Quality of New Enclosed/ Gated Housing Developments Realized by Public and Local Authorities in Istanbul

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ABSTRACT:

This paper aims to discuss the developments of the housing supply by government in terms of urban housing transformation processes in Istanbul since 2000. Therefore types of housing supplies by central and local governments emerging after the year 2000 will be examined, including the implementations of the Housing Development Administration, local authorities and public-private partnerships. The local government has also produced and marketed housing settlements in various parts of the city by means of a firm established for this purpose. Public-private partnerships have created various housing projects on the unplanned areas near motorways, forests and water dams with the new development plan proposals. Common points in all these applications are a promising new lifestyle and increasing quality of life, building of high density/vertical gated housing settlements, and construction of high rise buildings to save space for social, cultural, sport and recreational areas with secure, gated borders and well-controlled entries.

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, big cities of the world have been experiencing considerable changes of social, economic, political and spatial transformations. More than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas and it is projected to be 80% by 2025. It can be said that the urban lifestyle will be dominant in this century (Thorns, 2006). World cities and human settlements have increasingly been interrelated by means of information technologies and have become integral parts of the globalizing world.

The gated communities, claiming to provide a high quality and secure existence for the people have spread widely throughout the world since the year 2000. The sales advertisements of these settlements depict a lifestyle which presents the dwellers a new and quality life in which they can do more sports, socialize more, and raise their children in a secure environment.

People’s housing choice becomes part of their choice for quality of lifestyle. Choosing an area to live in is a process that includes the accumulation of differing characteristics of environments which respond best to the needs, preferences, lifestyles and images of the people. The level of preferred privacy plays an important role in choosing a location to settle in. In relation to privacy mechanisms, individuals have different preferences when responding to their environment. Another parameter which affects the settlement preference is the environmental quality itself, and its perceived level. Environmental quality, which can be defined as the physical and bio-chemical characteristics of an environment, also includes the characteristics of the symbolic and perceptual physical milieu responding to the needs of certain groups.

Settlement preferences of users depend on the user’s own characteristics and physical and social qualities of the area. Users’ characteristics such as age group (young / old), education (well-educated / less-
educated), economic level (higher / lower income), marriage status and family type (single / young couple / core family with children / single parent), and cultural background are some of the main categories which define the needs and expectations of people. These characteristics have an important effect on the lifestyles of the people and their choice to live in or outside the city, to live in a multi-story apartment building or a house with a garden (Ozsoy, A., Sener, E., 2009).

Housing areas are considered important not only in terms of the characteristics of the physical environment, but also the location of social, cultural and administrative facilities in their vicinity. Natural characteristics, such as sun, wind, fresh air, and potential for green areas, and the accessibility to public transportation are some of the other factors which define the conditions of the settlement.

The social environment of housing areas is determined by various characteristics of families living there. Individuals generally prefer to live among people who have more or less the same lifestyles. Inter-personal relations and shared activities posed by social life harmonize families and increase gathering points in the social environment (Rapoport, A., 1977). The environmental preference depends both on the social status of the people and that of the area.

Families attach crucial importance to the social environment they are going to live in when they are planning to resettle, due to various factors such as providing a better atmosphere for their children, establishing strong relationships with their neighbors and keeping the problems of daily routines at a minimum. It is seen that different components identify quality living. Quality living creates physical / objective, and cultural, social, and psychological / subjective and personal input. The focus of many environmental design researchers has been on subjective indicators such as perceptions, preferences, behavior and satisfaction (Turkoglu, Yildiz, 2005).

Quality of life and quality of the environment underpin how well cities and towns function. Undoubtedly, quality of life has improved in cities over the past 30 years. There is a notable conflict between individual short-term quality of life benefits and collective, longer-term needs for sustainable development that form the basis for quality of life in the future. However, the privileged in society are often able to improve their quality of life, for instance, by moving to better neighborhoods or to the countryside in order to escape unhealthy conditions. Another aspect to consider when describing quality of life is that it has an objective and a subjective perspective (ANON., 2009).

