

**MARUF25**

# REPORT

MARMARA URBAN FORUM

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on the shore of all possibilities





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IMPLEMENTING  
THE NEW  
URBAN AGENDA



**MARMARA MUNICIPALITIES UNION PUBLICATIONS**

**Marmara Urban Forum 2025 (MARUF25) Report**

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**ISBN:** 978-625-8164-37-4

**Publisher Certificate No:** 15668

**Publication No:** 179

**Publication Date:** February 2026

**Design, Layout & Infographics:**

sonntag.agency

Marmara Municipalities Union Publications  
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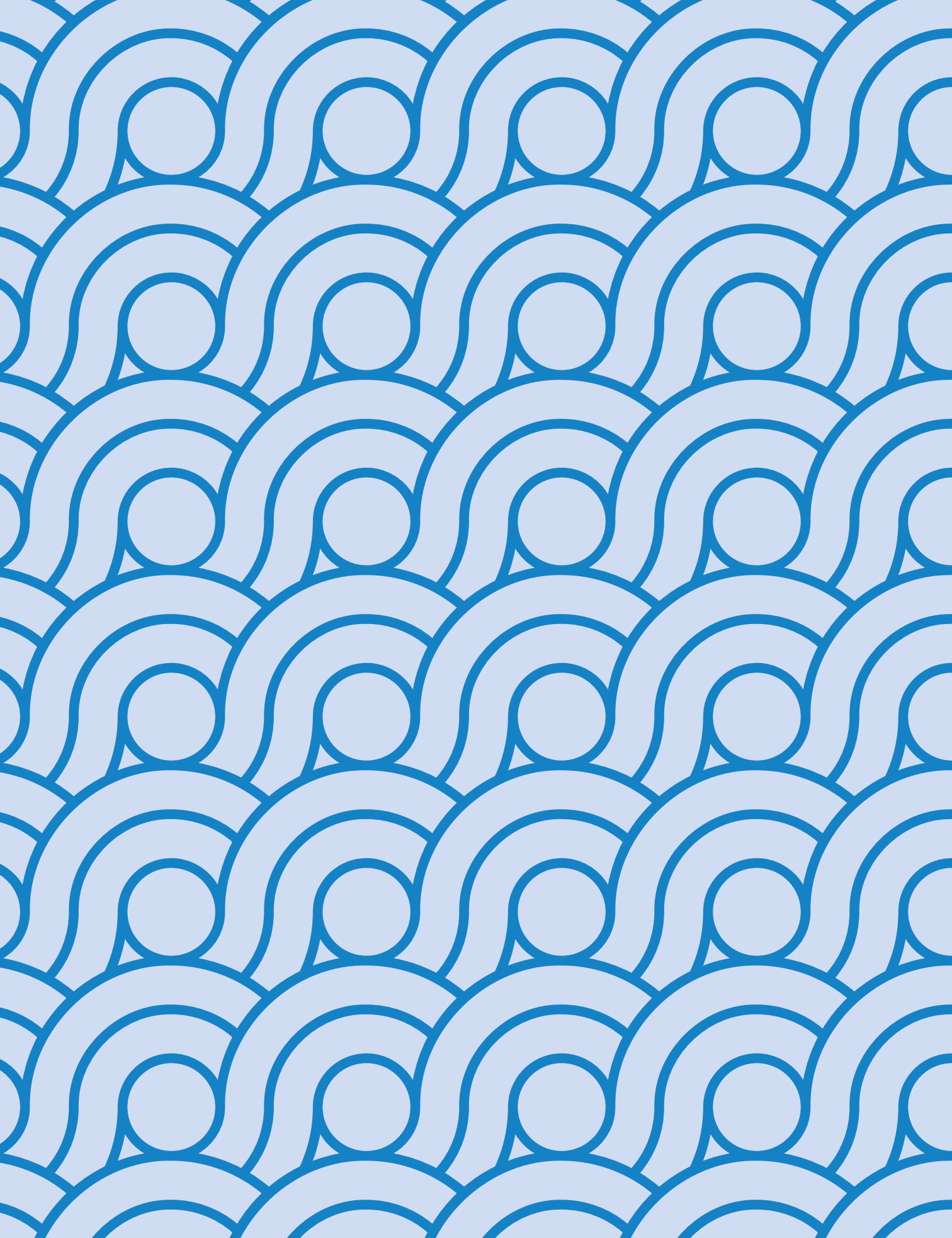
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# **INTRODUCTION**

## FOREWORD

We present to you the Report of the Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF25), which took place for the fourth time at the Haliç Congress Center in Istanbul from October 1–3, 2025, under the framework of “on the shore of all possibilities.”

We stand at a threshold where familiar maps of meaning are rapidly fading, institutions are losing their potency, and established norms are being shattered.

The global order is undergoing a seismic shift; the structure established in the wake of two great wars has been dislodged. The system—purportedly founded on human rights, international law, equality, and justice—remains insufficient in the face of crises, silent and helpless in the face of power. The dysfunction of international institutions, the hollowing out of global security systems, the collective indifference toward crises, and regional conflicts displacing millions all expose a stark reality: The current system is unraveling and, regrettably, failing to produce solutions.

The world is grappling not only with a climate crisis but also with a crisis of meaning, direction, and trust. In this climate, authoritarian tendencies are becoming attractive once again. Power feeds on fear. People are becoming more susceptible to surrender their freedoms in the name of security. The language of authoritarianism does not merely determine political life through certain mechanisms; it infiltrates ordinary lives, daily choices, city plans, and the very shape of public squares.

Yet, amidst all this, another movement catches the eye. Silent but obstinate, slow but widespread... This is a wave that cannot be explained by traditional politics. New generations, often accused of short-term thinking, are developing an attitude that questions not the systems categorically, but their effects. These generations touch politics not through conventional methods, but in creative ways. This is a new way of doing politics that prioritizes fluid practices over rigid institutional structures—one that finds resonance in the street, in art, in the digital realm, and in everyday life.

Bored with vertical relationships, self-organizing, prioritizing solidarity over hierarchy and participation over representation, these generations are whispering the notes of a new political style. This is not a silence; it is a different language, almost a silent scream. Without understanding this language, no transformation is possible anymore.

New demands necessitate the transformation of governance models as well. Public administration has long been defined by concepts such as performance and competition. However, successive fractures—from the 2008 global financial crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic, from ecological disasters to migration waves—have revealed the need for a new paradigm. A paradigm based on an understanding of management that prioritizes cooperation and social benefit; one that is flexible and agile in the face of crises, participatory and transparent in the face of social demands, and sharing and just in the face of outcomes. In a vol-

atile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous time, this search for direction based on cooperation and sharing is not merely a technical effort, but a moral responsibility.

Cities stand at the very center of this transformation. Because what we call a city is not just a physical structure; it is also a social memory, a fabric of daily life, an environment of negotiation, and a political space. In this context, cities are the areas where crises are most visible, but also where hope sprouts most vigorously. Because we are the city; we are different, we are unique, but we are together.

Precisely at this point, we believe we are in interesting times open to all contingencies—in other words, inspired by the poet Turgut Uyar, we are “on the shore of all possibilities,” living in a time frame where everything can be re-established.

The theme “on the shore of all possibilities,” determined for MARUF25, represents not only anxiety in these turbulent times but also hope and an invitation.

MARUF is organized not merely to identify problems, but to rethink, to dream together, and to seek the better. In other words, MARUF is organized to seek the better in all fields: to build a future where cities are carriers of social justice; to produce an approach where technology and nature are evaluated within a unity; to develop participatory models where the public is not just the object but the subject of decision-making processes; to transform local governments from technical ap-

paratuses into representatives of social consensus and dreams; to transform the right to the city from an abstract concept into a lived experience; and to localize universal human rights.

As the MARUF team, we are a community that worries about cities, yet does not stop at criticism—we dream, we experiment, we value coming together and producing together, and we invest in hope. We are the incurably optimistic, the unyieldingly determined, and those who believe that hope is not just a feeling, but a form of action.

As we leave you with the MARUF25 Report, we believe that a just, equitable, and inclusive effort—starting from Istanbul, from the shores of the Golden Horn, and spreading in waves—can be a fresh breath against the aforementioned dynamic disorder.

*As new as a bud,  
As resilient as a snowdrop,  
As simple yet transformative as a raindrop...*

I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who gave voice to the call for a better life with tremendous support “on the shore of all possibilities.”

M. Cemil Arslan, PhD  
MMU Secretary General  
MARUF General Coordinator

## FROM THE EDITOR

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together,” says an African proverb. We held the fourth edition of the Marmara Urban Forum—which we first embarked upon in 2019 with the motto “Cities Developing Solutions” to go further and better “together”—at the Haliç Congress Center on October 1–3, 2025.

At MARUF25, organized under the framework of “on the shore of all possibilities” with the contribution of over 150 partners, we hosted more than 200 events featuring over 500 speakers from 50 countries and came together with more than 8,000 participants.

This report you hold in your hands—or read on a screen—is a product of the effort to mark MARUF25 in history, akin to the adage “spoken words fly away, but the written words remain”—or in our case, “events pass, reports remain.” It also serves as an occasion for a reunion for those who could not attend the forum or missed sessions they wished to follow amidst the parallel events.

As the MARUF25 Creative Team, we have structured this report into three main sections. The “About MARUF25” section contains basic information about MARUF25 and details regarding the planning process. Readers will find information on MARUF25’s framework, flows, focal topics, and event modes and types in this section. Additionally, the MARUF25 design concept, spatial setup, collaborations, and various statistics are shared here.

The “MARUF25 Event Summaries” section includes the profiles and content summaries of all events held during the three-day forum as well as “MARUF on the Go” events before the forum itself.

In the “Reflections” section, we introduced a novelty this year by including the views of those who experienced MARUF25 firsthand. This section brings together assessments from the diverse actors who make MARUF polyphonic and colorful—ranging from Advisory Network members to partners and supporters, and from moderators and speakers to participants and volunteers. It presents suggestions for future MARUFs as well as areas for improvement alongside the forum’s strengths.

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success,” says Henry Ford. We are advancing the process where we came together with MARUF25 by continuing to keep together through this report. We have full faith that we will achieve success on the road to cities with a high quality of life that produce solutions by working and producing together. Just as in previous MARUFs.

We hope this report serves both as a resource documenting MARUF25, where we met “on the shore of all possibilities,” and as a useful starting point and guide for walking together “in pursuit of new possibilities.”

Samet Keskin  
*Editor*

## WHAT IS MARMARA URBAN FORUM (MARUF)?

Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF) is a biennial international urban forum organized by Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU). Bringing together all urban stakeholders with the motto “**Cities Developing Solutions,**” MARUF seeks solutions to urban issues by evaluating the global agenda together with local needs and priorities. In a world full of crises and uncertainties, the forum positions cities not only as the center of problems but also as the center of creative solutions.

By integrating participatory methodologies into the urban discourse, MARUF facilitates a multifaceted dialogue. The forum bridges the gap between theory and practice through unique interactive sessions, empowering participants to engage in a truly collaborative experience.

Dedicated to the pursuit of fairer and more sustainable urban life, MARUF brings together a global network of experts and decision-makers. From local governments to international organizations the forum acts as a catalyst for dialogue on how to make our cities more livable, resilient, inclusive and fairer. This collective effort is powered by an extensive ecosystem of 150+ partners, including key institutional players such as the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye, UN-Habitat, ICLEI, WWF, WRI, UNDP, UN Women, and NALAS.

