

THE BATIKENT PROJECT, ANKARA, TURKEY

World Habitat Award Winner, 1985

Co-operation and partnership as a solution to Turkish urbanisation

The Batikent Project in Turkey shows the world how large new towns can be rapidly and successfully built, using the self-help efforts of the people and a co-operative approach by the authorities. It illustrates the importance of providing a high quality living environment, both physically and socially, thereby providing a viable alternative to the haphazard squatter settlements which continue to multiply in and around so many of the world's cities. Moreover, it gives an example of how such results can be quickly achieved if all sectors of the community, including the children, are involved in its implementation.

Project background

The Batikent project is the largest co-operative housing development scheme in Turkey. It was designed to provide a solution to Ankara's housing problems, and prepare the city for development into the 1990s by channelling urban expansion along a 'corridor', 13 kilometres to the north-west of the city. The project is under construction on 1,035 hectares (or 10.5 million m² of land) adjacent to the main Ankara/Istanbul Highway. Ankara Municipality began preparations for the project in 1974, Kent-Koop (a non-profit, civic organisation comprised of 13 housing co-operatives) was established in 1979 to co-direct the operation, and initial construction work (on infrastructure and experimental housing) began in 1980. The project will be completed in 1993.

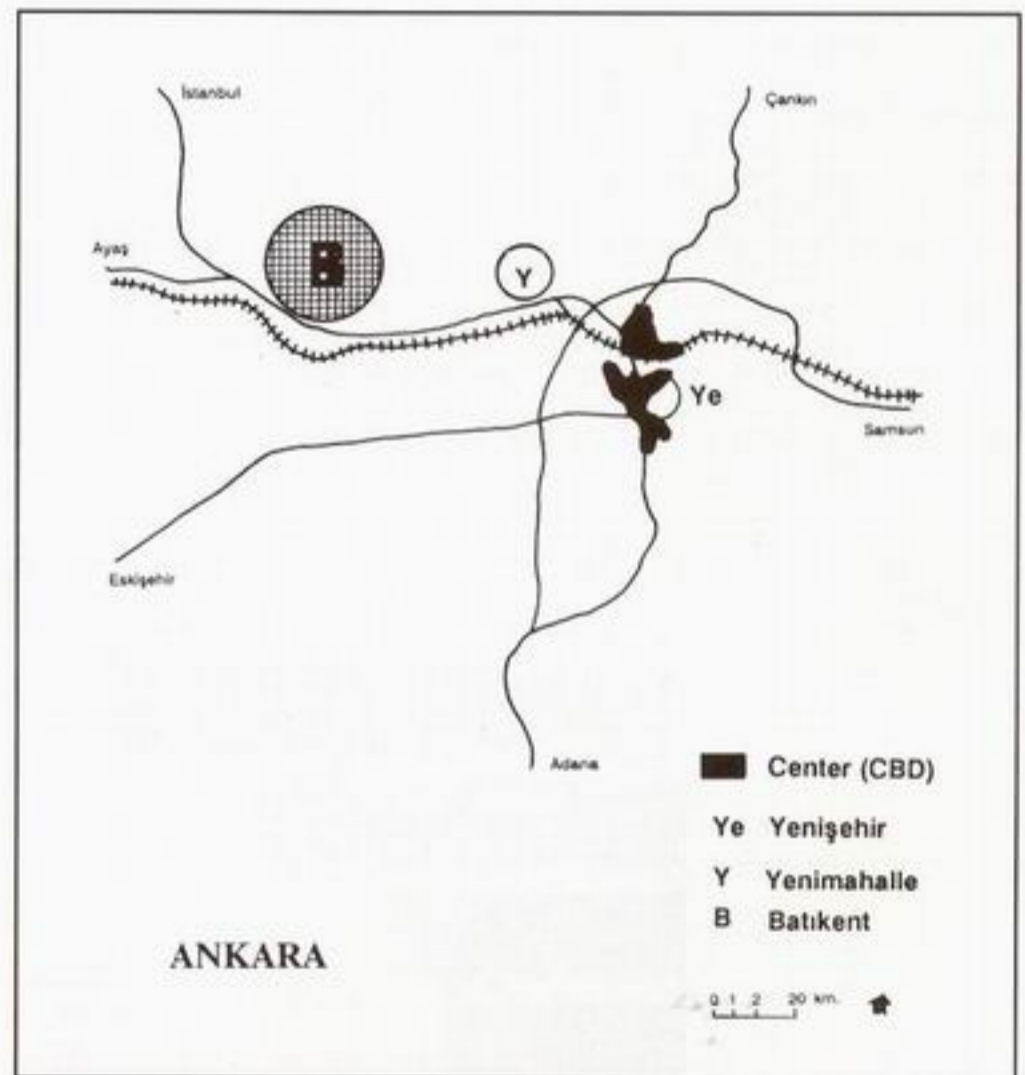


Figure 1

The location of the Batikent project in relation to Ankara.