The first Survey on Quality of Life in Europe (2003) investigated 8 domains of individual life situations in 25 member states. These do not cover all aspects but the most relevant for a complete description of quality of life in both its objective and subjective dimensions. These domains are: 1) economic situation; 2) housing and the local environment; 3) employment, education and skills; 4) household structure and family relations; 5) work-life balance; 6) health and health care; 7) subjective well-being; 8) perceived quality of (Eurofound, 2004).

Quality of housing spaces can be considered in regard to user satisfaction with that environment. The term quality is used to mean “fitness for use”, and user satisfaction is studied in terms of two dimensions of built environment which are spatial / psycho-social quality characteristics and performance characteristics. The performance concept is defined as “behavior related to use” (Ozsoy, A. et al., 1996).

The term “quality” has a very broad meaning, and researchers can give their own definition indicating different degrees. Psycho-social quality characteristics are the most subjective ones when compared with physical quality characteristics. They are commonly handled in psychological studies but rarely handled in social context. Space characteristics, such as flexibility, spatial organization, space hierarchy, functional relations, and aesthetic values are basic quality parameters of space when the main concern is user satisfaction (Ozsoy, A. et al., 1996).
Quality characteristics can be examined on two levels; user characteristics (individual, family, society), and characteristics of physical environment (building group, building, dwelling unit, dwelling space). Levels of physical environment are considered for open spaces as well as for positive spaces (buildings).

Main elements which define the spatial quality characteristics are needs and requirements of man, and performance requirements of the built environment. Needs of man comprise; basic needs related to human ergonomics, comfort, security, health etc., and psycho-social needs related to the concepts of privacy, personalization, identity, territoriality, status, social interaction, aesthetics, etc. (Özsoy, A. et al., 1996).

Quality of the living environment is a rather abstract container conception, which is related to matters that provide people (residents, tenants) to live pleasantly in their neighborhood. Attempts to express quality of life in districts and neighborhoods in ‘hard figures’, for instance by monitoring the degree of turnover and percentage of arrears of rent were found not to give a complete understanding. The perception of residents of the quality of the living environment had also to be taken into account. Therefore, quality of the living environment has to be considered from two different points of view:

- By determining certain characteristics of the neighborhood, the building or the infill (the objective perspective; concerning for instance measurement of physical characteristics),
- Perception by residents (the subjective perspective, concerning the inventory of opinions).

Quality of the living environment has relations to the physical, environmental and social-economic quality of the tissue (neighborhood). This kind of quality aspects also relate to the other scale levels, support (dwelling) and infill. The categories of quality aspects can be seen as an translation of the aspects of the definition of sustainability of the Brundlandt committee, namely: ecology, economy and society. The aspects are listed in Table 15. They can be measured and monitored as indicators for the neighborhood characteristics and the quality of the living environment. In addition, the perception of the living environment by residents of these three kinds of quality aspects plays an important role (Barrois, 2000).

**Gated Communities In Istanbul:**

Gated communities constitute a new housing concept which is made up of a number of housing units surrounded by some sort of physical or visual barrier that separates the residents from the rest of the city. They offer social services and amenities which serve the residents exclusively, such as sports, shopping, education and entertainment. This concept has become widespread in Istanbul simultaneously with many other big cities in different geographical areas of the world since the late twentieth century (Pulat Gokmen, G., Özsoy, A., 2008).

Gated settlements are generally developed by the private sector in the big cities of the world. The development of gated community projects, which include a large number of housing units and social amenities, is usually undertaken by large scale investment groups or by consortiums that are formed with the collaboration of several investment groups of various sizes (Çizmeci F. and Önel, H., 2008). These housing settlements offer quality of living spaces for upper-middle income groups.

Two different tendencies in the formal housing market in Istanbul have been gaining importance in recent years: One is the increasing number of gated communities on the outskirts of the city. The other is the construction of multi-story dwelling blocks (towers) near city centers that include various services. Both groups are trying to reach their own target groups by using their special advertisements and images. In
particular these enclosed settlements with luxury villas have been the most preferred areas after the earthquakes of 1999 in Istanbul.

