen as gain, knowledge, calm and consistent view of life (Çağlar, 2014).

It is known that the quality of life with aging has a significant reduction potential (Ercan Şahin ve Emiroğlu, 2013). The aim of the services to be offered for the elderly is to create an environment where the elderly will feel safe and can live in their environment (Oğlak, 2011). There will be a need to the elderly care models which

- This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

- Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of the Conference

has higher service quality and low cost to respond to the demands of the elderly without separating them from their environment in Turkey (Çağlar, 2014).

The study aims to evaluate nursing homes in Samsun which is a developing province in Turkey and to propose an “Elderly Living Center” as a new alternative to the institutional care models like nursing homes by analyzing the perspective of elderly care in Turkey. Accordingly, an analysis was carried out on the places to be in an “Elderly Living Center” and how the relations should be realized in between. Researches on the subject and current situation of nursing homes in Turkey and especially in Samsun province were examined. The results of 19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Interior Architecture, 2017-2018 Spring Semester Graduation Project were also analyzed. In doing so, an assessment was made on the recommendation of the “Elderly Living Center.” One of the significant outcomes of the study showed that the design understanding in areas where seniors will be able to live healthier seems to change from nursing home to the life center.

The Elderly Care in Turkey

Turkey is one of the countries with a young population yet today. On the other hand, the number of elderly population will follow a similar course shortly and will soon reach the proportion of seniors in developed countries (Kurt et al., 2010; Altay et al., 2016). Figure 1 shows the population projections by years in Turkey. Turkey's population estimated that it would be 82.077 million in 2020, 92.258 million in 2040, 93.476 million in 2050. As reducing, it will be 92.717 million in 2060 and 89.172 million in the year 2075 (Turkstat, 2015). As of 2050, the population over the age of 65 which was 6.8% of the total in 2008 will reach 16 million (about 17.6% of the total population) (Çağlar, 2014).

Years	Population (Thousand)	Years	Population (Thousand)
2016	78 966	2045	93 175
2017	79 766	2050	93 476
2020	82 077	2055	93 278
2025	85 569	2060	92 717
2030	88 428	2065	91 800
2035	90 680	2070	90 589
2040	92 258	2075	89 172

Figure 1. Population projections by years in Turkey, 2016-2075 (Source: Turkstat, 2015)

On 8-12 April 2002, the United Nations International Assembly for Ageing published the Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Madrid. The plan aims to guarantee that people, especially the elderly, live safely and respectably everywhere and continue to live with all rights in their communities (UN, 2002). In developed countries, the elderly care is directed to community-based care services (home care, day care, night care, home food distribution, supportive technologies (telemedicine, telecare, etc.)), which can vary according to the individual's needs rather than institutional care services. The aim is to ensure that individuals stay at home with their family and relatives as much as possible and to reduce the increasing costs of institutional care and to increase the quality of life with the satisfaction of the individual (Oğlak, 2011).

In recent years, the rapid changes occurring in the social structure in Turkey, except for the traditional family and kinship relations of the elderly has increased the need for state support and professional services. Under the Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the State Planning Organization (SPO) prepared a plan named Status of Elderly People in Turkey and National Plan of Action on Aging (Çohaz, 2010). In the plan, suggestions have been made for seniors to stay in an environment where they live and to access health and social care services (SPO, 2007).

Moreover, there are many legislations and regulations for the elderly in Turkey. The leading one is Social Services Law (SSL) which entered into force in 1983 to take measures for the elderly in need of protection, care or assistance, to maintain their lives in a healthy environment, peace and security in such a way that they can manage themselves and become productive. Also, there are two necessary regulations still in force: (1) Regulation on Nursing Home and Elderly Rehabilitation Centers came into effect in 2001, (2) the Regulation on the Private Nursing Homes and Elderly Care Centers emerged in 2008. In Regulation on Nursing Home and Elderly Rehabilitation Centers, minimum criteria for the departments which should be provided to seniors are determined. According to the regulation, the departments and units of the organization should be organized within the understanding of the home and family environment.