Figure 4
Batikent

Batikent is the single largest new housing project in Turkish history. By 1993, it will provide 50,000 low-cost housing units for 200,000 low-middle income people. Over 50 per cent of the land available is assigned to social, cultural and infrastructural facilities.

elementary schools, 4 high schools, 4 vocational high schools, 4 maternity centres and 4 medical centres. Green areas and parks are planned on the ratio of 20 m² to each person. In this way, the Batikent project will not only provide shelter, but will become an independent centre with its own sources of commerce, retailing and recreation.

(b) Housing

On completion in 1993, Batikent will provide 50,000 housing units for 200,000 low to middle income people, on 497 hectares of land. 90 per cent of the housing (45,000 units) will be owner occupied, while the remaining 10 per cent (5,000 units) will be for rent. Both low-rise and high-rise designs are planned. The former is low-density housing with a basic format that includes two storeys, 100 m² of living space, and a small garden. A total of 18,000 units of this type will be built, in housing blocks or rows, towards the periphery of the site. High rise, high-density apartment buildings will be built close to the

centre of Batikent. 28,000 units in blocks of 5-10 storeys, with an area of between 85-100 m² are planned, constituting 60 per cent of the dwellings at the project. The remaining 4,000 units are rental houses to be built at locations throughout Batikent's districts and main centres.

Population density will vary across the site, falling from the centre (600 persons/hectare), to the periphery (350 persons/hectare). To date, a total of 14,360 housing units including both high and low-rise designs have been completed at Batikent, providing shelter for 71,000 people. The remaining 36,640 planned units will be completed by 1993.

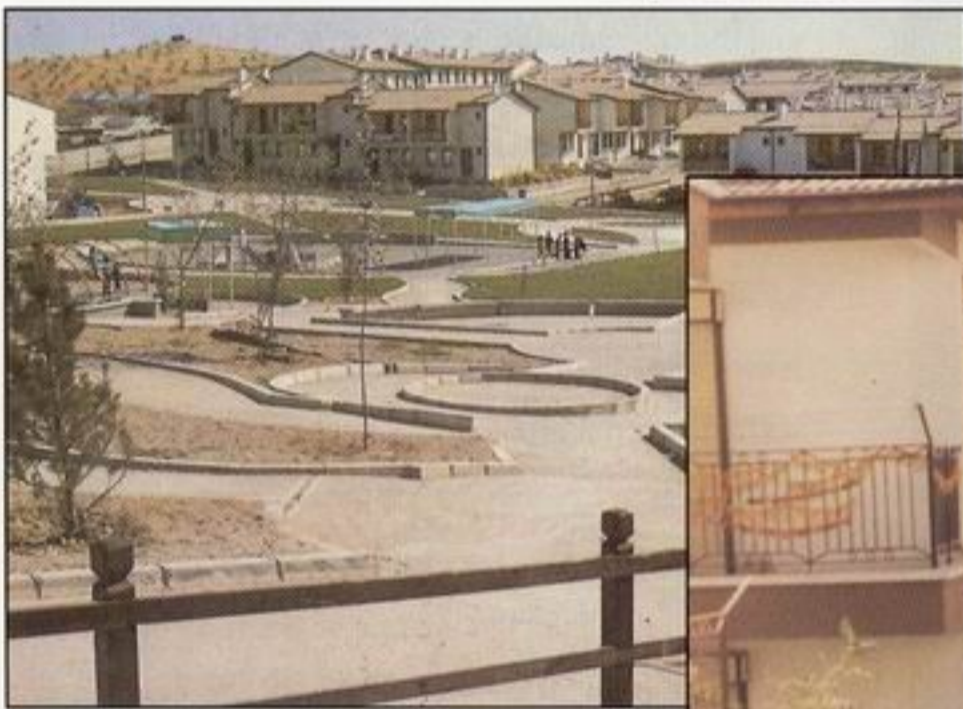




6 Figures 5-9 Housing

Both low-rise and high-rise housing has been built at Batikent. 18,000 low rise units similar to Figures 7-9 have been built on the periphery of the site, and some 28,000 high density apartment blocks of 5-10 storeys are found closer to the centre of the site. (see Figure 5, 6).