The gated residential development is particularly intriguing, mirroring changes in social values that accompany rapid globalization. Anti-urban sentiment is often expressed as fear of violence and crime that is said to pervade the city. However, Low (2003) emphasizes the loss of a sense of place and increasing class separation within gated communities. She suggests that “adding walls, gates, and guards produces a landscape that encodes class relations and residential (race/ class/ ethnic/ gender) segregation more permanently in the built environment” (Low, S., 2003).

The literature on gated communities identifies a number of reasons for their increase in number and size. Fear of crime, increased social diversity, in addition to expectation of quality of life, and homogenous neighbors are some of these reasons. Gated communities respond to middle-class and upper-middle-class individuals’ desires for community and intimacy and facilitate avoidance, separation and surveillance. They bring individual preferences, social forces and the physical environment together in an architectural reality and cultural metaphor (Marans, R., W., 1978).

Gated communities that offer privileges to a certain segment of the society are often criticized because the community causes separation in the spatial and social structure of the city (Roitman 2004, Özgür 2006). However, the developers of gated communities form their marketing strategies based on exactly this factor, and market the gated communities with the claim that they offer “a privileged lifestyle” (Çizmeci, F., Ercan, T., 2010).

The names of the gated communities, chosen as part of the marketing strategy, contribute to the definition of this “quality of lifestyle” in impressive ways by using different images. The images describing this lifestyle vary depending on the location where the gated communities are built in Istanbul. This variation can even be said to be nourished by the contradiction between the urban center and the periphery.

Owning a dwelling in a distinguished and privileged community is, equated with acquiring a privileged status in the social hierarchy with its quality of lifestyle. In this sense, the marketing images of gated communities can be considered as one of the most important indicators that goods available in the market have become status symbols and that these symbols are used by consumers with the aim of acquiring a social identity (Çizmeci, F., Ercan, T., 2010).

In Turkey, although gated communities in cities are generally built by the private sector, there are private-public sector collaborations in some projects on public land. In recent years, central and local governments have realized new gated settlements for middle and upper-middle income groups.

During the 1980s Turkey experienced rapid urbanization along with the transformation of social life. In Turkey, 70% of the population lives in cities. The rapid population increase and the ensuing urbanization process have triggered social and spatial transformations in the cities. A great amount of agricultural and forest land surrounding the cities is being transformed for urban housing production, while people who are migrating from rural areas have been increasingly living in the cities (Pulat Gokmen, Ozsoy, 2008).

The changing dynamics of the housing market, capital accumulation and technological developments have given great acceleration to the transformation processes. The central government (Housing Development Administration-HDA), local governments, private sector and public-private partnerships are the main mechanisms that provide solutions in formal housing market.

Housing settlements have different types of dwellings, such as villa, detached house, row house or apartment block on large land areas outside the city. They also have social infrastructures, including
recreation areas, clubs, sport facilities, restaurants, residence and social centers, very similar to housing settlements in the city. In these settlements, security is provided by professional organizations, thus colonies isolated from city and city conditions and surrounded by high walls are formed (Ozsoy, Pulat Gokmen, 2002).

HDA has produced “mixed” settlements including villas, apartments and tower blocks called “residence” with various dwelling layouts, equipped with social and sport facilities meeting almost all requirements of users. These houses with very high security contain shopping centers, swimming pools, fitness centers, dry cleaning, child care and clubs at the lower floors.

Private construction firms market in newspaper and television advertisements. These dwellings have been marketed not only to citizens of Istanbul but all over the country (Pulat Gokmen, 2010).

A real estate company has made a survey of 14,327 people with the aim of measuring factors of users’ dwelling preferences in 2007. 43% of people interviewed mentioned “earthquake resistance” in the first rank, 24% “affordable price”, 13% “location” and “living in a secure residential area” (Kara, 2007). According to another user preference survey conducted with 457 people in 2007, “location” (24%), “earthquake resistance” (21%), “affordable price” (20%) have been listed as the first factors. Another survey made by a real estate agent shows that 55% of the people who want to buy a house prefer “quiet and peaceful environment” and 45% prefer to live in inner city housing settlements. 53% of the people surveyed prefer flats; while 34% choose villa type houses and 13% of them want to live in residences (Hürriyet Emlak, 2008).