**Over the course of three days, MARUF offers a forum experience that provides the opportunity to:**

- **Address urban issues with creative and innovative approaches** across a wide spectrum ranging from disaster management to the climate crisis, social inclusion to governance, and sustainable development to artificial intelligence;
- Spearhead **permanent and concrete changes by drawing inspiration from practical and innovative applications** that can

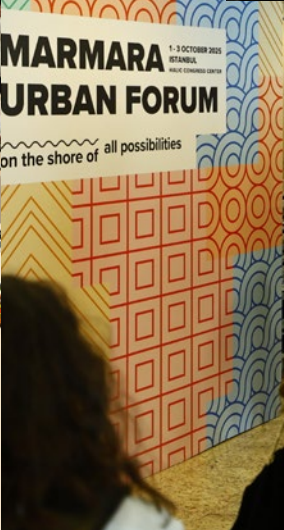
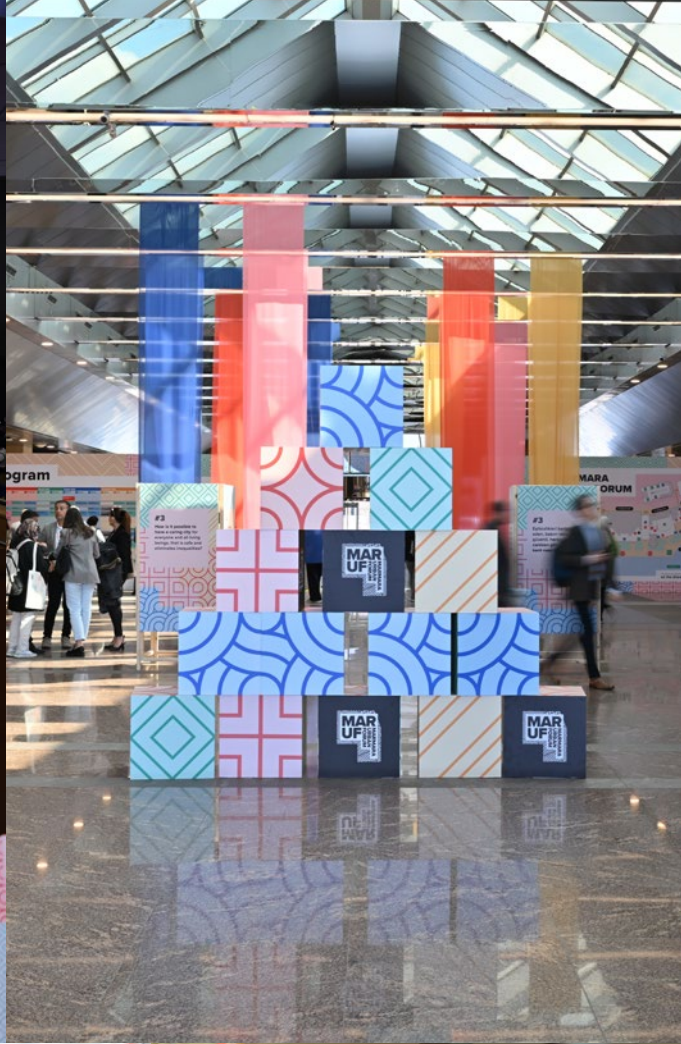
be implemented in cities;

- **Develop dialogue and cooperation with various urban actors** ranging from local governments to public institutions, the private sector to academia, and civil society to international organizations;
- **Come together** with policymakers, practitioners, and urban thinkers **from all four corners of the world to discuss how cities can be made more livable, sustainable, resilient, fair, and inclusive;**
- Open the door to **strong and long-term collaborations by meeting with new partners and networks.**

### MARUF Through the Years


Organized biennially within the scope of Urban October since 2019, MARUF has become a global platform for knowledge and experience sharing among urban actors over the years.

- **MARUF19**, held for the first time in 2019 with 250 speakers from 25 countries and over 5,000 participants, addressed urban issues comprehensively through sessions, panels, workshops, exhibitions, and field trips.
- **MARUF21**, organized online in 2021 with the main partnership of UN-Habitat, brought together over 500 speakers from more than 50 countries and thousands of participants in the digital environment with the theme “Re-think & Co-act.”
- **MARUF23**, held in Istanbul in 2023 with the theme “Resilience and Beyond,” hosted over 380 speakers from 62 countries and more than 5,000 participants. The forum, featuring over 140 sessions, included many different events such as workshops, film screenings, exhibitions, and urban routes. Additionally, MARUF23 hosted World Metropolitan Day events in collaboration with Metropolis and UN-Habitat.









**ABOUT  
MARUF25**

## THEME

MARUF25 was conceived within a framework inviting us to comprehend the contradictory and multi-layered conditions in which cities find themselves today, to generate new possibilities from within these conditions, and to discuss together how a better urban life is possible. Inspired by the lines of the poet Turgut Uyar, the discourse of “on the shore of all possibilities,” which forms the forum's main framework, was approached as a conceptual threshold allowing us to contemplate the simultaneous uncertainties and potentials of our age.

Today, cities face numerous structural challenges, ranging from deepening housing crises to the climate crisis, from disasters to forced displacement, and from economic fragilities to social polarization. These crises strain the possibilities of coexistence, preventing cities from being inclusive and safe living spaces and often transforming them into a ground for a struggle for survival. We are traversing a period in which existing governance systems struggle to generate responses to these volatile and multi-dimensional problems and fall short in establishing structures that are fair, participatory, accountable, and trust-building.

However, when viewed from the perspective of human history, it is also evident that we are living in an unprecedented age of opportunities and possibilities. Technological tools, scientific knowledge, data, and communication capabilities are more accessible than ever; cultural diversity and social accumulation offer powerful resources nourishing the potential of cities. Yet, the mere existence

of these means does not spontaneously produce fairer, safer, or more inclusive cities; the same tools can also be used to deepen inequalities or accelerate destructive processes.

For this reason, MARUF25 treated cities neither merely as a sum of crises nor as a realm of limitless opportunities. On the contrary, the forum adopted an approach acknowledging that cities are positioned precisely at a threshold where dichotomies intersect—on the line of tension between construction and destruction, solidarity and conflict, hope and despair. The state of being “on the shore of all possibilities” represented standing at this threshold, thinking without fleeing from uncertainty but also without disregarding the opportunities.

Inspired by Marmara Municipalities Union's institutional experience rooted in local democracy and the quest for a better urban life, as well as its unifying role and the fluidity evoked by the “shore” metaphor, MARUF25 invited all actors thinking, working, and producing on the city not to settle on ready-made solutions, but to think, learn, and produce together.

The forum aimed not only to identify problems but also to generate new questions by bringing different perspectives side by side, to redefine what is possible, and to mobilize collective imagination. MARUF25 offered a common space for thought and experience regarding possibilities that are not yet fully defined but will multiply when discovered together.

# FRAMEWORK

MARUF25 aimed to provide a multi-layered learning space that reorganized our collective curiosity about cities around four major questions, inviting participants to **think, produce, and experience**. The architecture of this journey was structured around four main components: **streams, topics, participation modes, and event types**.

## Streams: Four Fundamental Questions and Focus

MARUF25 set out with four main streams guided by four fundamental questions regarding the future of cities. The primary goal of each stream was to deeply address a concept that would make a better city possible and to focus on practical application methods; the **“how”** of the matter. Although these questions sometimes intersected and intertwined, each offered participants a unique direction and focus to deepen their understanding:

**#1 How is it possible to have a fair city** with participatory, reliable and accountable institutional structures where local democracy is rooted?

**#2 How is it possible to have a city that is resilient** to disasters, climate crisis, conflicts and economic crises?

**#3 How is it possible to have a caring city**

for everyone and all living beings, that is safe and eliminates inequalities?

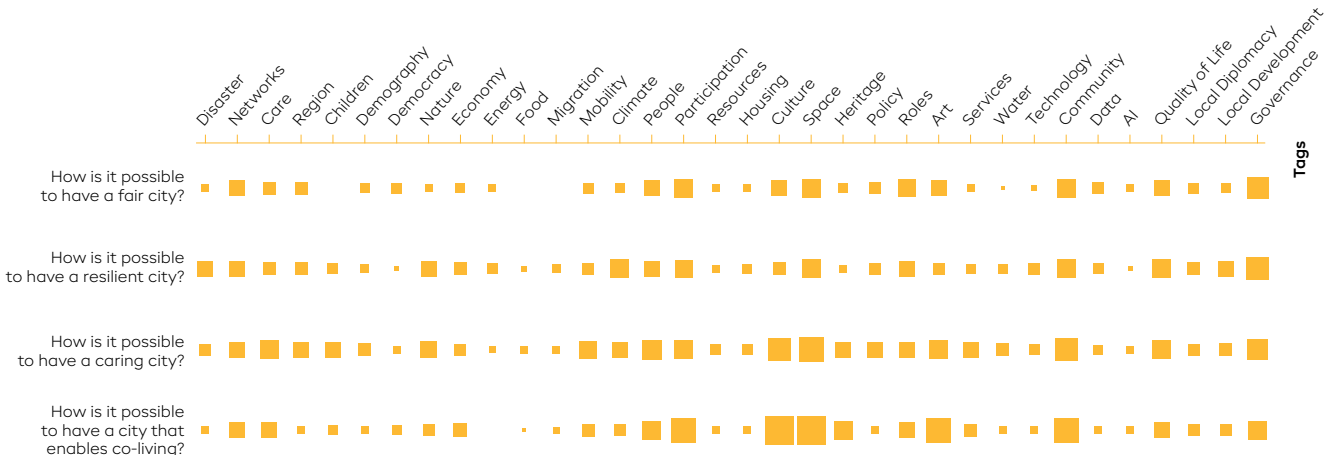
**#4 How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living** in solidarity and embraces social diversity?

In the “multiverse” of MARUF, these streams materialized through concurrent sessions, meet-ups, production areas, and experience spaces. Participants followed their own paths within this rich content universe—pursuing the questions they wished and generating new ones—as they were invited to curate their own “streams.”

By nature, each stream sometimes slowed down and sometimes accelerated. While they occasionally diverged into different branches in concurrent sessions, they sometimes met on common ground in specific events. At these intersection points, different ideas and experiences accumulated; thus, new, multi-layered, interdisciplinary solutions were produced. Which topics the sessions within a stream intersected with could be tracked by participants via topic tags.

## Topics: The Matrix of Intersections

Events were designed using 34 different topic tags within a matrix where the four stream questions intersected. The fundamental aim of this de-



sign was to allow participants to seek answers to their stream questions through a content journey progressing along different themes, while simultaneously generating new questions. In this way, each stream related to more than 30 topics, creating a rich, multi-layered content area within itself.

Across all four streams, the topics of **space**, **culture**, **community**, and **governance** stood out distinctly, becoming the most frequently interacted focuses throughout MARUF25. When examining the concentration of other topics within the streams, the following general assessment can be made:

**Democracy**, and the **roles** and **governance** issues that make it functional appeared most frequently in the **“How is it possible to have a fair city?”** stream.

Areas of vulnerability such as **disaster**, **climate**, **economy**, **energy**, and **resources**, alongside topics regarding resilience-building enablers—like **networks**, **technology**, **local diplomacy**, and **local development**—stood out most in sessions related to **“How is it possible to have a resilient city?”**

Those pursuing the question **“How is it possible to have a caring city?”** encountered a vast spectrum of topics. These ranged from social dimensions such as **people**, **children**, and **demographics** to ecological concerns like **nature**, **water**, and **food**; and from physical foundations like housing and mobility to governance dynamics such as **policy**, **data**, **care**, and **services**. Content related to the regional scale (**region**) and **quality of life** was also prominent in this stream.

**Migration**, **participation**, **culture**, **art**, **space**, **heritage**, and **community** featured most prominently in the stream **“How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?”**, while **artificial intelligence** demonstrated an even distribution throughout the program.

Topic tags determined which subjects the stream touched upon (the content), while participation **modes** determined the speed of the stream and the level of interaction it permitted.

### Modes: Three Dimensions of Participation and Interaction

Since MARUF19, MARUF’s creative and methodological journey has matured, deepened, and enriched, drawing upon the insights and perspectives carried forward from each preceding forum. The MARUF team’s curation of themes and content has always been complemented by a deliberate experience design process, defining exactly **how** this content **is shared** with participants.

At MARUF23, this process moved beyond the constraints of uniform session formats, adopting a flexible approach that allowed participants to engage with topics at varying depths and durations. This approach gave rise to formats like **Deep Dive**, enabling ninety-minute in-depth explorations, and **Quick Take**, offering concise yet substantial overviews for those seeking brief but impactful engagement. Following MARUF23, these formats were rigorously evaluated through feedback and observation. A series of preparatory workshops for MARUF25 helped refine these insights, informing a new direction for the forum’s approach to “deep engagement.” Consequently, the vision for the MARUF25 experience evolved into one that

enabled participants not only to engage intellectually—listening, thinking, and reflecting—but also to act, make, and sense. The forum’s design transcended the purely cognitive to embrace the experiential and the sensorial.

MARUF25’s structure moved beyond the thinking mind to place the embodied experience—acknowledging the body as the primary medium through which we perceive the world via countless receptors—at its center. The forum experience was **designed** around three modes that positioned participants not merely as listeners, but as producers and curators of their own experience: “**Minds On**”, “**Hands On**”, and “**Senses On**”. These modes created a holistic space for learning, discovery, dialogue, and play, while introducing new levels of agency that allowed participants to choose their role: as listener, producer, or curator.

MARUF25 thus offered not a one-dimensional forum experience, but an interactive, multi-layered space of discovery that appealed to different senses. Participants were invited to design their own pathways through the program, becoming not just parts of the forum, but designers of their own urban journeys. Just as the experience of living in a city is holistic—engaging our entire body—the MARUF experience reflected this multi-sensory reality through three core participation modes: conceptual exploration starting with “**Minds On**,” productive processes embodied in “**Hands On**,” and a deep urban immersion completed through “**Senses On**.”

**Minds On:** This mode marked the first stop of the MARUF journey and the genesis of intellectual exploration. Participants embarked on a mental expedition by listening to diverse perspectives and experiences. This mode offered opportunities for analysis, comparison, and opening new pathways of thought. Within this scope, the forum featured events such as **Showcases, Quick Takes, Closed Meetings, How To-ol, Urban Talks, Discussions, Local in Action**, and **opening-closing sessions**.

**Hands On:** Representing the forum’s productive and interactive facet, this mode embodied the spheres where knowledge and thought were translated directly into action. Acting through collective intelligence, participants engaged in discussions, developed ideas, and became integral parts of practical processes—producing, drawing, writing, dismantling, and rebuilding together. In essence, this mode offered experiences rooted in production, collaboration, and dialogue. Events such as **Networking, Urban Atelier, Discovery Meeting, Circle of Possibilities**, and **Play Marmara** took place under this mode.