Besides, according to the Regulation on the Private Nursing Homes and Elderly Care Centers, it is compulsory to provide services for seniors in all institutions (nursing homes). The building should be in the city center or near the city center. Care should be taken to ensure that the elders have a garden with adequate space to travel around and so on. There are institutions responsible for elderly care. One of them is General Directorate of Social Assistance (formerly General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity (GDSAS)) which was established in 1956. According to the Directorate (2006), services for the elderly in Turkey are (1) home care services, (2) economic support to the elderly at home, (3) the elderly solidarity center, (4) daycare centers, (5) day care and rehabilitation centers (nursing homes), (6) the elderly apartment (mobile nursing homes) (GDSAS, 2006).

The Justice and Development Party (JDP) which has been the leading party for 16 years in Turkey states that home care services began in 2007 for the first time in Turkey (JDP, 2018), but not popularized at the desired level. The daycare centers, which is a social policy service for the elderly is developed as an intermediate solution alternative between the nursing home and home care. It is a low-cost service model in addition to being a maintenance model that provides social inclusion along with a safe and healthy environment that delays access to institutional care centers (Oğlak, 2011). Another social care service for the elderly is considered under the name of institutional care (Taşçı, 2010). These institutions are named Nursing Home, Elderly Care, and Rehabilitation Center in Turkey (Ortabağ et al., 2011). SSL describes nursing homes as the private social service organizations established to protect and care the seniors in need in a peaceful environment and to meet their social and psychological needs. According to the JDP, 357 nursing homes with a capacity of 29.350 people in Turkey serve the elderly (JDP, 2018).

There are many studies about nursing homes in Turkey. Ercan Şahin and Emiroğlu (2013) found that sensory abilities and social inclusion of seniors were higher with the increase in their activities in nursing homes. They found that daily life activities were an important factor affecting the quality of life of the elderly (Ercan Şahin and Emiroğlu, 2013). Care of the elderly is widespread in Turkey as home care (Şenol and Erdem, 2008). Older adults most want to live in their own homes (Öğüt et al., 2017). Overall, in parallel with the changing trends of the last decade in Turkey, it is seen that in line with the concept of social care, there is a change in elderly care from institutional care model to community-based care approach. However, the fact that it is not fully covered within the social security system and does not reach the individuals who are in need is considered a critical deficiency (Oğlak, 2011). However, nursing homes providing services to the elderly in Turkey emerged because of the families' transformation into the nuclear family, and due to the inability of serving the elderly in the family (Ardahan, 2010; Miroğlu, 2009). The majority of the elderly see the nursing home as a place where they cannot afford their care (Arpacı et al., 2015). Nursing homes are compulsory because the elderly do not have alternatives (Miroğlu, 2009; GDSAS, 2006). Nursing homes are generally considered socially unacceptable (Önder Erol, 2018) and in a sense abandoned (Aktaş Polat and Hira, 2017). In many studies, the reasons of the unhappiness and low quality of life of seniors living in nursing homes are loneliness, economic inadequacy, health problems, and their occurrence together (Balki ve Özyonar, 2017; Kurt et al., 2010; Oğlak, 2011).

Regarding positive aspects of nursing homes, it is imperative in preferring a nursing home for the elderly and their relatives that the nursing home should be close to where they used to live. The situation in which the elderly are less satisfied is the negativity in their relations (GDSAS, 2006). Seniors who live in nursing homes voluntarily communicate more with their environment and establish better connections (Ilhan et al., 2016). There is an improvement in life satisfaction and social relations of older adults who are dealing with gardening. There is a decrease in loneliness perception. Also, with the increase of physical activity, depression decreases and satisfaction with life increases (Altuntas et al., 2013). For instance, looking at the forest rather than looking at the wall that increases the satisfaction of the elderly should be a feature of nursing homes (Tarakçı Eren et al., 2017). However, some of the least satisfied properties of the nursing homes are the distance to the city center, and the lack of sports areas and inadequate. Besides, seniors want to have similar items in nursing homes like in their homes (GDSAS, 2006).