The gated housing projects conducted by the public-private sector were initially aimed at middle-income groups. These settlements were planned as enclosed areas, having their own shopping, sports, cultural and recreational facilities. The general layout and dwelling designs have been generally carried out using the main characteristics of the Turkish house and its environment. They present a rich variety of dwelling types, from studio apartments, to duplex dwellings, and various facilities such as green areas, social centers, shopping centers, garages, swimming pools, sports facilities. As these areas produce large profits for their investors, developers and owners, luxury settlements have been one of the main trends in the housing production systems in the 2000s (Ozsoy, Pulat Gokmen, 2002).

**Housing Settlements Realized by Central Government (HDA)**

In order to solve the housing problem at the national level, the Housing Development Administration Fund Law (No. 2487) was passed in 1981. The Housing Development and Public Participation Administration was also established to ensure that the system was adequately operating. The Housing Development Law is a framework law, which sets the basic principles that give direction to the solution of the housing problem in Turkey. Its provisions are particularly relevant in terms of organizational and financial aspects. The basic goal in establishing the fund was to provide the required public support through revenues earmarked for this purpose and required services through an administration created in order to meet the housing needs at the national scale and to achieve an orderly process of urban development.

In 2004, all the duties and authority of the Urban Land Office were transferred to HDA. Based on this legal arrangement, 64.5 million square meters of land passed onto HDA's immovable portfolio. This law will integrate the process of land development and housing production and will facilitate providing efficiency in the aforementioned housing and urbanization implementations. Hence, as reflected in its mandate, the Housing Development Administration (HDA) is the single responsible public body within the housing sector in Turkey.
In addition to the loans given to cooperatives, municipalities are also supported by HDA loans - facilitating new housing projects on lands they own for the provision of low-cost owner-occupied housing. There are several housing production models which HAD has adopted:

- Housing production on HDA’s lands for low and middle income groups,
- Land provision / production,
- Urban transformation projects (squatter transformation),
- Social housing fund raising projects.

HDA achieved its strongest position in housing provision after 2003. Through its new powers to expropriate, acquire and transfer land, HDA became more powerful than the local authorities. Its rights included preparing plans for urban regeneration projects in squatter housing areas. Its new responsibilities were expanded to include operations in historical sites and rural areas. HDA announced that its house-building efforts would eliminate 5–10% of nation-wide housing shortages, estimated at 2.5 million units by the State Planning Organization (SPO, 2008) and the State Institute of Statistics. Furthermore, HDA’s target for the period up to 2011 is to complete the construction of 500,000 housing units (HDA, 2010). 84,000 housing units are planned to be constructed as a revenue sharing system. In accordance with its new role, the development plans HDA prepares have to be approved by the local authority concerned. However, in case of disapproval, HDA has the right to implement development plans at its own initiative. This right creates a serious problem, as it leads to a disregard of municipalities at the local level through the imposition of central government decisions. This development is contrary to the current trends in housing provision policies of European countries, where a recent report has emphasized the decentralization of housing policy, as well as closer links to local actors, users and social housing providers (Housing Europe, 2007). Moreover, in order to get finances for social housing projects for lower-income groups, HDA has invited bids from construction companies, with the winning company paying for the right to build apartments for middle- and upper-income groups on public land, while HDA retains the balance of profits in this ‘revenue-sharing’ model (Ünsal et al., 2010).

It has built 116,223 housing units at 154 construction sites in Istanbul. It has completed 64,994 housing units. HDA plan to produce 57,828 housing units as a financial fund development model (www.toki.gov.tr/25.06.2011).

HDA has produced mass housing projects on its own land, generally for low and middle income families who are not able to own a housing unit. The housing units realized are in sizes between 80-120m², with a square meter cost of $180-200, including infrastructure costs, but excluding land costs. Until today, among the mass housing provided by HDA, 31% of the housing credits have been used by workers, 30% by civil servants, 7% by retired, 13% by middle tradesmen and 19% by others. Housing units are given to the applicants through lottery conducted by a notary public.