**Senses On:** The MARUF experience, which began with knowledge and evolved into production, reached its culmination in this mode through bodily and sensory engagement. Participants forged connections with the space, tuned into its sounds, focused on its visuals, and moved both within the city and in unison with it. This mode provided the opportunity to understand and discuss urban issues by perceiving them through diverse senses. Key activities featured under this mode included the **Urban Library, Urban Cinema, Collective Work, Exhibition, Urban Rhythm**, and **Urban Route**.

## Event Types

A total of 21 different event types were experienced under the three modes within the scope of MARUF25.

### Event Types in the Minds On Mode

**Showcases:** Allowed for the most effective presentation of urban good practices, research, initiatives, projects, and "MARUF on the Go" events within a limited time.

- **PhD Showcase:** PhD candidates who passed the preliminary evaluation competed by presenting their theses to the jury in the most effective way possible in 3 minutes.
- **Good Practice Showcase:** Practitioners who passed the preliminary evaluation presented the implementations they realized by or in cooperation with municipalities in 5 minutes.
- **Start-up Showcase:** Start-ups that passed the preliminary evaluation conveyed their innovative and creative work in 5 minutes.
- **Project Showcase:** Project teams that passed the preliminary evaluation shared their projects most efficiently in 5 minutes.
- **MARUF on the Go Showcase:** Institutions that organized events within the scope of "MARUF on the Go" prior to MARUF25 presented their work and outputs concisely in 5 minutes.

**Quick Take:** Designed to access short but concise information rather than long and detailed explanations to cover more urban issues, "Quick Take" sessions offered dynamic content focusing on the essence of the matter, forming a basis for various urban topics.

**How To-ol:** These concise but inspiring talks began immediately before the circles of possibilities for professionals who produce creative and inclusive solutions in urban areas and trigger change, offering knowledge and experience on "how to achieve" different topics.

**Discussion:** Opened a space for experts to discuss different theories, strategies, proposals, or solutions in a field around a table. These sessions, where expert opinions from different disciplines regarding urban problems were subjected to deep analysis and solution proposals were evaluated and synthesized, encouraged the exchange of ideas and critical thinking.

**Urban Basics:** Shaped by presentations from expert speakers to remind us of our fundamental rights regarding the city, these talks focused on rights such as water, energy, breath, time, and digitalization, examining their historical and current contexts. Aiming to reopen fundamental rights and responsibilities for public discussion, these presentations underscored the principles of justice and equality in city management.

**Local in Action:** Brought urban practices creating positive impact on a local, regional, or global scale to the stage. This format, where good practice examples, case studies, and success stories were presented in detail, made innovative and sustainable urban solutions visible. By sharing these actions born from local initiatives that could inspire on a broad scale, the aim was to encourage

action-oriented learning and positive change for participants.

**Urban Talks:** In this conversation program with special guests on urban life, topics such as urban culture, sociology, literature, and art were addressed. Through the personal experiences, areas of expertise, and visions of distinguished guests, the visible and invisible layers of urban life were explored.

**Closed Meeting:** Meetings held by stakeholder institutions with their specific agendas and invitees, closed to general participation, played an important role in terms of strategic information exchange and inter-institutional coordination.

#### **Event Types in the Hands On Mode**

**Networking:** Offered the opportunity to meet, collaborate, and learn together by bringing experts and interested parties together on specific topics. While strengthening MARUF's dialogue-oriented structure, these events formed the most visible form of interdisciplinary contact.

**Discovery Meeting:** Implemented as sessions where topics were opened to discussion with different perspectives, and speakers and participants were part of the evaluation process together. This format ensured that ideas were handled in a polyphonic manner and discussions were shaped collectively.

**Urban Atelier:** Designed to have different setups with creative methods and co-production techniques and shaped by the contributions of participants, these workshops created productive spaces where ideas turned into tangible outputs. Each workshop added a different energy to MARUF's learning and production atmosphere with its own internal dynamics.

**Circle of Possibilities:** Used as a method where participants came together in a circle arrangement following expert presentations in "Tools of the How" events, with active listening and sharing at the forefront. Thus, knowledge went beyond one-way transmission and transformed into thinking and producing together.

**Play Marmara:** As a game format developed specifically for the Marmara Region, it enabled participants to experience strategic thinking, decision-making, and solution generation in a gamified process. The outputs of these sessions were reported as concrete data contributing to the forum's general learning cycle.

#### **Event Types in the Senses On Mode**

**Urban Library:** Designed as a common thinking space bringing together knowledge, research, and experiences on the city. This area, where periodicals and non-periodicals from different disciplines, visual, and digital contents met, offered participants the opportunity to discover the city's multi-layered structure, deepen their readings, and establish new connections. The Urban Library became a resource feeding the intellectual universe of the forum.

**Urban Cinema:** Offered participants the opportunity to discover the cultural, historical, and social layers of the city from a visual and sensory perspective by bringing together urban stories and cinematic experiences. Through screenings, interviews, and creative workshops, the program opened spatial reflections of urban memory, community solidarity, and cinema culture to discussion.

**Exhibition:** Curated as discovery spaces addressing urban issues from different scales and perspectives, combining research, memory, and creativity. Aiming to establish a dialogue between

the city's past, present, and future, these exhibitions became the manifestation of shared production and sharing experiences alongside the intellectual process that began before MARUF25.

**Collective Work:** "Collective Works," where participants reflected their observations regarding the forum and which were shaped by their own experiences and efforts, were carried out in MARUF's areas offering intersection and commonality. These creative spaces allowed participants to transform their experiences and ideas about the city into a common production process.

**Urban Rhythm:** A series of creative and unifying events such as music, dance, and visual arts at various points of the event venue were curated as a reflection of the emotional and physical energy of the city. Inviting participants to experience the sounds, rhythm, and movement of the city, these events offered the opportunity to discover the city by hearing, feeling, and moving together.

**Urban Route:** Planned as walking and discovery experiences inviting participants to explore various venues of the city through the filter of different themes. These routes, enabling the step-by-step experience of the city's history, texture, and daily life, offered participants the opportunity to make sense of the city in a multidimensional way by establishing direct contact with the space.

## From Deep Dives to Collective Memory

MARUF25 provided a platform where participants were not merely passive observers but active architects of their own learning and production journeys. Dedicated interfaces and collective workspaces were established to make these personal experiences and journeys visible. Throughout the event, content experienced through different modes was blended with individual takeaways, reflections, answers, and new questions.

The forum's multidimensional structure materialized through over 200 events organized under **3 modes, 21 event types, 4 streams, and 34 topics**. Within this dense universe of content, each participant curated their own flow. Participants recorded their deep insights into Deep Dive Diaries and, if they wished, shared them with others digitally via social media or physically at the "Caught in MARUF's Net" collective workspace on the shores of the Golden Horn. In this way, the participants, producers, and occasional curators of MARUF constructed the forum's collective memory with ideas, values, and solutions that were genuinely 'captured' from their unique flows.

Alternatively, participants were free to share nothing at all, simply surrendering themselves to the flow; for getting lost within a universe of multiple and simultaneous events was also an inseparable part of the MARUF experience.

## VISUAL DESIGN LANGUAGE AND ITS CONCEPT

At the heart of MARUF's communication strategy lies its identity as a platform that unites cities and city dwellers, generating new ideas through collective wisdom and collaboration. Its core visual identity supports this vision, articulating the complexity, diversity, and layered structure of the city through simple yet potent symbols. Over the years, this framework has become the cornerstone of the institution's memory.

Built upon this robust framework, the 2025 identity centered on the year's theme: 'on the shore of all possibilities.' This year, a visual strategy was developed to emphasize MARUF's resolve to exist not only in inter-city dialogue but also in the liminal spaces where ideas and possibilities intersect.

MARUF's symbolic elements (circles, squares, waves, lines, and zigzags) were reinterpreted through the "Embroidered Floss" approach, transforming into fluid lines that connect to one another. While representing the multi-layered structure of cities and MARUF's interaction networks, this approach also provided a visual counterpart to

the shore metaphor—a space where borders blur, making flow and transition possible.

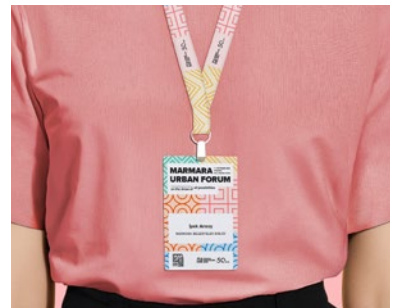
The 2025 visual language embodied the concepts of connection, flow, transformation, and togetherness that are prominent in MARUF's communication strategy. Rather than a linear structure, it was designed as a cyclical flow that extends infinitely when looped. With each form intersecting and each color touching another, the design directly reflected MARUF's nature as a ground and a 'forum' where ideas, sectors, regions, and disciplines converge. Colors and color transitions represented not only tonal changes but also the permeability between spheres of thought, conceptual depth, and diverse fields of possibility.

This holistic language was integrated into all communication channels throughout 2025. Digital platforms, stage designs, printed materials, publications, and social media content all carried this new narrative. Thus, the visual identity became not merely an aesthetic expression, but the primary vehicle for MARUF25's strategic communication narrative.



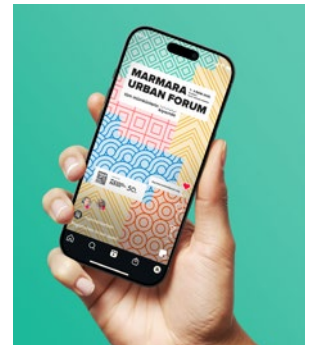
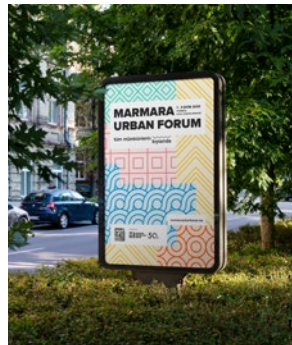


Sahir Ugur Eren, 2025





Baht, Design Studio, 2025



Sahir Uğur Eren, 2025

## SPATIAL LAYOUT AND CONFIGURATION

At MARUF25, the entire venue was conceived as a city prototype, drawing on the fragmented and distinctive spatial character of the Haliç Congress Center, located on the shores of the Golden Horn and enabling integration with the water. The structure, in direct contact with the city and the sea, provided a permeable experiential environment between interior and exterior spaces, shaping not only the spatial organization of the forum but also its content flow. From wide foyer areas to high-ceilinged volumes, and from enclosed spaces of various scales and forms to open areas extending along the shore, the entire area was treated like a living and transforming fragment of the city throughout MARUF25. While this approach allowed different event types and user experiences to leave dynamic traces within the space. Foyer areas, exhibition surfaces, booths, workshop and networking areas, and transition spaces turned into multi-functional grounds for production. This flexible spatial framework, hosting creative workshops, exhibitions, and collective works throughout the forum, offered a holistic interaction space that enabled participants to go beyond being mere spectators to become actors who directly experience, produce, and share.

The spatial layout took shape around various focal points that ensured encounters were visible alongside different event modes and types. Conceived as distinct centers for thinking about cities, developing shared ideas, and exchanging solutions, the venue was organized into various hubs focused on dialogue, creativity, vision, and social interaction, collectively comprising 52 activity points. Complementing this spatial layout, which enabled urban diversity and interaction within an architectural unity, the wide open space along the shore extended the forum experience beyond indoor spaces—merging the event's rhythm with the Golden Horn.

The **Dialogue Hub**, which included the main entrance, was one of the areas forming the intellectual backbone of MARUF25. Bringing together contemporary urban issues, future-oriented debates, and diverse fields of expertise, this hub spatially articulated the forum's capacity for dialogue. Session halls, the Urban Cinema, and sections reserved for thematic talks were curated in a permeable layout that was calm and suitable for focus but also encouraged encounters through collective works and exhibitions. As a meeting point where urban challenges were discussed, new perspectives were generated, and collective intelligence was cultivated, this area represented the conceptual depth of MARUF.

The **Social Hub**, structured around another focal theme, was one of the most dynamic and encounter-driven areas of the forum. It provided a ground where participants could engage with everyday urban issues while also spending time together in a socially vibrant environment. Alongside exhibitions and collective works, Urban Expo, the Play Marmara serious game, and the Showcase Stage enabled active participation and knowledge exchange, ranging from urban memory and social cohesion to innovative community practices and doctoral research presentations. As the section where the free and dynamic flow of the forum intensified, the Social Hub was one of the liveliest and most inclusive areas, establishing MARUF25's sense of togetherness through space.

The **Vision Hub**, conceived as a space where future urban imaginaries were shaped, hosted sessions focused on strategic visions, scenario-based discussions, and forward-looking planning and research outputs. With MARUF's main stage at its core, complemented by collective works and exhibitions inviting participants to think and imagine

together, this hub enabled the development of long-term perspectives and encouraged participants to look beyond conventional frameworks when considering cities. Designed to address not only the present but also the future of urban life, this area possessed a quality that strengthened the visionary aspect of MARUF25.