The construction techniques for both residential and community buildings have been chosen in order to minimise costs. As a result, prefabricated concrete columns and beams with infill



7 Figure 9 illustrates finished low-rise housing units, with small gardens.

walls constructed from traditional stonework are widely used on the Batikent site. Although self-build methods and self-help improvement of units were originally considered as credible options for construction at the Batikent site, skilled, trained labour was actually used for the building phase of the project.



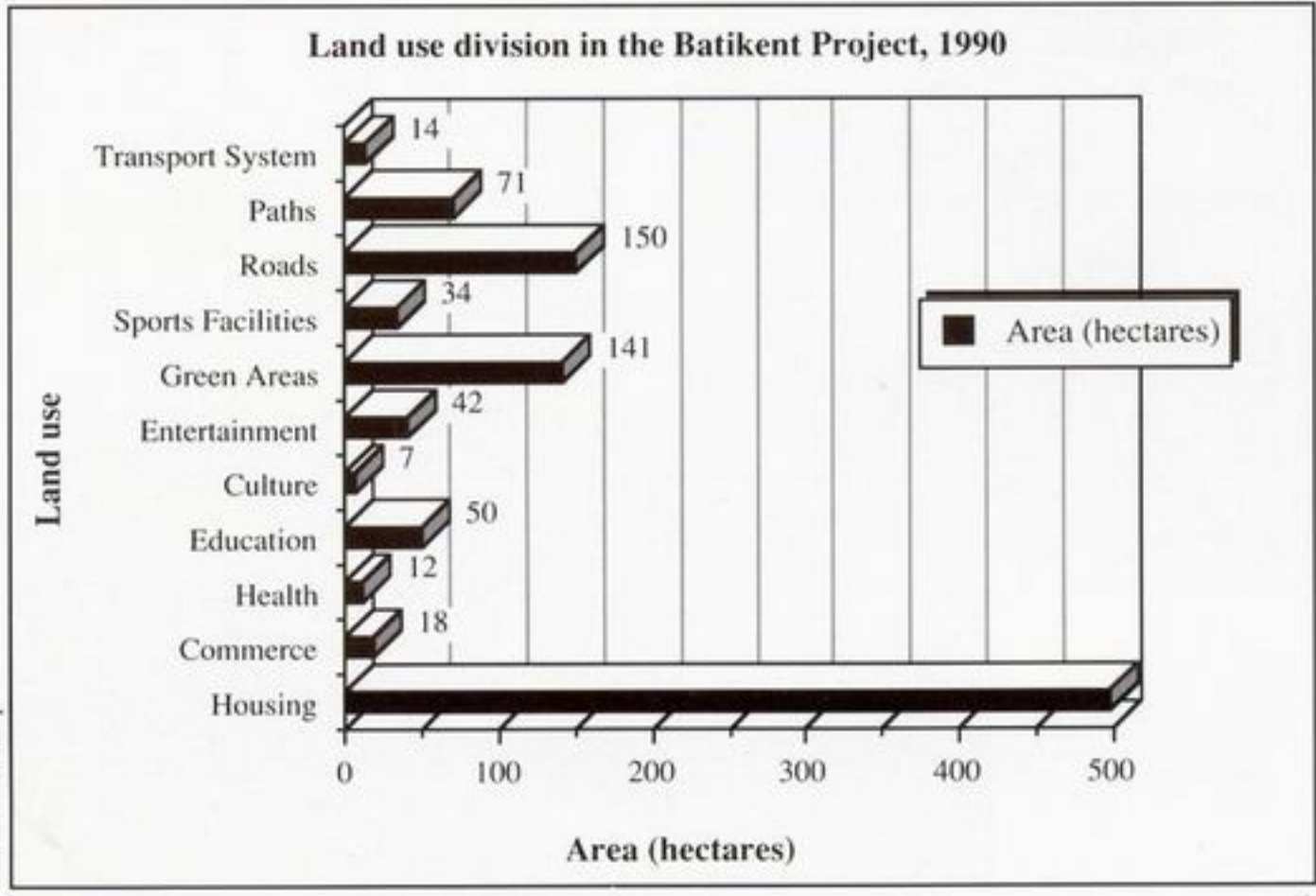


Figure 10
Land use at Batikent
 The bar graph to the left underlines the principle applied to Batikent that housing alone cannot satisfy the needs of urban dwellers. Hence the allocation of 22 per cent of land between education, leisure and green spaces alone.