The priorities of the elderly and their families for the ideal nursing home is a nursing home with their rooms which they can arrange as they wish and have a kitchen, toilet, and bathroom. The seniors want to have their belongings in their place. They want a nursing home with comfortable walking, wooded, flowered green space and a quiet and safe environment. It is understood from the ideal nursing home that they are places where every kind of needs of the older adults can be organized in the shortest time, in the best way, which they can think that they belong, happy, feel important, and loved (GDSAS, 2006).

The Elderly Care in Samsun

Research Area

Samsun is at the central part of the Black Sea Region (MEU, 2015). Samsun province, situated between the deltas where Yeşilırmak and Kızılırmak rivers are poured into the Black Sea, has an area of 9.083 km². The Black Sea is located in the north of the province, Sinop province in the west side, Tokat and Amasya provinces in the South, and Çorum province in the south-west (Url-1). It is comprised of 17 districts, 18 municipalities (Url-2) and 992 villages (Url-3) with a population of 1.312.990 in 2017 (Turkstat, 2017). The number of people aged 65 and over in Samsun was 143.010 which is approximately 11% of the total population of the city by the end of the year 2017 (Turkstat, 2017).



Figure 2. Samsun province (Source: Url-4)

Samsun Family, Labor and Social Services Provincial Directorate (SFLSSPD), working under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, provides support for all needy and risk groups such as seniors to those in lack of protection. The mission and vision of the Directorate are to indicate to prevent social problems and to make social services accessible to all needy groups. According to the data of SFLSSPD; there are five nursing homes providing services for the elderly in the city center. Four of these are; (1) Samsun Nursing Home Maintenance and Rehabilitation Center, (2) Havza Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center, (3) Bafra 75. Yıl Nursing Home, (4) Ladik Kemal Kaplan Nursing Home (SFLSSPD, 2010).



Figure 3. Bafra 75th Year Nursing Home Center (Source: SFLSSPD, 2010)

A total of 207 elderly and 563 disabled persons are under the care of these four nursing homes. The other nursing home is the Metropolitan Municipality Nursing Home which has a special allowance for opening by the SFLSSPD. The nursing home can accommodate up to 95 people and currently serves 63 people (Url-5). When the population of the older adults living in Samsun is considered, it can be assessed that there is much work to be done by the Directorate.

Student Studies

Due to the increasing importance of care services for the elderly, OMU Faculty of Architecture Department of Interior Architecture 2017-2018 Spring Term graduation project has been selected as the Elderly Living Center by the author as the coordinator of the project. With the project, it was aimed to fulfill the studies which are carried out and planned for the elderly at a more advanced level.

The study area was "Ilkadım Derebağcı Social Facilities Building" which is currently being used as a social facility and located in Ilkadım which is a district in the center of the city. The construction system of the

building is reinforced concrete similar to the existing nursing homes. The floor squares of the study area need to be solved within the scope of the project are as follows: (1) Basement floor: 1168,00 m², (2) Ground floor: 1189,00 m², (3) 1st floor: 340,00 m².



Figure 4. Ilkadim Derebahce Social Facilities Building (Source: Tolga Yavuzylmaz)

The Graduation Project was conducted with juries held at specific intervals. Besides, the students are also expected to investigate the current aged care methods and expressed their opinions on the issue. In the first stage, students approached the subject conceptually. They explained how social relations are reflected in the space and why the design concept is inspired. They stated that they are trying to solve the deficiencies they have seen in the existing care methods in their design. In the plans, ideas such as traditional neighborhood, home and family environment, stratification, use of water, the importance of daylight, street feel, accessibility, the reflection of the outside environment, movement, balance, perception have come to the fore. According to the students, old age is the last slice of the cake. The elderly living center should be the place of transformation. The elderly may be overwhelmed by each other, so the design should be shaped accordingly. Equality is important in old age. For the elderly, the action is a vital condition and needs to be included in the designs. The services above in the existing nursing homes are not sufficiently covered.