The **Creative Hub**, curated as the reflection of creative thinking, design, cultural production, and art practices in the forum space, offered participants the opportunity to address urban topics from an intuitive, experiential, and aesthetic perspective through exhibitions spread across different layers, creative workshops, material experience areas, and production-oriented sessions. This area created an atmosphere reminding us that cities are not only planned structures but also spaces of collective production that are cultural, artistic, and emotional. Like the other areas, in addition to hosting session rooms, collective works, and exhibitions, it supported the dynamic flow of creative processes through the Urban Library, the Creative Stage, and various workshop areas.

The final area, the Shore, functioned as a threshold between interior and exterior spaces, integrating the forum experience with water, openness, and the natural rhythm of the city. With the open-air stage, various collective works, exhibitions, music, and performance events, the coastline hosted the forum's more informal, relaxed, and fluid encounters. This wide area, where participants could take a breather, socialize, and join experiences by the Golden Horn at different moments of the day, was the place where MARUF25's bond with the city was felt most strongly in a sensory manner.

Sustainability was a defining principle in the design of MARUF25, extending beyond content to encompass spatial configuration, material selec-

tion, and wayfinding systems. Driven by the motive to reduce the forum's footprint, the entire spatial framework was developed through a holistic approach—from the types of materials used to the reusability of spatial arrangements. Interventions made to complement existing architectural elements in the venue provided functional support while ensuring that all parts of the system formed a consistent and meaningful whole. All production surfaces, exhibition modules, seating elements, and temporary structures were built using durable materials that retained their natural qualities and offered potential for reuse or transformation. Materials that stood out distinctly included OSB panels with their rigid structure, honeycomb panels with light but strong characteristics, wooden pallets offering simple but effective use, and wooden cable reels repurposed for versatile functions; these formed the basic elements of the space. Temporary furniture, modules, and interaction areas were shaped by the flexibility of these materials, creating a cohesive spatial experience throughout the venue. Completed with various fabrics offering functional and visual support, this approach demonstrated how simple materials could deliver an impactful experience while enabling sustainability through reuse after the event.

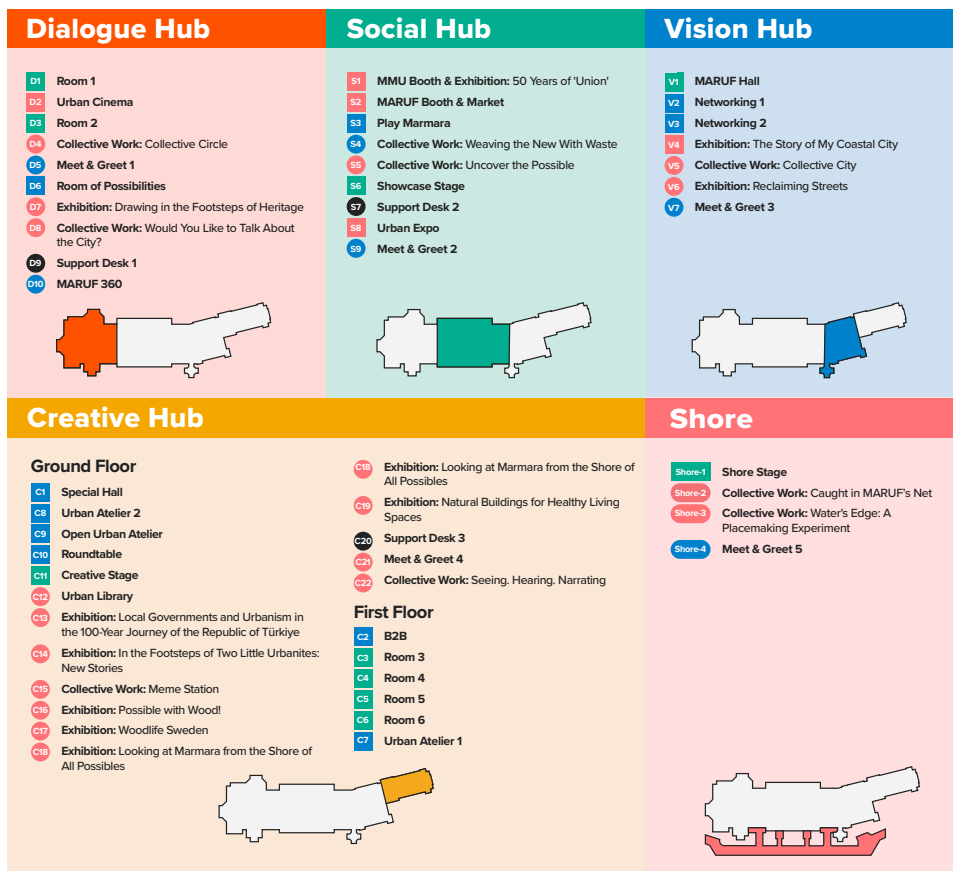
The wayfinding system, designed to help participants easily navigate the forum's flows and focal points, reflected the same sustainable approach. MARUF's distinctive visual language extended across the entire venue through minimal structural interventions, while the graphic design established a rhythm that supported collective thinking, production, and imagination. The semantic narrative constructed through the configuration of spatial elements created a strong connection between the event's identity and its spatial organization, making MARUF25's flows legible within the physical environment. In this way, the forum space ceased to be merely a venue where

events took place and transformed into a sustainable, holistic, and meaningful environment reflecting MARUF25's conceptual content.

Throughout the forum, the venue's wide foyer areas were transformed into vibrant spaces for exhibitions, collective works, workshops, and networking activities, fostering an atmosphere of interaction and exploration. While exhibitions located in circulation areas took their place in the venue as the physical manifestation of intellectual pursuits and common productions carried out on the city in the process leading up to MARUF, collective works became an experiential tool for thinking about the city. Participants encountered areas where they could not only acquire information about the present and future of cities but also

experience, touch, and think about this information together.

All this spatial arrangement transformed MARUF25 from merely a place where an event occurred into a sustainable city in a social and environmental context where the spirit of sharing, interaction, and co-production at the core of the forum was experienced. With its intertwined functions, fluid structure, and language inviting participation, the venue continuously encouraged participants to imagine and rethink cities together at every step. In doing so, MARUF25 transformed the space itself into an active component of the event, inviting participants to become part of new encounters and productions that would shape shared visions and hopes for the future of cities.







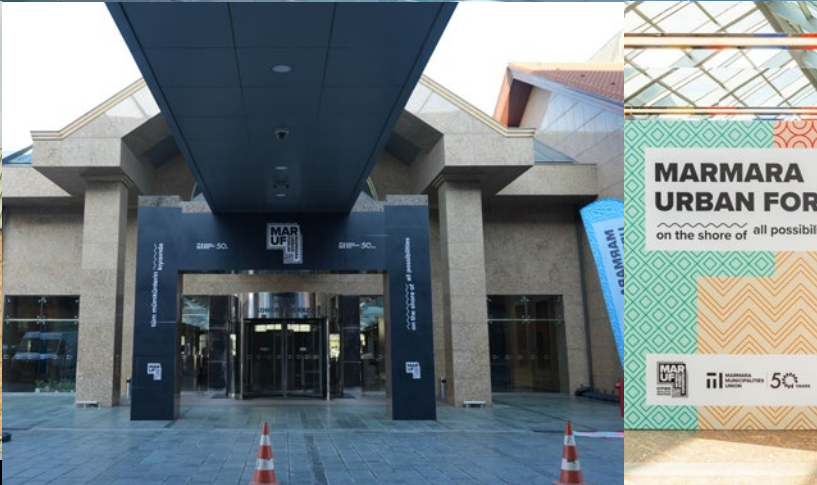
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## PARTNERSHIPS

Since its inception in 2019, one of MARUF's defining strengths has been its ability to create a space for collaboration and networking through an inclusive and participatory planning approach. This year, MARUF25 truly became an arena for "co-creation," thanks to an Advisory Network uniting experts from diverse urban fields, over 150 partners, and interactive events that allowed participants to contribute both during the pre-forum planning process and throughout the forum itself. This pursuit of collective production opened the door to numerous valuable collaborations.

### *A Wide Spectrum of Partners and Supporters*

Partners played a pivotal role in shaping the forum. Of the more than 150 stakeholders who partnered with MARUF25, two-thirds were institutions based in Türkiye, while the remaining third comprised international stakeholders and organizations abroad. Civil society organizations, international bodies, private sector actors, and local governments featured most prominently among these partners. The network also encompassed stakeholders from diverse sectors, including universities, local government associations, national and international projects, and central government bodies. All partners contributed significantly to the shaping and outreach of sessions by supporting content creation, speaker selection, planning, organization, and promotion.

Prominent international partners included leading UN agencies spearheading global urbanization efforts—such as UN-Habitat, UNDP, UN Women, and UNICEF—as well as institutions like

the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, CDP, ICLEI, WWF, WRI, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate, British Council, GIZ, EIT Urban Mobility, and the Time Use Initiative.

Domestically, contributors included public institutions such as the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change (Directorate of Climate Change), Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), the Union of Municipalities of Türkiye, and the Istanbul Development Agency (ISTKA). Furthermore, leading civil society and research organizations such as IKSU, TESEV, Urban.koop, MAD, the Türkiye Design Council, the Zero Waste Foundation, and the Green Crescent (Yeşilay) played a key role. Local governments—notably Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Bursa Metropolitan Municipality—along with universities from Türkiye and abroad, such as Politecnico di Milano, Oxford Brookes University, Istanbul Technical University, and Yıldız Technical University, were also integral to the partner network.

Another vital component of the ecosystem was MARUF's supporters. In particular, the Urban Library, which offered participants a unique space to explore urban literature and engage in author talks over three days, was made possible through book donations from Yapı Kredi Publications and many other publishing bodies such as İletişim, Metis, İdealkent, and Ayrıntı. Additionally, Everything Accessible (Erişilebilir Her Şey) and WeWALK provided crucial support before and during the forum to ensure that all events were accessible to every participant.

### **Strengthening Cooperation with International Urban Events**

As in past editions, MARUF25 strengthened its cooperation with global urban events. A strategic partnership was established with the Urban Future Global Conference (UFGC), held annually in different European cities for the past decade; this partnership facilitated a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and experience between the 2025 edition of UFGC and MARUF. Similarly, through collaboration with the British Council and Beyond Studio, creative industry projects and best practices from the United Kingdom were showcased at MARUF25. During the “International Urban Events in Dialogue” session, various international platforms developing common solutions for cities convened on a shared ground, including the ICLEI World Congress, POLIS Global Mobility Summit, the International Conference on Urban Planning (ICUP) in Serbia, and the annual AESOP Congress. Knowledge exchange also took place with other urban forums, such as the Serbian National Urban Forum and the Malaysia Urban Forum. An agreement signed with Urbanice Malaysia, the organizer of the Malaysia Urban Forum, laid the groundwork for collaboration on the localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other shared priorities between local governments in Türkiye and Malaysia.

### **Special Collaborations with Thematic Forums and Meetings**

MARUF25 also led special collaborations through three distinct event tracks. The “Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe,” organized by NALAS in cooperation with UN Women, was held this year as part of MARUF. Women mayors and elected representatives from across South-East Europe gathered for two days to share

challenges, solutions, and best practices regarding women's leadership at the local level. Another significant collaboration within MARUF25 was the CIVICSHIP Forum, organized in partnership with Urban.koop and Stiftung Mercator. This forum brought together representatives from local governments and civil society organizations to discuss how cooperation between these two sectors could be strengthened. Finally, in collaboration with UN-Habitat, Expert Group Meetings and sessions were held on “Metropolitan Planning and Finance for Adequate Housing.” Experts from Türkiye and around the world convened to explore how public policies ensuring universal access to adequate housing can be integrated with metropolitan management strategies.

### **B2B Meetings and Networking Sessions**

Debuting at MARUF25 in a structured format, B2B (business-to-business) meetings and networking events provided a platform for participants, speakers, and partner institutions to discuss collaboration opportunities within their fields. Networking sessions, planned both sectorally and thematically, connected stakeholders working on similar issues with relevant peers. Sector-specific sessions addressed topics such as funding opportunities and project calls for local governments, international city networks open for membership, and global urban events available for participation. Thematic networking sessions covered a wide range of areas including disaster management, resilience, culture and creative industries, smart cities, innovation, climate, mobility, and energy poverty. Through these B2B sessions, MARUF25 partners had the opportunity to hold one-on-one meetings with participants interested in specific collaborations.

## Partners



## Supporters



## Local Partners



## Academic Partners



## URBAN EXPO

The MARUF25 Urban Expo was curated as one of the most vital interaction spaces aimed at materializing MARUF’s approach of “cities developing solutions.” With its accessible and fluid layout, the Expo integrated seamlessly with MARUF’s public spaces—designed as a city prototype—and became a core element that reinforced the forum’s multi-stakeholder, solution-oriented, and interactive structure.