(c) Services and infrastructure

Responsibility for the provision of public utilities and amenities is divided between Ankara Municipality, the central government and Kent-Koop, details of which are outlined later. The division of land use at Batikent is set out above.

(d) Social activities

Great emphasis is placed upon the social and cultural activities at Batikent, since Kent-Koop maintains that such features need to be integrated with housing if the project is to be successful as a place to live, work and relax. Generally, it is the role of Kent-Koop housing co-operatives at Batikent to stage and promote a range of activities for their residents, although particular agencies are prominent in hosting specific events. The commitment to developing Batikent as a complete urban entity is demonstrated in the division of land use, with 22 per cent (or 231 hectares) of land allocated to education, entertainment, green spaces and sports facilities alone. This emphasis is further illustrated by the role of community centres, which have become foci for

public participation in social activities at Batikent, and through innovative funding methods that reallocate revenue from commercial areas, to the construction of entertainment and cultural centres. In addition, a series of social functions are organised by the Batikent Cultural and Educational Foundation which aims to improve and broaden leisure time activities at the project site. In particular, it has been successful in introducing a Batikent radio station, children's libraries, nurseries and an open-air cinema for the settlement. On a larger scale, Kent-Koop, in co-operation with the Turkish Radio and Television Institute (TRT), runs the International Children Festival and Forestation Campaign each year. These events are designed to foster fraternity and friendship between children of different nations (by inviting children's groups from a variety of nations), and to accelerate the process of afforestation. The 'April 23rd Forest of Friendship' for instance, has significantly benefited from this latter campaign through the planting of new saplings annually. By the end of 1991, afforestation will account for an additional 100,000 trees at Batikent, as part of a

Figures 11-14 The integrated approach to urban settlements taken by Kent-Koop attempts to develop Batikent as a place not only to live, but also to work and relax. Social activities are fundamental to achieving this goal.

Figure 11 Children's festival, 1991

Figure 12 Bicycle race, 1991

Figure 13 Children's playground

Figure 14 Tree planting as part of afforestation campaign

planting programme that is designed to reach 500,000 trees by 1995. A Beautiful Garden Competition is arranged each year among the co-operative housing sites in an effort to improve the environment of each housing block by encouraging and rewarding this type of community involvement. These examples indicate that in most cases, social activities are given a dual purpose - to foster links within the community and extend the range of social infrastructure.

Educational programmes are fundamental to Kent-Koop's aim of maintaining a high standard of knowledge and experience amongst its staff and associate members. By developing an information network in this way, the organisation as a whole can operate more efficiently and responsibly. Seminars on housing and the place of co-operatives in Turkey demonstrate different models and methods of development that may be valuable in the implementation of the Batikent project.

To ensure that construction workers are equipped with the latest skills and building techniques, Kent-Koop co-operates with the Ministry of Education in organising practical training courses and workshop sessions that cover trades such as plastering, masonry, iron-working, sanitary installation and structural frameworks. In this way, a constant supply



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of qualified workers are always available, maintaining a consistency of construction throughout the Batikent project. Kent-Koop finances its training, education and overseas trips itself, through monthly fees paid by each individual member of its housing co-operatives, and from rent generated by the commercial centres at Batikent.