**Urban Transformation Projects (Squatter Transformation):**

In the context of transformation of squatter areas, for the first time in Turkey, HDA has initiated a very extensive and a rapid renovation project in cooperation with local authorities. The aim of these projects is to reconstruct the "illegally occupied and underdeveloped (in terms of lacking basic urban services, like adequate water, proper sanitation, transportation etc.) squatter regions" through clearing of such regions, and to rehabilitate those areas by constructing a modern, livable settlements with the provision of adequate shelter, sanitation, social facilities, better environment quality etc. Through the squatter transformation model used by HDA, both "the illegally occupied squatter zone" is rehabilitated and also at the same time a vacant area is planned for the purpose of providing modern housing units for evicted households from the squatter areas. Therefore, through the model realized by HDA, not only squatter areas are rehabilitated but also urban rents can be diverted to public use through the implementation of such projects like schools, urban recreational areas, shopping centers, prestigious housing settlements etc.
With these models, HDA’s proportion of housing production increased from 0.6% (1984-2002) through 6.4% (2003) to 24.7% (2004) (YEM, 2006). It has provided housing loans to approximately 1.2 million housing units by the end of 2004. Among these, housing cooperatives have the biggest share. 84% of the housing units that were given credit have been produced by housing cooperatives and housing contractors (www.toki.gov.tr).

**Revenue Sharing Model:**

This model mostly targets high income families under the frame of profit making, providing short-term financial funds. HDA uses this method to generate funds for the low and middle income housing projects. This model is based on production of housing units on HDA owned lands in cooperation with developers and contractors in the private sector, and sharing the sales revenue of the project with a shareholder firm. The project (design, engineering, services, construction, marketing, sales, etc.) is implemented by a private developer or contractor selected through an open tender. Through this method, the housing units are sold at the beginning of the construction period. Sales revenue is, therefore, provided at an early stage of the investment process. The revenue sharing model is a build-and-sell concept, but based on revenue instead of housing units.

Most large-housing projects have the planning principles of economical and fast construction of many housing blocks using the tunnel framework system; yet they also have problems of flexible growth, sound and thermal insulation problems, excessive vertical density of high and wall-like or tower blocks, an unaesthetic city silhouette, and too much space consumed by ground parking lots. One of the issues is that HDA thinks that it must generate high density settlements. However, it mistakenly believes that this is possible only through high rise buildings. The other alternative is to use horizontal blocks, which may leave less ground space but which might fit the existing cultural form layouts of most cities in the nation (HDA, 2010).

Among the criticized aspects of HDA are:

- The head of HDA is the only authority concerned with selling urban land, making decisions on planning and determining the value of lands. Hence it is a kind of government supported monopoly in the housing sector (Geray, 2009),
- HDA has rights and authority of a financial institution,
- HDA has extended power in city planning and tax exemption,
- The government makes it easier to sell public lands for the use of HDA (Dulgeroglu, Pusat Gokmen, 2009).

It seems that the quantitative objectives of the Authority are mostly met: HDA has constructed 45,293 units and received about half of the 8 billion TL to be collected. This is from the revenue share model. From the sale model, out of almost 300,000 places built, 265,000 have been sold. Of 165,000 units, the social facilities and environmental design (i.e. landscape architecture) are in the process of completion (Anon., 2008). It has provided completion credit to 56,000 units since 2003. In the last report, it stated that by 2010, HDA aimed to start the construction of 250,000 residences and by mid-year, this goal had already been reached. This led the institution to increase its goal to 500,000 in the following term. Over 61,000 residences are being produced for low-income urban groups (HDA, 2010).

HDA is realized total of 20 housing settlements and 17,961 housing units as a financial fund development model in Istanbul, it has built a total of 21 housing settlements and 19,958 housing units its own implementation. The Real Estate Investment Trust has realized a total of 23 housing settlements and 38,327 housing units and has produced a total of 2,862 housing units as a revenue sharing model and 5,369 housing units as urban renewal (www.toki.gov.tr/25.06.2011).
Design quality is a problem for these new developments. The use of luxury and expensive building materials are not enough to reach quality buildings. Repetition of stereotyped building plans, very few alternative designs for dwelling units and lack of innovative ideas create monotonous settlements. To increase design quality for these settlements, design competitions may be helpful to reach new and creative design solutions and to increase variety of dwelling plans. Participatory approaches, use of technology for sustainable living environments may create innovative proposals for living environment.