Participants in the MARUF Urban Expo not only showcased products, services, and projects contributing to urban transformation and solutions but also seized the opportunity to cultivate lasting partnerships within the collaborative networking environment created by MARUF25. Hosting over 25 exhibitors—including local governments guiding the future of cities, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society organizations—the Urban Expo became an integral part of MARUF25, standing on the shore of new collaborations. In this respect, the area served as a dynamic ground where knowledge sharing coalesced with cross-sector encounters, new partnerships, and thematic cooperation.

Resulting from a participatory and multi-stakeholder planning process driven by a pre-event open call, the Urban Expo stood out as one of the most visible manifestations of the forum’s inclusive nature. It offered stakeholders a valuable platform to both introduce themselves and share their urban solutions with a widely cast network.

### Actors at the Urban Expo

#### Municipalities

- Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality
- Bursa Metropolitan Municipality
- Gebze Municipality
- Üsküdar Municipality

#### Municipal Affiliates

- Istanbul Planning Agency (IPA)
- İSTON
- İSTAÇ
- İmar A.Ş.
- KÜLTÜR AŞ - Müzik TR100
- İSKİ
- Bursa Planning Agency
- BESAS
- BUSKİ
- TARIM A.Ş.

#### City Networks

- B40 Balkan Cities Network
- Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)
- Union of Municipalities of Türkiye (UMT)

#### Private Sector

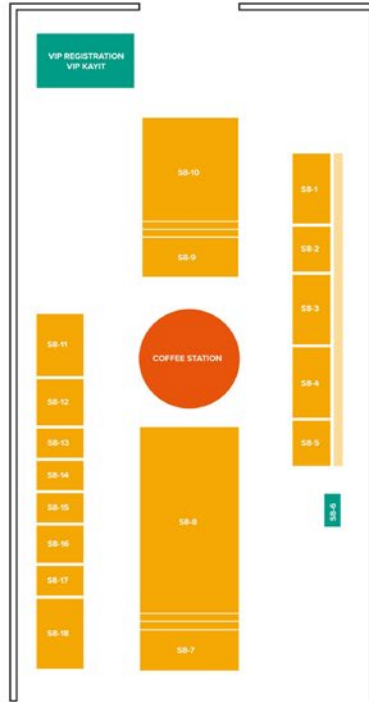
- Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing
- All Atık
- Fellas

#### Civil Society Organizations

- Zero Waste Foundation (Sıfır Atık Vakfı)
- Green Crescent (Yeşilay)
- Disaster Platform (Afet Platformu)
- Social Cohesion and Entrepreneurship Association (UYUM)
- Foundation for Children with Leukemia (LÖSEV)
- Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG)

## Urban Expo

- SB-01** Union of Municipalities of Türkiye - UMT  
Türkiye Belediyeler Birliği - TBB
- SB-02** Association of Palestinian Local Authorities-APLA  
Filistin Belediyeler Birliği - APLA
- SB-03** Uskudar Municipality  
Üsküdar Belediyesi
- SB-04** Gebze Municipality  
Gebze Belediyesi
- SB-05** ALL ATIK  
ALL ATIK
- SB-06** MUSIC TR 100  
MÜZİK TR 100
- SB-07** Bursa Planning Agency  
Bursa Planlama Ajansı
- SB-08** İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality  
İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi
- SB-08** IŞTON, İSKI, İPA, İMAR AS.
- SB-08** B40-Balkan Cities Network  
B40-Balkan Şehirleri Ağı
- SB-09** Zero Waste Foundation  
Sıfır Atık Vakfı
- SB-10** Bursa Metropolitan Municipality  
Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi
- SB-10** BESAS, BURULAS, BUSKI, TARIM AS.
- SB-11** Turkish Green Crescent Society  
Yeşilay
- SB-12** Fellas
- SB-13** Disaster Platform  
Afet Platformu
- SB-14** Chamber of City Planners  
Şehir Plancılar Odası
- SB-15** Social Cohesion and Entrepreneurship  
Association - UYUM  
Sosyal Uyum ve Girişimcilik Derneği -  
SUGDER
- SB-16** Foundation for Children with Leukemia  
(LÖSEV)  
Lösemili Çocuklar Vakfı - LÖSEV
- SB-17** Community Volunteers Foundation  
(TOG)  
Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı-TOG
- SB-18** Yapı Kredi Publications  
Yapı Kredi Yayınları







## SUSTAINABILITY

Since the inception of MARUF, sustainability has served as a compass guiding every stage; from content creation to space design, and from pre-event planning to post-event evaluation. For MARUF25, stream questions and topics were crafted with the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability in mind. Furthermore, to raise awareness of global frameworks defining today's sustainability discourse—such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—and major arenas where these agendas are set, like the Conference of the Parties (COP), dedicated sessions were organized both during the “MARUF on the Go” process and at MARUF25 itself. Building on discussions initiated at MARUF21, the forum continued to explore SDG reporting, ensuring participants deepened their understanding, examined diverse reporting practices, and fostered a sustained dialogue across MARUF editions.

At MARUF25, meticulous care was taken to minimize the event's environmental footprint. Throughout the planning, execution, and post-event phases, resources were utilized efficiently with a concerted effort to minimize waste. In space design, priority was given to the use of recyclable and reusable materials. MARUF25 also actively encouraged participants to adopt responsible consumption habits, advocating for choices that reduce plastic use and lower carbon footprints.

Additionally, the MARUF Code of Conduct was established, embodying fundamental ideals of sustainability such as inclusivity, accessibility, and resource stewardship. These principles were disseminated through official communication channels, inviting participants to internalize these values and align their actions with this framework.

## ACCESSIBILITY

MARUF25 was curated with an approach that treats accessibility not merely as a technical requirement, but as an integral component of urban life. The efforts undertaken to ensure an equal and safe experience for every participant created a holistic framework in terms of both scope and on-site implementation. Throughout the event, services such as sign language interpretation, live captioning, live audio description, barrier-free spatial arrangements, and indoor navigation support were provided. Thanks to the welcoming and supportive approach of the help desks and volunteer teams, participants were able to access the assistance they needed instantly.

Accessibility was also made a fundamental element of the program design; an icon system utilized in the session flow allowed participants to identify which accessibility features were available in each session prior to the forum. Quick access to the digital program was provided via QR codes distributed throughout the venue. Navigational solutions were developed specifically for visually

impaired and low-vision participants, making the spatial experience more independent and accessible.

All these efforts aimed not only to strengthen the technical infrastructure but also to make accessibility a natural part of urban discourse. This approach was underscored in the session titled "Let's Talk Accessibility," where local government policies and practices regarding accessibility were discussed together with participants. Thus, MARUF25 offered a genuine and inclusive forum experience that internalized accessibility within both the physical space and the intellectual framework.

MARUF views this journey not merely as a goal for today but commits to maintaining accessibility as a founding principle when designing the cities of the future. Strengthening every component of the forum in the coming years, harnessing new technologies for the benefit of accessibility, and offering a more inclusive experience at every forum will be part of this vision.

## MARUF25 ORGANIZING TEAM

### MARUF25 Team

#### General Coordinator

M. Cemil Arslan

#### Program Coordinators

Burcuhan Şener | *Partnerships*

Ezgi Küçük Çalışkan | *Planning*

Görsev Argın Uz | *Experience*

#### Senior Officers

Samet Keskin | *Content Coordinator*

İrem Kurtuluş Korkmaz (*Venue Design*)

Merve Ağca (*Logistics & Sponsorship*)

Nazlıcan Akcı (*Culture & Arts*)

Özge Sivrikaya (*Networking*)

#### Creative Team

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Ayşe Göç Yalçinkaya

Ayşe Gümeç Karamuk

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Büşra Yılmaz

Dila Toprak

Elif Kahraman

H. Kübra Baştuğ

Halenur Dönmez

Hazan Sertkaya

Meltem Özden

#### Communications

Emrehan Furkan Düzgiden | *Com. Coordinator*

İpek Nur Arısoy

İrem Selen

Hayrünnisa Akpınar

#### IT

Yunus Demiryürek

#### Support

Mustafa Kabil

Sefa Şahin

Ali Mert Çavuşoğlu

Cemre Korkut

#### Special Thanks to:

Turgut Kartal

Burak Arlı

Gamze Aydın

Melis Nur Koyuncu

Arcan Kavuzlu

Özge Yüksekaya

and the entire MMU team

## MARUF25 Advisory Network

A. Faruk Göksu  
Ahmet Hakan Atik  
Alim Arlı  
Aslı Ceylan Öner  
Azime Tezer  
Bahar Aksel  
Burak Pak  
Bülent Özcan  
Celal Abdi Güzer  
Cengiz Özdemir  
Çağrı Yıldırım  
Ece Ceylan Baba  
Eda Yücesoy  
Ela Babalık  
Emre Oğuzöncül  
Erbay Arıkboğa  
Ervin Sezgin  
Ezgi Orhan  
Fatih Terzi  
Gökhan Yılmaz  
Güneş Cansız  
Halil İbrahim Düzenli  
Hande Sart

Hayrettin Günç  
İtir Akdoğan  
Koray Velibeyoğlu  
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Murat Şentürk  
Mustafa Sarı  
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Oktay Kargül  
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Osman Balaban  
Özlem Ece  
Savaş Zafer Şahin  
Selva Gürdoğan  
Sibel Bulay  
Tamer Kılıç  
Tarkan Oktay  
Tülin Hadi  
Yaşar Adanalı  
Yunus Uğur  
Zafer Yenal  
Zeynep Enlil  
Zeynep Günay  
Zübeyir Nişancı

## MARUF25 Volunteers

Abdulla Kikati  
Ahmet Burak Kara  
Ahmet Efe Arslan  
Ahmet Furkan Çetin  
Amine Berra Güngör  
Aras Enes Ekti  
Arzu Haji Hasanlı  
Aslı Durdu  
Asya Dalan  
Ayça Sinan  
Aylin Kartal  
Ayşe Yılmankaya  
Ayşenaz Evin Yıldırım  
Azra Kaya  
Azra Yağmur Kartal  
Bahar Töremen  
Baraah Alhayek  
Batuhan Sal  
Belis Demirci  
Beren Sude Karadaş  
Berfin Baki  
Beril Sevinç  
Berk Yılmazpehlivan  
Berkin Kor  
Burak Ayaz  
Burcu Kara  
Burcu Korkut  
Büşra Künkül  
Cemre Bülbül  
Cemre Onan  
Ceren Cankurt  
Ceren Özel  
Ceyda Kartekin  
Ceylin Kaya  
Çağla Zeynep Kayaturan  
Çağatay Turan Yıldırım  
Deniz Gülbay  
Dilara Sayıt  
Dilara Tarakçı  
Duru Günay  
Duygu Yurteri  
Dürdanenur Aşlayıcı  
Ece Lal Kuddar  
Ecenur Pehlivan  
Eda Nur Çerli  
Edanur Arslan  
Edanur Sarılı  
Efe Emirhan Karahan  
Elif Lal Karacan  
Elif Yavuz Özdemir  
Emin Yıldız  
Eren Can Sarıkaya  
Erva Sümeyra Darbaz  
Esmal Deniz Deniz  
Esmal Yılmaz  
Esmanur Serfice  
Esra Çoban  
Eylül Serep  
Ezgi İliksiz  
Fatih Mert Yaşar  
Fatime Ateş  
Fatma Zehra Kılıç  
Firdevs Zehra Şimbil  
Funda Tezcan  
Gamze Şahin  
Göksu Ekin Kavruk  
Gülbahar Acap  
Gülten Ece Akşit  
Halil Akay  
Hande Nur Karalı  
Hatice Beyza Yıldırım  
Hatice Kübra Civan  
Hayrunnisa Demir  
Hilal Daşcı

Huriye alıřkan Mimarlar  
İdil Zeynep Gerek  
İlayda Bahři  
İlknur Kuvall  
İrem Bilgi  
İrem ıplak  
İrem Gzaık  
İrem Korkmazer  
Irmak Paksoy  
Kemal Kaan Glcenbay  
Khudai Birdy Ghulam Nabi  
Mehmet Toprak Genler  
Mehveř Ünal  
Meliha řevval Uysal  
Melissu Damar  
Merve Avran  
Merve Azgın  
Mine Karaman  
Miray Özyurt  
Nairi Ađay  
Nazlı Kayar  
Nefise Sena Usta  
Nidanur Bozkurt  
Nilsu Omrak  
Nilüfer Yüce  
Nisan Nigar Sađlam  
Nur Eylül Topkaya  
Nur Pelin Uras  
Nursena Özdemir  
Ömer Faruk akar  
Ömrüm Neriman Özgün  
Öykü Dođa Aras  
Pelin Altıntař  
Rabia Aktař  
Rana Akyüz  
Ruveyda Say  
Sahar Meena Alkuzalı