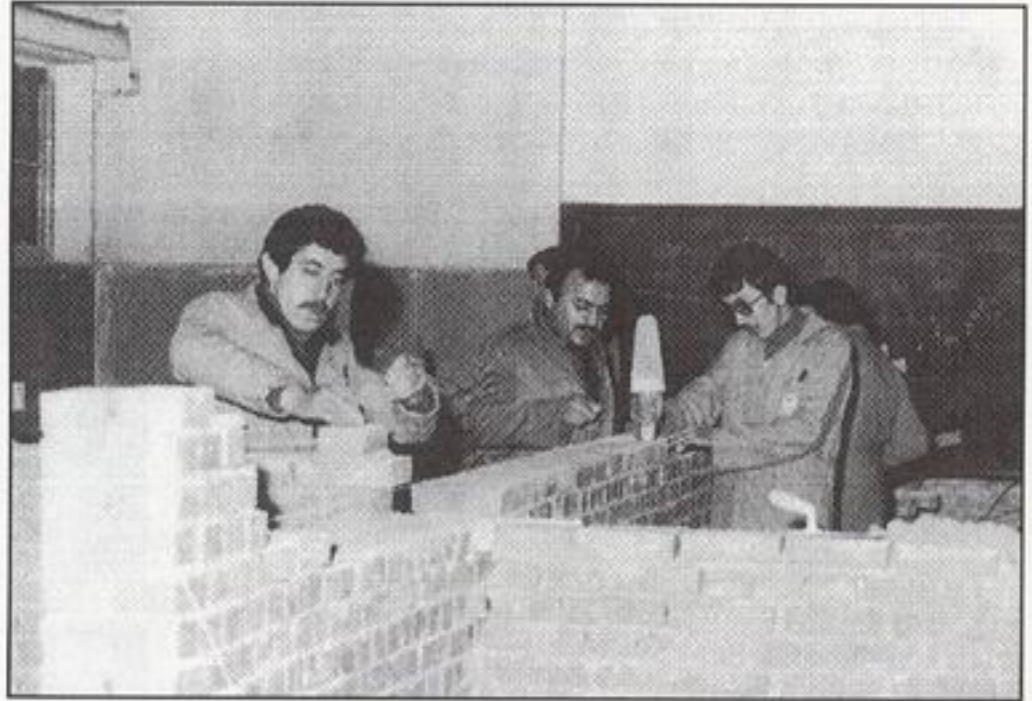


Figure 15
Education and training

Batikent finances its own training programmes to ensure high quality workmanship. Above - a bricklaying workshop.

The publishing activities of Kent-Koop have expanded significantly since 1979. Its periodicals and reports (which are valued as academic articles on the role of housing co-operatives), now exceed 100; 'Batikent News' is in circulation, providing a valuable source of local news to the community; and 1989 saw the launch of a monthly newspaper that is managed and produced entirely by children living in Batikent.

The Batikent project is the single largest new settlement scheme ever developed in Turkey, and the scale of investment echoes this magnitude - costing approximately 1.1 trillion TL at 1990 prices, or the equivalent of \$ 500 million. This sum is divided

between four principal elements of expenditure at Batikent, as set out in Figure 16;

In order to finance such a vast investment project, Kent-Koop has secured loans from a variety of domestic and international sources. In 1986, domestic funding was provided by the National Housing Fund (42 per cent), Social Security Fund (2.6 per cent), and individual sources (12 per cent).