In the second jury, within the design decisions discussed in the first jury, the main idea of the projects and the functional distribution of the approaches were expected to be explained. It was seen that the accommodation and common areas in the plans could not be solved sufficiently from the functional point of view. There was a weak analysis in the relationships between the floors, environmental factors, internalization of the project, and investigating the subject.

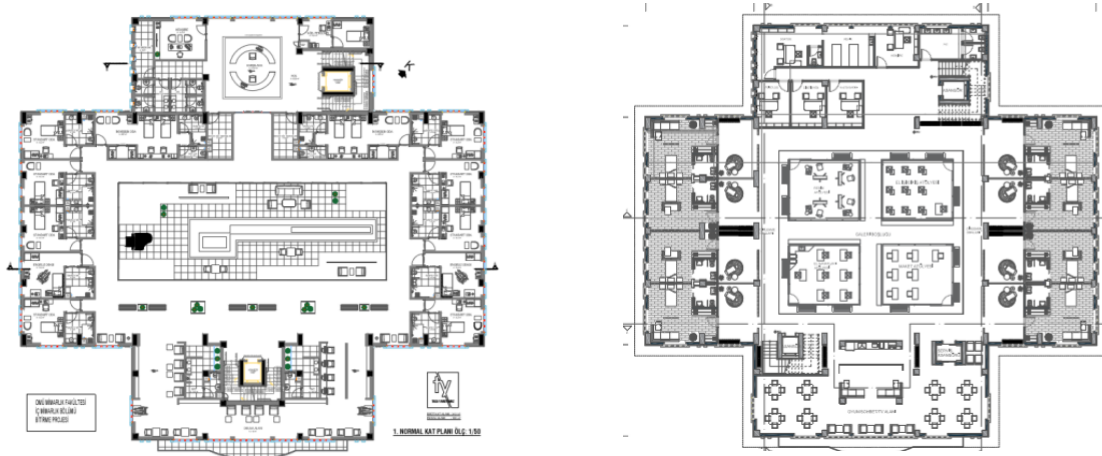


Figure 5. Student projects showing social spaces and bedrooms together

In the third jury, design development and evaluation studies continued. In general, air-free spaces have been formed in some projects, and in-house circulation deficiencies have been observed. The students stated that old age is a privilege and social success, and more literature research is needed to understand this well in their projects. In the final jury, students gave information about the character, design process, design decisions, interesting and important points of the projects. According to the students, the appearance of the doors of the old houses should also be at the gates of the accommodation where the elderly stay in the living center so that they can maintain their old habits. Some indicated that social areas should be given priority. Seniors who struggle with a disease such as Alzheimer's should be privileged. It was emphasized that all rooms should be designed

for disabled people. Overall, the students shared various opinions on the care of the elderly. They stressed the importance of old age in the process of human life.

Conclusion

People now live longer regarding changing living conditions, developing technology, diversity of food services, etc. As a result, problems such as neediness and inadequacy arise. Therefore, it is essential to solving the issues that will occur in the old life. The social policies implemented by the countries reduce or increase the problems experienced by the elderly in the aging period. Social policies for the elderly in Turkey are directed to hand the laws and regulations currently in force. The state, while taking into account its social responsibility concerning elderly care, reveals many different ways from home care services to community-based care services. In providing this, it is essential to realize the elderly without separating them from social life. In the study in which a sample life center project is also evaluated for elderly individuals, it can be emphasized that institutional care services should be taken from the perspective of the Nursing Home on a broader view and should be passed to the Living Center phenomenon.