Sahra Bacanak  
Sara Huseynova  
Sare Nur Erenay  
Sedanur elebi  
Sedef Ülkü Yıldırım  
Selin Öztürk  
Selin Tümay  
Sena Özemre  
Siddıka Sude Demirel  
Sıla Bađ  
Sude Aleyna Ülgen  
Sueda Kara  
Sümeyye Aytav  
řevin Ari  
řeyda Nur Daylak  
řeyma Sonkur  
řükran Bke Dölger  
Tuana Bade Sarı  
Tuba Can  
Tuđe Erol  
Tuđe Karaca  
Ulař Zal Akkaya  
Umut Görkem Arslanbay  
Utku Yıldız  
Yađmur Kumsal Yılmaz  
Yaren Sümeyya Toraman  
Yasmeen Salem  
Zeliha Telli  
Zelihanur Glopur  
Zeynep Durmuř  
Zeynep Ferhan Kaya  
Zeynep Nur Yüreкли  
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Zeynep Yergök  
Zöhre İkbal Kaya  
Zuhal řaman  
Zulhude Ođuzhan

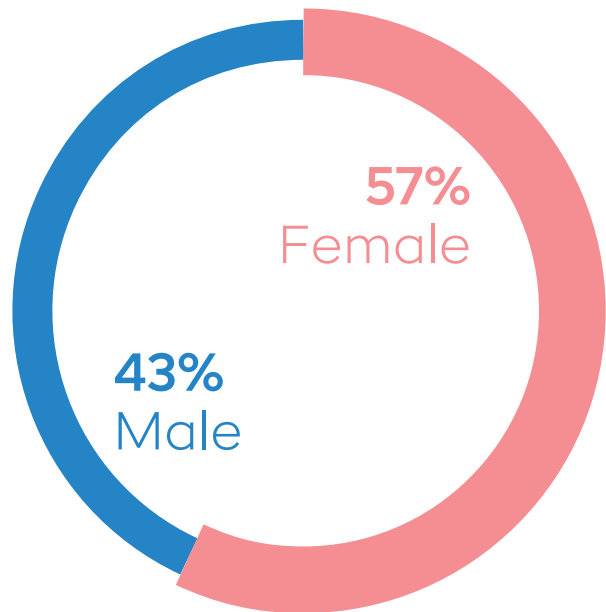
## DATA AND STATISTICS

### Events and Speakers

MARUF25 hosted 211 sessions across approximately 21 event types, structured under the “Minds On,” “Hands On,” and “Senses On” modes. The distribution of these sessions according to event mode and type is detailed in the table below.

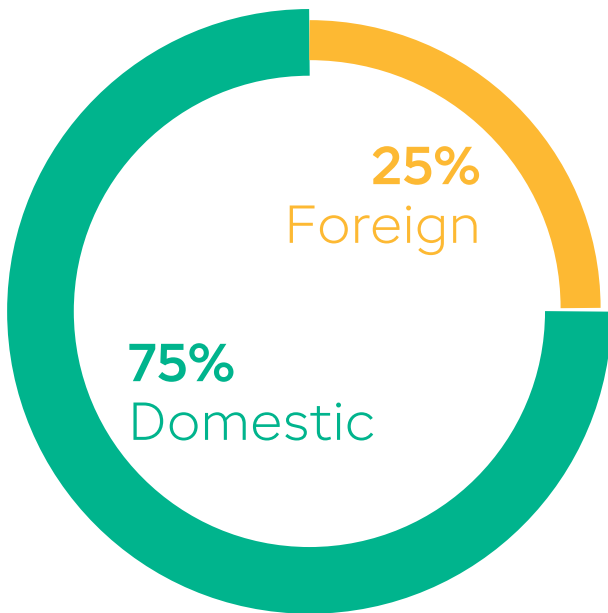
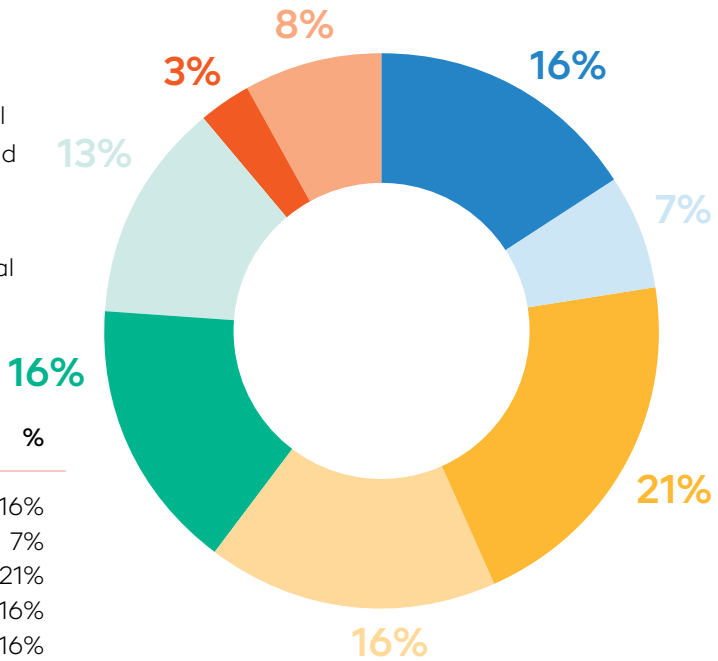
MINDS ON		HANDS ON		SENSES ON	
Event Type	Number	Event Type	Number	Event Type	Number
■ Opening-Closing	2	■ Networking	16	■ Urban Library	9
■ Showcase	8	■ Urban Atelier	30	■ Urban Cinema	8
■ Quick Take	7	■ Discovery Meeting	9	■ Urban Route	21
■ Closed Meeting	9	■ Circle of Possibilities	5	■ Urban Rhythm	4
■ How To-ol	7	■ Play Marmara	3	■ Collective Work	9
■ Urban Talks	2			■ Exhibition	10
■ Discussion	13				
■ Urban Basics	5				
■ Local in Action	34				
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>

A total of over 500 speakers—serving as both moderators and panelists—contributed to the sessions held within the scope of MARUF25. The gender distribution of these speakers stood at 57% female and 43% male.



Regarding the sectoral breakdown of speakers, local governments and local government associations took the lead (23% combined). This was followed by universities/academia (21%), the private sector (17%), non-governmental organizations (16%), international organizations (13%), and central government (3%).

Sector	%
Local Government	16%
Local Government Association	7%
University/Academia	21%
Private Sector	16%
Non-Governmental Organization	16%
Int. Organization/Int. NGO	13%
Central Government	3%
Other	8%

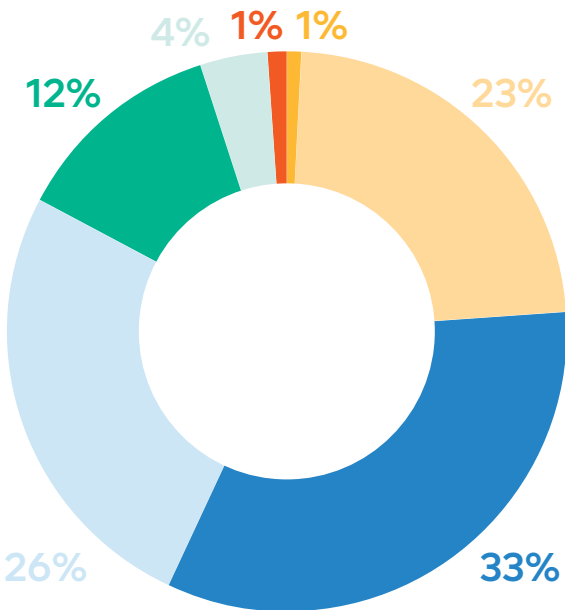
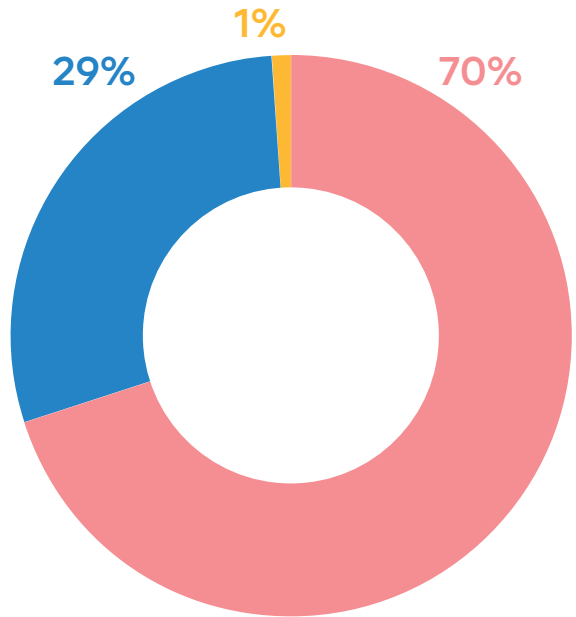


In terms of origin, 75% of the speakers were domestic, while international speakers accounted for 25%. A review of speaker nationalities reveals representation from 50 different countries. These include: Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Malaysia, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Northern Ireland, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United States.

## Participants

Held at the Haliç Congress Center from October 1–3, 2025, MARUF25 attracted over 8,000 attendees. The gender breakdown of participants was 70% female and 29% male, with 1% preferring not to disclose their gender.

Gender	%
Female	70%
Male	29%
Prefer not to say	1%



Regarding age distribution, the largest group fell within the 25–34 age range (33%), followed by the 35–44 range (26%) and the 19–24 range (23%). Collectively, participants aged 19–44 constituted approximately 82% of the total attendance. The remaining 18% comprised those aged 45–54 (12%), 55–64 (4%), 0–18 (1%), and 65+ (1%).

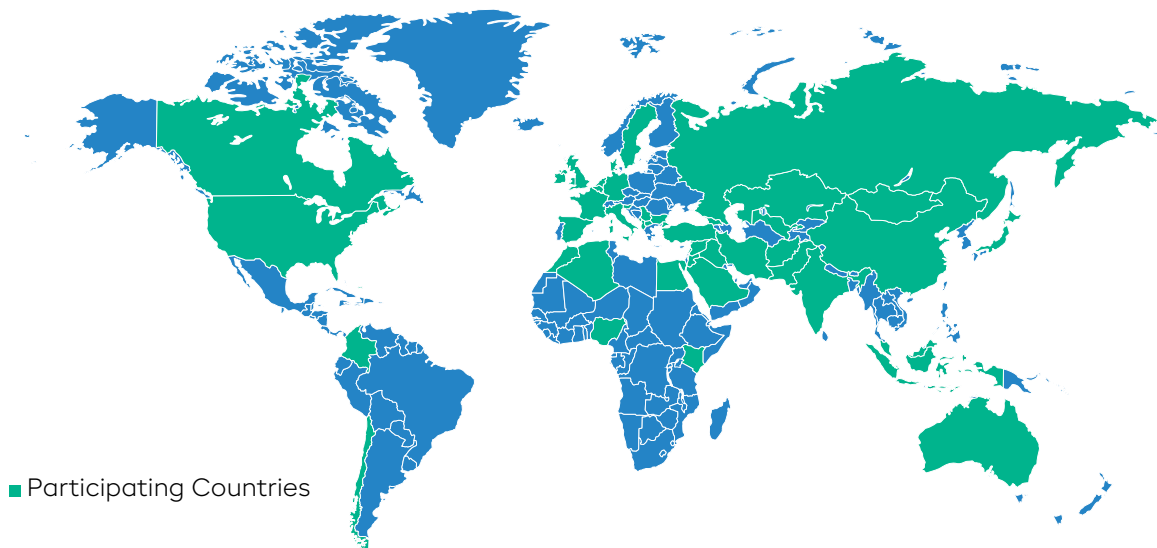
Age Range	%
0-18	1%
19-24	23%
25-34	33%
35-44	26%
45-54	12%
55-64	4%
+65	1%

An analysis of the sectoral distribution shows that local governments ranked first (40%), followed by students (23%), the private sector (8%), and universities/academia (8%). Within the public sector, in addition to local governments, participation was noted from central government (2%) and local government associations (1%). Non-governmental organizations (5%), international organizations (2%), and media (1%) were also represented. Participants from outside these specified sectors accounted for 10%, comprising those not currently working in any sector (4%) and those specifying “other” (6%).

Sector	%
Local Government	40%
Student	23%
University/Academia	8%
Private Sector	8%
Other	6%
Non-Governmental Org.	5%
Not Currently Employed	4%
Int. Organization/Int. NGO	2%
Central Government	2%
Media	1%
Local Gov. Association	1%



Looking at the countries of origin, MARUF25 welcomed participants from 50 different nations, including: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Georgia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Türkiye, Turks and Caicos Islands, United Kingdom, United States, and Uzbekistan.