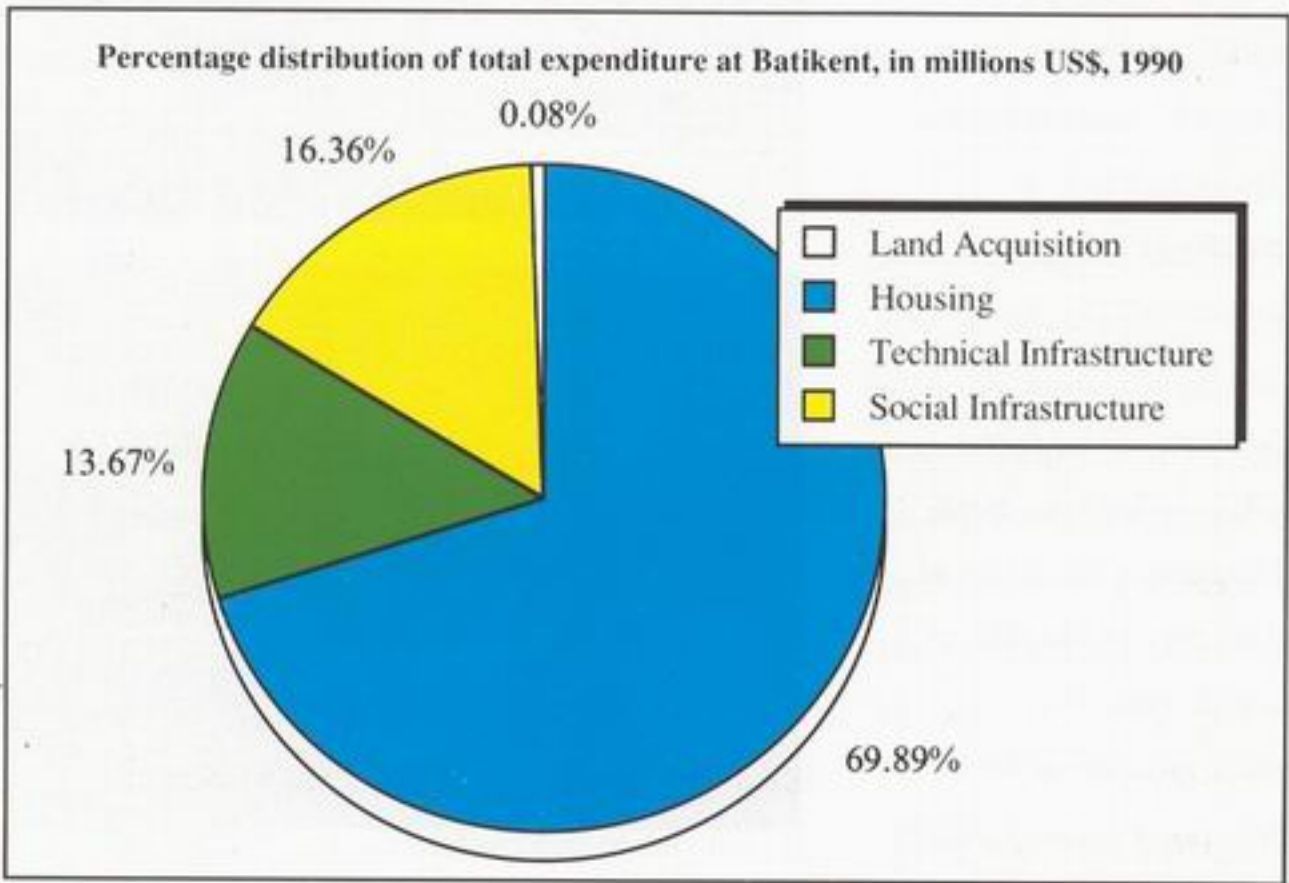


Figure 16
Expenditure

Over 1.1 trillion TL (\$500 million) has been invested in the Batikent project, with over two-thirds spent on housing alone.

Finance for the project was raised from a variety of international and domestic sources, including the Resettlement Fund of the European Council.

The remainder (43.4 per cent), was received as a loan from the Resettlement Fund of the European Council, which has contributed a total of \$86.9 million, or just under 20 per cent of the total costs of the project, since 1980. At the local level, the Batikent Saving Bank has recently been established in association with the Turkey Real Estate Credit Bank in order to provide access to finance and loans for low and middle income co-operative members.

There is a 5 per cent interest rate on all loans secured by Kent-Koop for its financing of the Batikent project, and these loans are repaid by the collective contributions of individual Kent-Koop members, through regular monthly contributions over a 10-15 year repayment period.

Kent-Koop: a model of co-operation

The Union of Batikent Housing Co-operatives (Kent-Koop), founded on 17th October 1979, is a non-profit, civilian organisation formed with the basic aim of addressing the housing problems of lower to middle income groups in Ankara. It seeks to achieve this by mobilising the self-help efforts and resources of the people themselves to satisfy their common demands, rather than expecting the State to act as provider. Thus, a democratic structure, and participation in the main decision-making processes are principle objectives of Kent-Koop. Although initially focused around 13 housing co-operatives, Kent-Koop drew support and active participation from similar civilian organisations such as trade unions, 'traders and artisans' organisations, and professional chambers. This breadth of support not only heightened public confidence in Kent-Koop, but also injected needed financial resources, and organisational experience.

Underlying the approach of the Union is the belief

that the shelter needs of the people cannot be divorced from their multiple social, economic and cultural needs. This principle is clearly shown at Batikent, which has been intentionally developed as an integrated entity, incorporating all the anticipated needs and wants of its citizens into the settlement structure. Hence, the urban housing co-operative model pioneered at Batikent has become a dynamic alternative to the common practice of ordinary Turkish co-operatives, that are solely concerned with the construction of housing units.

(a) Partnership and provision at Batikent

Batikent demonstrates the great potential that exists for collaborative ventures between the public and private housing sectors. The development of the project has become a model for this type of co-operation, based on a partnership between three agents - the central administration, Ankara Municipality and Kent-Koop. By dividing responsibility for the project, and delegating duties between these three agents, resources are maximised, knowledge applied appropriately, and provision efficiently executed.