As a result of the study, it can be concluded that one of the most significant differences between nursing homes and the living centers is the understanding of the concept of senescence. In this sense, strengthening the social aspects of the policies under the institutional care services in Turkey is essential. It is a critical threshold for the lifespan of old age. Accordingly, it is clear that there is a decrease in some functions in the aging process and the requirements. In the first place, instead of the Nursing Home evoking a place where physical needs are met, a space construction in the understanding of Living Center should be formed in minds. Legislative updates should be made to allow the strengthening of the social aspects of the elderly in Turkey within the framework of institutional care concept. For the elderly to spend their last years happily and peacefully, welfare space designs and management organizations in nursing homes need to be diversified and developed by considering elderly satisfaction and happiness.

Notes

The author was the coordinator of the jury of the graduation project. The jury members were Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatih US, Architect Mr. Sacit ACAR, Architect Mrs. Ayşe Esra TÜRKEL, and also Res. Asst. Ms. Selin ALICI served as an assistant. The views signified in the research are not the views of the jury members but only the opinions of the author.

References

- Aktaş Polat, S., & Hira, İ. (2017). Perception of nursing homes as accomodation units. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 14(4), 3250-3267.
- Altay, B., Çavuşoğlu, F., Çal, A. (2016). The factors affecting the perception of elderly patients towards health, quality of life and health-related quality of life. *TAF PrevMedBull*, 15(3), 181.
- Altuntaş, O., Uyanık, M., Kayıhan, H. (2013). Investigation of the activities and participation of nursing home residents: a pilot study. *Journal of Occupational Therapy and Rehabilitation*, 1(2), 21-30.
- Ardahan, M. 2010. Aging and nursing home. *Journal of Family and Community*, 11(5), 25-32.
- Arpacı, F., Tokyürek, Ş., Bilgili, N. (2015). Life quality of elderly living in the nursing home. *Elderly Issues Research Journal*, 8(1), 1-11.
- Balki, S., & Özyonar, A. (2017). Effects of isometric strength of the trunk and leg muscles on the quality of life and balance in nursing home residents. *Adnan Menderes University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 1(3), 92-100.
- Çağlar, T. (2014). Elderliness and social work: the example of life support centre. *Hacettepe University Journal of Economics & Administrative Sciences*, 25 (2), 145-162.
- Çohaz, A. (2010). Offered care services of age and elderly in Turkey. *The 3rd Academic Geriatrics Congress*, Famagusta, Northern Cyprus: May 26-30.
- Ercan Şahin, N., & Emiroğlu, O.N. (2013). Quality of life and related factors of older people in nursing home. *Journal of Hacettepe University Faculty of Nursing*, 1(1), 57-66.
- General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity (GDSAS) (2006). *Evaluation of social services for the elderly abstract report, (summary of qualitative and quantitative research findings) No: 4638*. Social