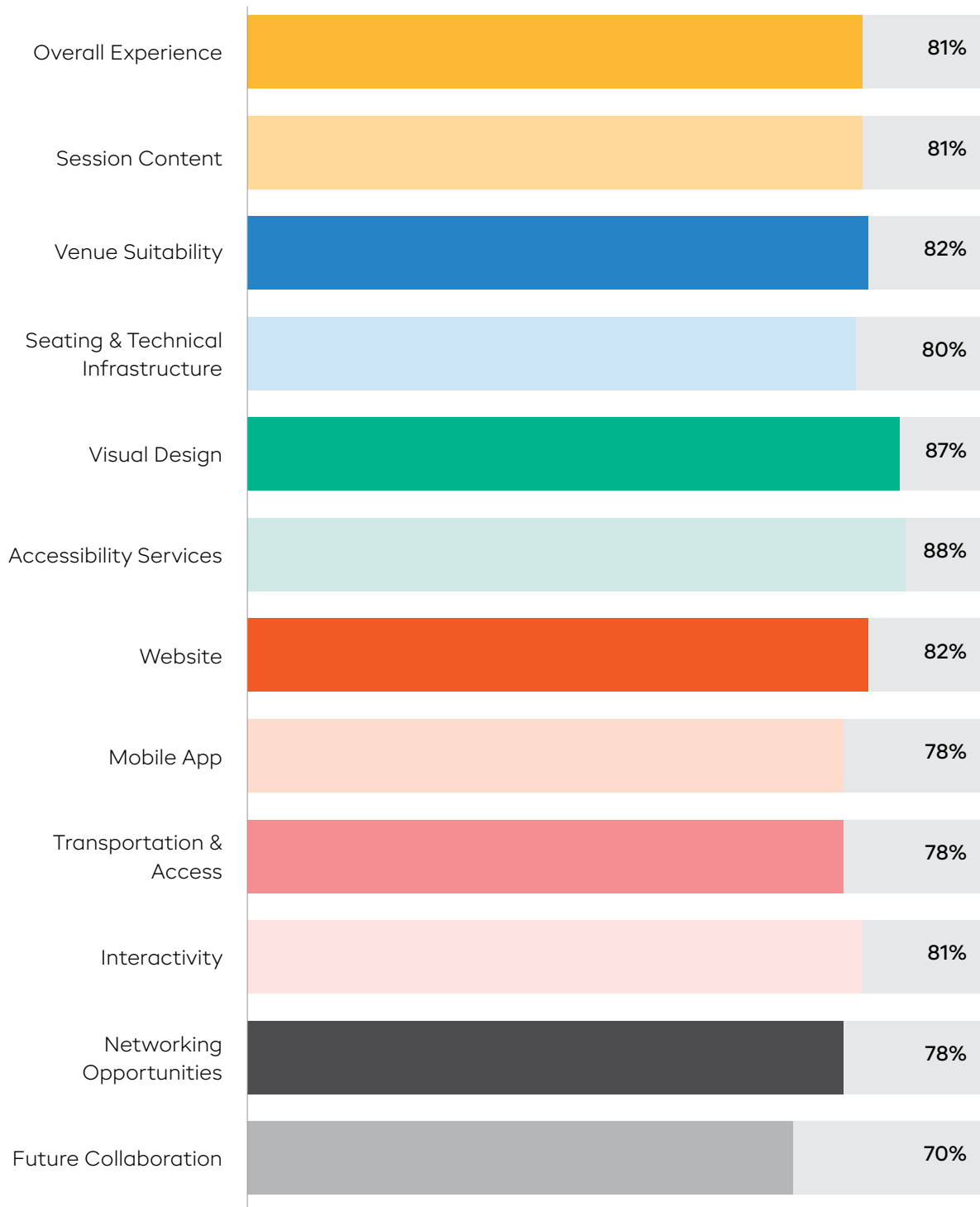


## Participant Evaluations

Following MARUF25, an online survey was distributed to participants to evaluate their experience. The assessment aimed to gauge satisfaction levels regarding the overall event experience, session content, venue suitability, simultaneous interpretation and sign language services, and the functionality of the mobile app. Participants were asked to rate MARUF25 on a 7-point Likert scale (where "1" represents the lowest and "7" the highest satisfaction) across the following dimensions:

- How would you rate your overall MARUF experience?
- How would you rate the quality of the session content?
- How would you evaluate the suitability of the venue used for MARUF?
- How would you rate the seating arrangement and technical infrastructure?
- How did you find the visual design concept of MARUF25?
- How would you rate MARUF in terms of accessibility (simultaneous interpretation, sign language, live captioning, audio description, smart cane, etc.)?
- How would you rate the MARUF website?
- How would you rate the MARUF mobile application?
- How would you rate the transportation/accessibility to the event venue?
- How interactive did you find the events?
- To what extent did MARUF help you meet new people/institutions?
- What is the likelihood of collaborating in the future with people you met at the event?

### MARUF25 Satisfaction Levels by Category



Regarding the **overall MARUF25 experience**, approximately **38.8%** of participants expressed maximum satisfaction (7 points). The average score was calculated at **5.70 out of 7**, corresponding to a satisfaction rate of roughly **81 out of 100**. Participants rating their experience at 4 points or above—considered the threshold for satisfaction—constituted approximately **88.2%** of the total.

In terms of **session content**, about **29.4%** of respondents indicated maximum satisfaction (7 points). The average score stood at **5.69 out of 7**, translating to an **81%** satisfaction rate. Notably, **92.9%** of participants rated the content at 4 points or higher.

Evaluating the **venue and its facilities**, **47.1%** of attendees reported maximum satisfaction (7 points). With an average score of **5.77 out of 7**, the satisfaction level reached approximately **82%**. The proportion of participants giving a rating of 4 points or above was measured at **84.6%**.

For **seating arrangements and technical infrastructure**, **40%** of participants were maximally satisfied (7 points). The average score was **5.59 out of 7**, yielding an **80%** satisfaction rate. Those rating this category at 4 points or higher accounted for **85.8%** of the total.

The **visual design concept** of MARUF25 received maximum marks (7 points) from **54.1%** of participants. This category achieved a high average score of **6.07 out of 7**, corresponding to an 87% satisfaction level. A significant **92.9%** of attendees rated it at 4 points or above.

Regarding **accessibility and inclusivity services** (simultaneous interpretation, sign language, live captioning, audio description, etc.), **55.3%** of respondents found these services maximally adequate (7 points). This category garnered the highest average score of **6.19 out of 7**, reflecting an **88%** satisfaction rate. The percentage of participants rating these services at 4 points or above was **97.6%**.

For the **MARUF website**, designed to facilitate information access, **41.2%** of users reported maximum satisfaction (7 points). The average score was **5.72 out of 7**, indicating an **82%** satisfaction level, with **91.8%** of participants rating it at 4 points or higher.

The **mobile application**, created to enhance the forum experience and interaction, received a maximum rating (7 points) from **42.4%** of users. The average score was **5.48 out of 7**, translating to a **78%** satisfaction rate. Approximately **87%** of participants rated the app at 4 points or above.

Regarding **transportation and accessibility to the venue**, **31.8%** of attendees gave the highest rating (7 points). The average score stood at **5.44 out of 7**, corresponding to a **78%** satisfaction level. The ratio of those rating it at 4 points or higher was approximately **87%**.

When asked about the **level of interaction** at events, **36.5%** of participants expressed maximum satisfaction (7 points). The average score was **5.70 out of 7**, reflecting an **81%** satisfaction rate. A substantial **94%** of participants rated interaction levels at 4 points or above.

Regarding the opportunity to **meet new people and institutions**, **34.1%** of participants were maximally satisfied (7 points). The average score was **5.43 out of 7**, yielding a 78% satisfaction level. Approximately **89.5%** of attendees rated this aspect at 4 points or higher.

Finally, concerning the **likelihood of future collaboration** with contacts made at the event, **23.5%** of participants gave the highest rating (7 points). The average score was **4.89 out of 7**, corresponding to a 70% satisfaction level. The proportion of participants rating this potential at 4 points or above was **84.7%**.

## Communication and Visibility

Transcending the boundaries of a mere three-day forum, MARUF25 established a comprehensive network of information and interaction across its digital platforms. Through the forum's website, mobile app, social media accounts, and outdoor campaigns, it achieved robust visibility, reaching a vast audience on both national and international scales.

### Web Site

Throughout MARUF25, [www.marmaraurbanforum.org](http://www.marmaraurbanforum.org) served as a comprehensive information hub. The sheer volume of content—featuring data on over 52 venue points, 20+ event types, and 200+ events covering 34 topics (including 21 urban routes and 30 urban ateliers), along with 150+ partners and 500+ speakers across 73 distinct detail pages—reflects the forum's diversity and information density.

Between August 4 and October 4, 2025, the website attracted 48,000 visitors, generating 366,000 page views and a total of 864,000 interactions. These figures demonstrate that MARUF25 created an active digital ecosystem that extended well beyond the specific event dates.

### Mobile App

Developed to enhance the participant experience, the MARUF25 mobile app served as a crucial tool for information access and personalized interaction during the forum. Launched one week prior to the event, the app reached a total of 1,800 users, comprising 1,300 iOS and 500 Android downloads.

## Social Media

Throughout the event cycle, social media channels served as the primary communication vehicles boosting MARUF25's visibility.

- **Instagram:** Standing out as the channel delivering the highest reach and engagement during the event week, Instagram fostered strong digital community interaction through visual stories, stage moments, and participant shares. Between September 5 – October 4, 2025, the account achieved 4 million views, 22,800 interactions, and 4,471 new followers. With 165 posts and 37 reels, the total follower count reached 11,500.
- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn bolstered MARUF25's visibility within professional circles. On the MARUF LinkedIn account, utilized for the first time this year, the forum achieved 93,000 impressions, 2,494 reactions, and 87 reposts between September 6 – October 5, 2025, gaining over 2,000 followers.
- **X (Twitter):** X remained an effective sharing channel despite algorithmic changes. Between August 4 – October 4, 2025, it garnered 79,300 views, 3,500 interactions, 333 likes, 173 reposts, 18 comments, 65 shares, 25 bookmarks, 337 profile visits, and 90 new followers. The engagement rate stood at 4.4%.

### Outdoor Campaigns (OOH)

MARUF25 integrated into the cityscape through outdoor advertising campaigns conducted in eight metropolitan cities. High visibility was achieved through billboards, digital screens, and public transport ads in **Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Kocaeli, Tekirdag, Antalya, and Eskisehir**. Additionally, municipalities in various other cities created supportive visibility at the local level. Between September 26 – October 5, 2025, public awareness was further expanded through content broadcast on **Modyo TV, YOVI, IMM TV, and City Lines (Şehir Hatları)** screens.

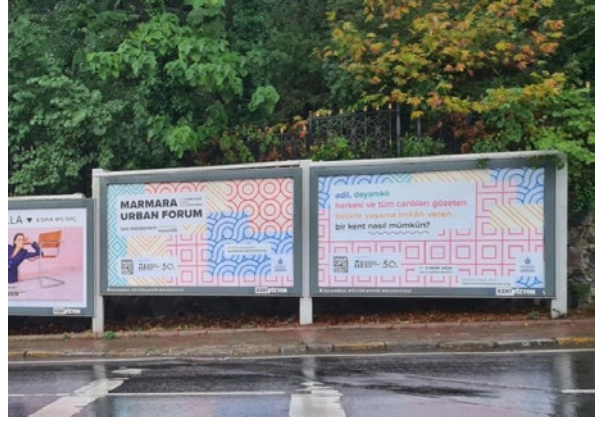
### Media Coverage

MARUF25 achieved strong coverage in both national and local press.

**Broadcast Media:** A total of 37 broadcasts aired across various channels. According to media monitoring data, these broadcasts reached an Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) of 648,980 TL.

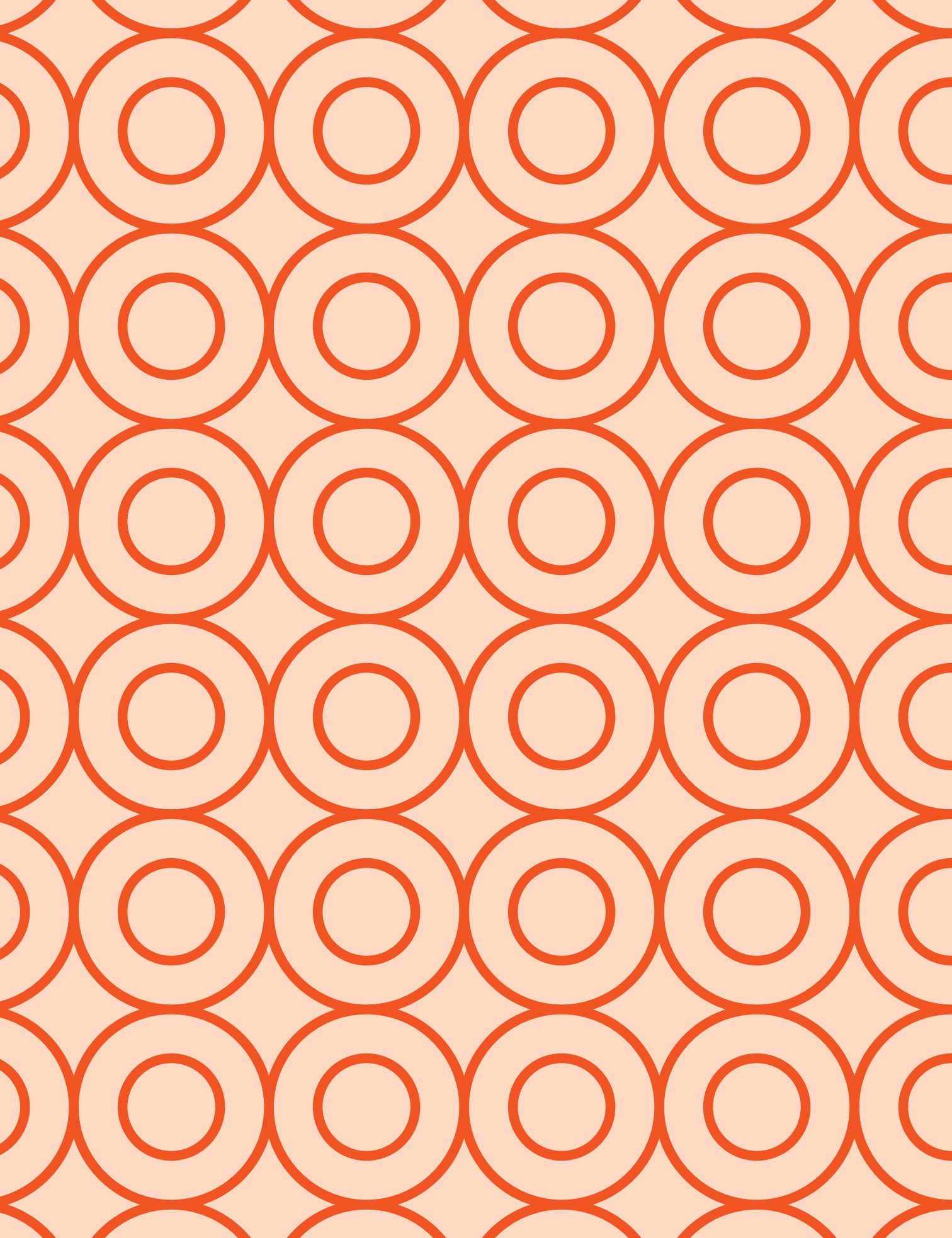
**Digital Media:** MARUF25 reached a wide coverage area with a total of 4,728 online news pieces. Content diversity was achieved across platforms themed around urbanism, environment, economy, technology, agriculture, and construction. MARUF25 was featured in prominent outlets such as Hürriyet, Karar, Dünya, Halk TV, İHA, Arkitera, EkoIQ, Sivil Alan, and Aposto. With intense coverage from local media alongside the national press, visibility was achieved across nearly all 81 provinces.