For the implementation of Batikent, a Main Protocol was signed between Ankara Municipality and Kent-Koop on 15th December 1980, which defines the obligations of each agent in relation to the project. This relationship is illustrated in Table I overleaf. In general, it is the local administration and Kent-Koop that play the most active roles in provision of services, while the central government acts as a catalyst for development at Batikent, financing, supporting and approving when necessary.

Replication

Kent Koop was founded in 1979 as a union of housing co-operatives formed specifically to

Task	Agency Responsible	
Land appropriation	Municipality	
Public utilities	Municipality	
Green areas	Municipality	
Commercial areas	Municipality	Kent-Koop
Social services	Central government	
Applications for housing	Kent-Koop	
Financing	Central government	Central government

Table 1

The division of responsibility at Batikent

Specific responsibilities for the implementation of the Batikent project as outlined under the Main Protocol of 15th December 1980.

Source: Kent Koop

implement the Batikent project. Today, it has developed into an organisation that embraces 105 co-operatives with 28,000 associate members that stretch across Turkey. Since 1989, the experience, knowledge and trust that was gained during the implementation of its urban housing co-operation projects, gave Kent-Koop the inspiration to initiate further housing developments, (based on the lessons learnt at Batikent), in cities elsewhere in Turkey. At present, 14 new settlement projects have been undertaken on behalf of Municipal authorities, totalling over 140,000 dwelling units, housing an estimated population of over 300,000 people. The schemes vary in size, from 220 units at Marmaris in the city of Mugla, to 16,500 units in the Dogukent project. All the projects have been prepared and developed by Kent-Koop through its consulting firm, Kent-Kur. In addition, Kent-Kur has recently begun feasibility studies for a second resettlement project in Ankara, three times the size of Batikent when completed.

More specifically, since 1987, Kent-Koop has implemented a series of 'Urban Development Projects' across Turkey which seek to improve

housing through the application of co-operative principles, and self-help efforts. The Zafertepe project was one of the first applications of this principle to a squatter settlement, and involved the construction of public paths and stairways by the people living in the area, thus giving easy access to previously inaccessible social centres and amenities. By mobilising the people of Zafertepe, solutions have been found to the inadequacies of urban facilities in this area that would not have been met by the public sector. The project's success led to further replication, and at present, 11 squatter upgrading co-operatives are at work throughout the cities of Turkey.

At the Yenibati project, 224 villas each with an area of between 350-600 m², and four storey apartment blocks with 60-135 m² of floorspace are planned for construction. In this settlement, Kent-Koop intends to apply the knowledge of Batikent to implement a project in which the social, economic and physical elements of the settlement are complementary.

The Leisure Gardens Project is a unique venture for both Kent-Koop and Turkey, since the project creates