Avrupa Konutları is the most popular gated settlement produced by HDA. This gated community has three entrances manned around the clock. The residents of the housing complex have an identity card for entry. There are many facilities in the enclosed settlement: social and cultural facilities, cafeterias, open and covered parking, open and covered swimming pools, fitness centers, sport areas, jogging tracks, tennis courts, squash courts, children’s playgrounds and a maintenance service. Avrupa Konutları has the general characteristics of middle income gated communities in Istanbul.

Avrupa Konutları settlements consist of 20 blocks and 1350 apartments. The results of one survey (Yirmibesoglu, 2010); residents of the settlement are generally young people in the 20-40 age range (67%). Most are married (87%) and with children (48%). Couples without children are newly married and have the possibility of having a child. Users think that the settlement is suitable for raising children. The percentage of single mothers is 37.5. Security is the major reason for preferring to live in this area for single mothers. 41% of children are 0-5 years old. 89% of the children were born in Istanbul. Most residents were born in Istanbul (31%). Users’ educational background is generally university and graduate level (70%).

Most residents (73%) have a paid job. Housewives constitute the unemployed group. Most of the housewives are young mothers. University graduate young mothers have a tendency not to work for a certain time. Users are generally (77%) homeowners. The rate of car ownership is 95%. Users prefer this housing complex for security and good services, a clean, aesthetic and comfortable green environment and for activity areas, the lifestyle, and social homogeneity.

It can be concluded that the inhabitants who prefer to live in this housing complex are composed of middle-income young professionals, married with children or with the potential of having children, having a tendency to inhabit a familiar area, a paid occupation, and a preference for a comfortable and secure life, and who benefit from the opportunities provided by the community in terms of time-saving (Aydın Yonet, N., Yirmibesoğlu, F., 2009).

**Housing Settlements Realized by the Municipality (KIPTAS)**

The Greater Istanbul Municipality has produced dwellings with a construction firm (KIPTAS) established in 1987 to solve the informal urban development and squatter problems by means of a foreign capital partnership to In 1994, “İstanbul Konut İmar Plan Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S (KIPTAS-Istanbul Housing Development Planning Firm)” was formed as a metropolitan municipality institution.

KIPTAS, has served as part of the building sector since 1995. With the catchword of “50,000 residences for Istanbul”, it started construction with the “BASAK-HILAL Collective Housing Project” in 1995.

Its missions / main objectives are:

- to produce modern, low-cost and safe dwelling units with necessary urban facilities, green areas and infrastructure,
- to improve the irregular / unplanned urban areas and to move these populations into the planned areas,
- to produce dwellings with varying sizes and types for various income levels,
• to prevent illegal developments in forestry, agricultural areas and near water dams, and to conserve historic and natural urban patterns of Istanbul.

Since its foundation, KIPTAŞ has produced almost 50,000 dwellings on both the European and Asian sides of the city as new land development and squatter transformation projects. It has completed 34 housing settlement projects, totally 29,042 housing units and 920 housing blocks. 20 housing settlements are on the European side of Istanbul (616 blocks). Of the 50 projects, 16 are in the construction and sales process. 14 projects have more than 1000 dwelling units each with their own cultural, educational and commercial facilities. Most of the projects are located near the city center and / or on the squatter transformation areas. Most have been built as a social housing unit for low income people with apartment size ranging between 75 - 125m². The firm has also been producing residences (80-160m²) and villas (250-400m²) to follow the new trends and to meet the changing demands of the families.