- Services Child Protection Institution Social Risk Mitigation Project Coordination Unit, Ankara, Turkey.
- İlhan, N., Arpacı, S., Havaoğlu, D., Kalyoncuoğlu, H., Sarı, P. (2016). Quality of life and factors affecting the quality of life of elderly nursing home residents. *Clin. Exp. Health Sci.*, 6(2), 56-65.
- JDP (2018). *Social policies for our elderly*. Justice and Development Party Social Policy Presidency, Ankara, Turkey.
- Kurt, G., Beyaztaş Y.F., Erkol, Z. (2010). The problems of aged people and the life satisfaction. *Turkish Journal of Forensic Medicine*, 24(2): 32-39.
- Kutsal, Y.G. (2009). *Aging people of the aging world*. Turkish Pharmacists Association, Ankara.
- Ministry of Environment and Urbanization (MEU) (2015). *Samsun city identity workshop final report*. Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, Samsun, Turkey.
- Miranda L.C., Soares, S.M., Silva, P.A. (2016). Quality of life and associated factors in elderly people at a reference center. *Ciencia & Saude Coletiva*, 21(11):3533–3544.
- Miroğlu, C. (2009). *An examination of a nursing home in Ankara*. Master's Thesis, Ankara University, Institute of Social Science, Ankara.
- Oğlak, S. (2011). The community-based care models for the need of care of elderly people in Turkey. *"İşGüç" Industrial Relations and Human Resources Journal*, 13 (4), 117-130. DOI:10.4026/1303-2860.2011.191.x
- Ortabağ, T., Özdemir, Ö., Kılıç, S. (2011). Determination of the risky behaviors of elderly individuals toward home accidents living in a private care center. *Gülhane Medical Journal*, 53, 189-194.
- Öğüt, S., Öğüt Düzen, K., Polat, M. (2017). Feelings and thoughts of elderly people living in nursing homes on aging. *Celal Bayar University-Health Sciences Institute Journal*, 4(1), 522-526.
- Önder Erol, P. (2018). Nursing home in Turkey: a remedy for the changing intergenerational relationships or a total institution. *Abant İzzet Baysal University Graduate School of Social Sciences Journal of Social Sciences*, 18(3), 265-278.
- Pandelaki, E. E., Wijayanti, Pribadi, S.P. (2014). The elderly friendly high-rise housing: a comparison study between Indonesia & Japan. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, 20: 146-153.
- Samsun Family, Labor and Social Services Provincial Directorate (SFLSSPD) (2010). *Annual report*. Samsun Family, Labor and Social Services Provincial Directorate, Samsun, Turkey.
- Sevim, K. (2017). Elderly care in Netherland. *Journal of Social Work*, 1(1), 55-63.
- Şenol, D., & Erdem, S. (2008). The perception of old age and the nursing home in the elderly culture. *International Symposium on Family Culture Conference*, Edirne, Turkey: March 25-27.
- Tarakçı Eren, E., Var, M., Düzenli, T. (2017). Examination of the official nursing home gardens in Trabzon in comparison with scoring method, *Elderly Issues Research Journal*, 10(1), 60-72.
- Taşçı, F. (2010). Social policies for the old: the cases of Sweden, Germany, Uk, And Italy. *Labour and Society*, 1 (24), 175-202.
- The State Planning Organization (2007). *Status of elderly people in Turkey and national plan of action on aging*. General Directorate of Social Sectors and Coordination of State Planning Organization, Ankara, Turkey.
- Turkish Republic Official Gazette (1983). *Social services law (1983)*. Turkish Republic Official Gazette, 18059, May 27, 1983.
- Turkish Republic Official Gazette. (2001). *Regulation on nursing home and elderly rehabilitation centers*. Turkish Republic Official Gazette (TROG), 24325, 21 February 2001.
- Turkish Republic Official Gazette. (2008). *Regulation on private nursing homes and elderly care centers*. Turkish Republic Official Gazette (TROG), 26960, 07 August 2008.
- TURKSTAT (2015). *Turkey in statistics 2015*, Turkish Statistical Institute, Ankara.
- TURKSTAT (2017). Address based population registration system (ABPRS), 2007-2017. Turkish Statistical Institute, Ankara, Turkey.
- UN. (2002). *International Plan of Action on Ageing*, New York, USA.
- (Url-1). <http://www.samsun.gov.tr/cografi-yapi>. [Data received 28.10.2018].
- (Url-2). <http://samsun.yerelnet.org.tr/il.php?iladi=SAMSUN>. [Data received 28.10.2018].
- (Url-3). <http://www.koylerimiz.info/samsun/sehir-55-samsun-koyleri.html>. [Data received 28.10.2018].
- (Url-4). <https://www.samsun.com.tr/moduller.aspx?modul=samsun-hakkinda-ilceler#.W9YbXGgzbiU>. [Data received 28.10.2018].
- (Url-5). <https://samsun.aile.gov.tr/istatistikler/2013-yili-istatistikleri>. [Data received 29.10.2018].

Author Information

Alper Bodur

Ondokuz Mayıs University

Faculty of Architecture

Contact E-mail: *boduralper@yandex.com*