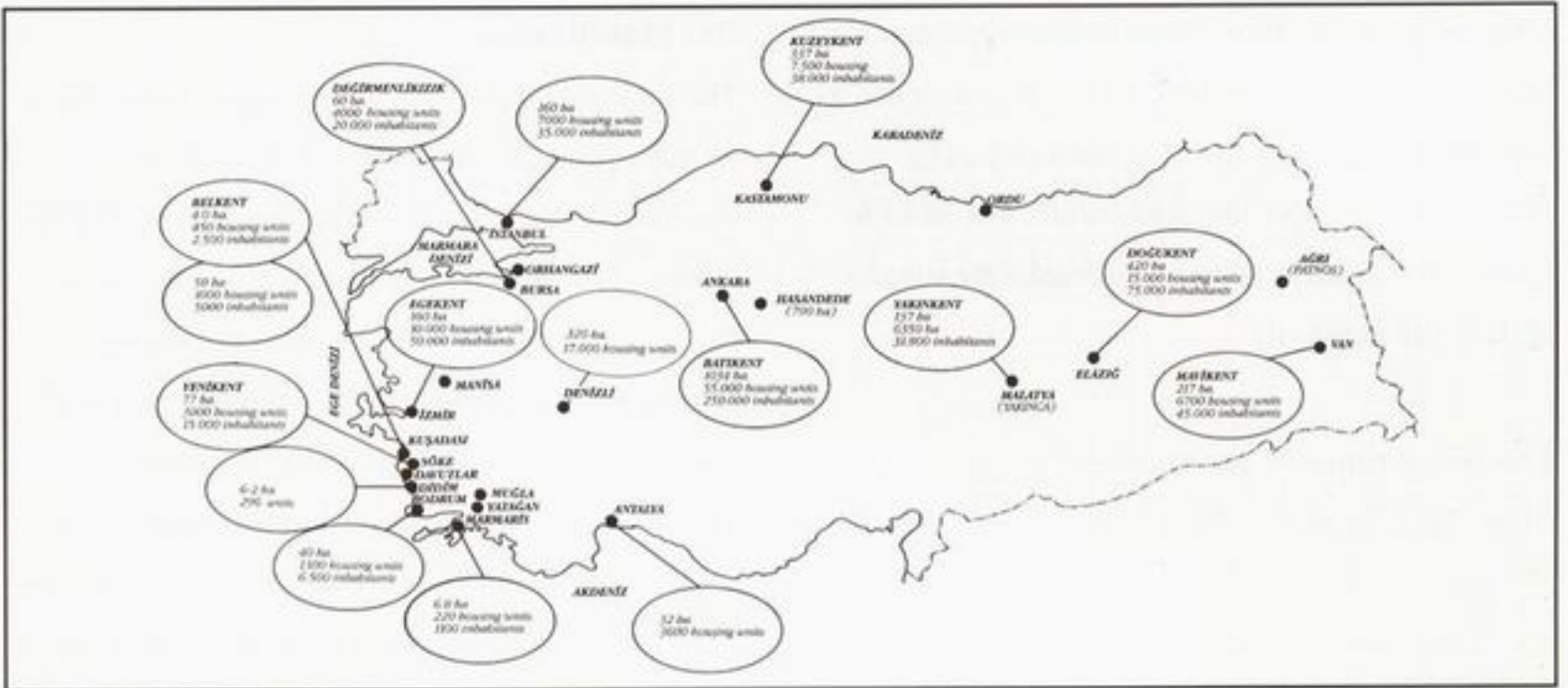


Figure 17 Location of new housing projects implemented by Kent-Koop across Turkey.

Replication across Turkey

Kent-Koop has grown rapidly since its formation in 1979, and is today applying the lessons of urban development that were first learnt at Batikent to 14 other settlement projects in Turkey.

Figures 18, 19 Self-help construction of pathways at the Zafertepe Squatter Improvement Project in 1987.



400 gardens each with a 50 m² area, and recreation grounds through co-operative effort. It is designed to enhance the quality of life of urban dwellers by establishing a relationship with nature, that seeks to release their creative talents, and reduce the stresses of daily life in the city.

The importance of the Batikent project

In summary the key aspects of the Batikent project are:

(i) Co-operation

Above all, the Batikent development shows that housing the lower and middle income dwellers of Ankara can only be achieved through co-operation and partnership in the provision of services. No single organisation, whether it is in the public or private sector, governmental or civil society, possesses adequate resources to satisfy present and future housing demand in Turkey alone. In sum, the project is characterised by the allocation of available resources at the right time, in the right place.

(ii) A holistic approach

The project is innovative in its adoption of a holistic approach. Batikent has been developed as more than just shelter for its inhabitants; it has become a place in which to live, rest and work.

(iii) Skills acquisition

The third element fundamental to the project is its reliance on a positive education and training programme for its co-operative workers. Acquiring skills in this way is the key to a stable future since it involves and encourages the people, and demonstrates that they alone are responsible for their own future. It echoes the importance of optimising the use of existing resources, and applying them when and where they are most needed.

(iv) Mobilisation

The Batikent project is conspicuous for its emphasis on mobilising the talent and resources of the community itself. It approaches the problems of the urban poor from a new perspective, dismissing the past idea that the State alone could, and should, provide for all, when in reality it did not possess the resources to do so. Instead, it teaches that the individual and community is ultimately responsible for its given life-style and conditions. Only through self-help and practical participation will any positive changes be effected.

1991 is the twelfth anniversary of the founding of Kent-Koop. In its brief, but intensely active history, the organisation has evolved rapidly from its infancy as a small Union, to reach maturity as the cornerstone of the entire Turkish co-operative movement. The Batikent project was the first, and highly significant step in this process, since it justified the principles and methods used by Kent-Koop, and provided the confidence to replicate these ideas throughout both urban and rural Turkey. For the foreseeable future, the central role of Kent-Koop is secured, and it will continue to search for new ways to resolve the urban requirements of those in need in the cities of Turkey.