Başakşehir was started as a city project in 1995 by KIPTAŞ. It consists of six communities in Küçükçekmece Municipality and two communities in Esenler Municipality. During 2008, Başakşehir became its own sub-municipality. The settlement has 6 phases. Total of 18,358 housing units have been completed. The first stage was built on 43.3 hectares, 79 blocks, and 3404 housing units (68-120 m²). The second stage was built on 5.3 hectares, 62 blocks, and 2,304 housing units (84-143 m²); the third stage was built by Onurkent construction cooperative, consisting of 6190 housing units; the fourth stage 6190 was built on 82 hectares 6,050 housing units (67-151 m²). In 1998, 358 villas were added and in the fifth stage, a total of 7000 housing units have been built since 2003 (67-149 m².) (Perouse, J.F., 2007).

Başakşehir has a homogeneous and social composition. It consists of a young population and the proportion of non-working women is high. With Oyakkent (12,000 housing units), HDA houses and the Kayabaşı settlement (60,000 housing units) in the environs of Başakşehir, the whole area represents a large scale urbanization effort.

Perouse (2007) claims that Başakşehir is far from being a social project in view of its pricing and marketing. In marketing, its manifesto has changed. The settlement has become spread out and its social make-up has also changed, reflected on rising prices.

Başakşehir Metrokent was announced in 2007 by the KIPTAS General Directorate. Residence type housing and shopping malls are planned as an area for a new urbanite middle-class that has national and traditional values, is family-oriented. In 2000, the advertisements of Başakşehir expressed that “we produce a livable and secure environment”.

A real estate company has made a survey of 14,327 people with aim of measuring factors of user dwelling preferences in 2007. 43% of those interviewed mentioned “earthquake resistances” as the first priority, 24% “affordable price”, 13% “location” and “living in a secure residential area” (Kara, 2007). According to another user preference survey conducted with 457 people in 2007, “location” (24%), “earthquake resistance” (21%), and “affordable price” (20%) were the most important factors. Another survey reports that 55% of the people who want to buy a house prefer a “quiet and peaceful environment” and 45% prefer to live in inner city housing settlements. 53% of the people surveyed prefer flats, 34% villa type houses and 13% tower blocks (Hürriyet Emlak, 2008).

Conclusion:

HDA is committed to building high quality housing settlements using revenue sharing models and selling the units at high prices. These settlements are gated communities that have become more common in Istanbul. HDA provides the land and tenders out the projects to private construction companies. Therefore, gated settlements had the support of public authorities.
throughout the city. Private construction firms give large advertisements to the media (newspaper and television) and promise “a new life with high quality”. Quality means some social and sport facilities, security and services in the settlements.

Today, as reflected in its mandate, HDA is the only responsible public body within the housing sector in Turkey.

HDA has produced transformation projects with local authorities for squatters, but the owners of the new settlements have changed rapidly and dwellings are now bought by high or upper-middle income groups. These settlements also are neither of good physical quality nor of sound construction. They have no social and sport facilities, and the settlements do not offer a better quality of life.

Together with the housing developments constructed by KIPTAS, the Housing and Squatter Branch of the Greater Istanbul Municipality has been conducting transformation projects. Although since establishment, KIPTAS has not only built social housing units for low-income people, it has also produced tower blocks and villas to follow the new trends and meet the changing demands of the families. The demands and preferences of the users for high quality dwellings are met by housing projects built in luxury dwelling areas with high walls for security and privacy. Yet, such settlements have isolated their residents from the rest of the urban environment.

KIPTAS claims that it has built new urban housing settlements for families who are more conservative and want to live with their friends or sharing the same political and religious views. The women live at home and take care of their children in spite of having professional skills.

As luxury settlements produce a large percentage of profit for their investors, they show a growing tendency both in the inner city areas and in the green areas surrounding the city. For the upper income groups who prefer to settle far from the activities of city life, the function of a dwelling is not only to meet the shelter needs of the family. Common spaces, designed for sports, recreation or cultural facilities, not only help create social interaction among residents but also save them from feelings such as loneliness and isolation. In the settlements which were built after the 2000s, common spaces play an important role. These examples have a number of open and closed sporting areas, swimming pools, recreation facilities and at least one or two parking spaces for each dwelling. All these features are only available for residents of the settlements; anyone outside cannot use them. This situation creates social and physical segregation in Istanbul.

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