**Print Media:** A total of 102 news pieces were published. According to media monitoring data, these occupied a total area of 9,635 cm<sup>2</sup>, reached a circulation of 350,673 readers, and generated an AVE of 238,221 TL. Newspapers such as Cumhuriyet, Dünya, NB Ekonomi, and Tünaydın were among the prominent outlets.











**MARUF25  
EVENT  
SUMMARIES**

## MARUF ON THE GO

MARUF on the Go is a series of events that brings together diverse stakeholders to develop sustainable, inclusive, and innovative solutions for cities. Through workshops, walks, field experiences, and creative sessions, it provides a collaborative ground for exploring urban challenges and shaping future-oriented solutions.

Born from MARUF's rich and multilayered content that extends beyond its three-day program, MARUF on the Go was inspired by the idea of sustaining collaboration and learning throughout the year. Activities that cannot be fully realized within the temporal and spatial constraints of the main forum—such as extended workshops, field studies, and hands on applications—take place in different cities across the Marmara Region leading up to the event.

Each MARUF on the Go event serves as a space for cultivating context-driven ideas and building lasting connections among various actors. The outcomes of these events are featured at MARUF through exhibitions, workshops, games, competitions, showcases, and presentations—sometimes even evolving into new partnerships or joint projects during the forum itself.

In essence, MARUF on the Go is not merely a series of events, but a continuous ecosystem of learning, creation, and collaboration. It explores urban issues through an applied and participatory lens, fostering local knowledge production and collective intelligence.

In 2025, MARUF on the Go convened 43 partners across six provinces, organizing 22 activities—ranging from workshops and study sessions to podcasts and ideathons—in 56 different locations throughout the Marmara Region. This ongoing process contributed to reshaping cities on the shore of all possibilities, transforming MARUF's vision of "Cities Developing Solutions" into a year-long, living experience.

## Workshop

### **Marmara in Harmony with Water: The Story of My Coastal City Workshop**

- 📅 **Date:** July–August 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Yalova Municipality, Bandırma Municipality, Eyüpsultan Municipality, Fatih Municipality, Gebze Municipality, Gelibolu Municipality, Mudanya Municipality, Pendik Municipality, Şarköy Municipality, Üsküdar Municipality
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Arkki Türkiye, Turkish Design Council
- 🛠️ **Method:** Workshop
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Children aged 8–14, local government representatives

The workshop “Marmara in Harmony with Water: The Story of My Coastal City” centered on the ecological identity of the Marmara Sea and the relationship between coastal cities and water. Hosted by 10 municipalities across seven cities, the initiative engaged 122 children in exploring innovative ideas for inclusive and nature-based coastal cities that coexist with the marine ecosystem.

Through design thinking methodologies, participants imagined the transformation of Marmara’s shores over time, identified urban challenges, and developed creative solutions. They then translated these ideas into illustrated stories and model designs, blending creativity with environmental awareness. The resulting comic-style narratives were showcased at MARUF25 as part of the “The Story of My Coastal City” exhibition. This workshop strengthened the children’s capacity to evaluate their surroundings from multiple perspectives and approach urban spaces with a design-oriented mindset. By presenting these models and concepts to local authorities, the program contributed to the sustainable transformation of Marmara’s coastal cities.

### **Model COP Workshop**

- 📅 **Date:** 28 August 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🛠️ **Method:** Simulation and role-playing workshop
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Local government representatives, climate experts, young professionals

The Model COP Workshop was organized to familiarize local governments with the dynamics and negotiation processes of the UN Climate Change Conferences (COP). Stepping into the shoes of negotiators, participants explored the complexities of global climate policy decision-making through the En-ROADS Climate Action Simulation.

This workshop empowered local policymakers to gain a deeper understanding of international climate negotiations and to translate global strategies into actionable local initiatives. By testing various policy combinations aimed at limiting global warming to 1.5°C, participants witnessed the real-time implications of different climate action pathways. Ultimately, the event fostered a culture of evidence-based decision-making and underscored the multi-level nature of climate action—spanning from the local to the global scale.

### **Seeing, Hearing, Narrating Workshop**

- 📅 **Date:** 2-4 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Online
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, İzmir Film Lab
- 🛠️ **Method:** Participatory Visual Storytelling, Digital Narration, Sensory Observation
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Artists, students, and individuals interested in urban culture

The “Seeing, Hearing, Narrating” workshop aimed to explore how urban experiences can be perceived through different senses and transformed into creative digital narratives. Designed as an interactive learning process, the program enabled participants to convert their city observations into personal micro-stories using sound and visual media. The workshop unfolded in two phases: it began with three online skill-building sessions under the themes “Seeing”, “Hearing”, and “Narrating”, where participants shared experimental works and received one-on-one feedback from mentors.

The second phase took place during MARUF25 in Istanbul, where participants produced short videos inspired by their sensory experiences of the city. Through these exercises, participants discovered personal connections with urban life and collectively contributed to a broader narrative of the city – weaving together individual and shared perspectives into a mosaic of urban stories.

### **Reading the Heat of the City: Thermal Walk**

- 📅 **Date:** 11 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Maltepe, İstanbul
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Center for Spatial Justice
- 🛠️ **Method:** Field experience / Walking workshop
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Urban planners, architects, environmental engineers, climate researchers, local government representatives

The “Seeing, Hearing, Narrating” workshop set out to explore how urban experiences can be perceived through the senses and translated into creative digital narratives. Designed as an interactive learning journey, the program empowered participants to craft personal micro-stories from their city observations, utilizing both sound and visual media. Unfolding across two phases, the initiative began with three online skill-building sessions centered on the themes “Seeing”, “Hearing”, and “Narrating”, where participants shared experimental work and received one-on-one mentorship. The process culminated during MARUF25 in Istanbul, where participants produced short videos inspired by their sensory encounters with the city. Through these exercises, participants forged personal connections with urban life and contributed to a broader collective narrative—weaving individual and shared perspectives into a mosaic of urban stories.

### **Inclusive Disaster Management: Independent Mobility Workshop for the Visually Impaired**

- 📅 **Date:** 13 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, Feshane Art
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Yıldız Technical University, Değiştiren Adımlar Association
- 🛠️ **Method:** Empathy Exercise and Participatory Workshop
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Visually impaired individuals, disaster management experts, technical staff, students

The “Inclusive Disaster Management: Independent Mobility Workshop for the Visually Impaired” convened technical experts and visually impaired participants to strengthen independent mobility capabilities during crises. Through empathy-based simulations, participants navigated accessibility barriers under disaster conditions and co-developed innovative solutions to address them. Crucially, the workshop underscored the necessity of including visually impaired individuals as active stakeholders—rather than passive beneficiaries—in disaster planning and management. The resulting insights were consolidated into a report, offering guidance for the development of more inclusive disaster policies. By establishing a vital platform for dialogue between experts and citizens, the event fostered deeper awareness and collaboration toward accessible and equitable disaster management practices.

### **My Dream City: Justice, Ecology, and Art Workshop**

- 📅 **Date:** 20 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, İmalat-hane, İMÇ Block 5
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, The Spatial J/U/S/T
- 🛠️ **Method:** Participatory Art and Collective Design Workshop
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Artists and residents aged 6 and above

The “My Dream City: Justice, Ecology, and Art Workshop” synthesized the concepts of urbanity, justice, utopia, art, and ecology, inviting participants to envision and craft their own just and inclusive urban realities. Centered on creative processes that fused music and visual arts, the session guided participants to collaboratively build their imagined cities using natural and recycled materials. Through embodied exploration, sensory engagement, and collective creativity, the workshop inspired participants to reimagine cities as equitable, aesthetically harmonious, and environmentally conscious spaces. Ultimately, it cultivated a space where the transformative power of art intersected with urban justice, ecological awareness, and collective imagination—fostering a vision of cities that thrive in balance and inclusivity.

## Learning Program

### Sustainable Urban Mobility

#### Learning Program

- 📅 **Date:** 26-27 August 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, EcoMuse
- 🛠️ **Method:** Learning Program
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Municipal staff, transportation experts, academics

The “Sustainable Urban Mobility Learning Program” was designed to embed a sustainability perspective into the transport policies of local governments. Supported by the EIT Urban Mobility RIS Education Program as part of the NextGen Urban Mobility Academy (NUMA) project, the two-day intensive equipped participants with practical tools for sustainable mobility planning, data-driven analysis, and innovative solution design. The program empowered municipalities to craft adaptable strategies tailored to their specific local contexts. By formulating concrete action plans, participating institutions were able to take tangible steps toward more sustainable and inclusive mobility policies leading up to MARUF25.

## Fieldwork

### Age-Friendly Neighborhood Experience

- 📅 **Date:** August–September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Rasimpaşa Neighborhood, Kadıköy
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Kadıköy Municipality
- 🛠️ **Method:** Participatory Observation and Neighborhood-Based Research
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Residents aged 65 and over

The “Age-Friendly Neighborhood Experience” was launched as a pilot initiative in Rasimpaşa Neighborhood, designed to foster the active participation of older adults in urban life and strengthen social inclusion. Engaging residents aged 65 and above, the program utilized focus group discussions, structured observation tools, and a “Walking Together” route to audit the accessibility, safety, and livability of their immediate surroundings. The resulting insights were synthesized into a strategic report, offering local governments a roadmap for developing age-friendly urban policies. Ultimately, the initiative championed a participatory policy-making model deeply rooted in the lived experiences of older residents.

## Urban Route

### *Istanbul Student Route: Belonging to the City*

- 📅 **Date:** 4 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD Türkiye), Ankara University, Hasan Kalyoncu University
- ⊕ **Method:** Urban Walk and Field Experience
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** University students holding EU scholarships

The “Istanbul Student Route: Belonging to the City” was curated within the framework of the EU-funded EU Scholarships (BEURs) Project, inviting scholarship holders to re-examine their connection with the urban environment. Through a guided route traversing diverse districts of Istanbul, participants explored themes of belonging, accessibility, and inclusion in public spaces through a distinct youth lens.

Along the way, students engaged in socio-cultural observation, weaving their individual impressions into a collective narrative. The initiative sought to empower young people with a stronger awareness of the “right to the city,” redefining their sense of belonging through shared urban experiences.

## Information Session

### *New European Bauhaus Facility Info Day*

- 📅 **Date:** 13 June 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, TÜBİTAK, YTU Technopark
- ⊕ **Method:** Dialogue Session
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Designers, architects, urban planners, policy makers

The “New European Bauhaus (NEB) Facility Info Day” was convened to deepen the understanding of NEB principles within Türkiye and to cultivate new collaborations among stakeholders engaged in related initiatives. Participants examined how European NEB practices could be adapted to the Turkish context, exploring how aesthetic values and public participation act as drivers for sustainable transformation. The event sought to empower institutions in aligning with European standards and preparing for upcoming EU funding calls under the NEB framework. By focusing on translating NEB principles into local applications within Turkish cities, the session established an interdisciplinary platform for exchanging innovative, design-led approaches across architecture, urban design, and policy-making.

**Voluntary Local Review:  
From SDG Reporting to Action**

- 📅 **Date:** 19 June 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Online
- 👥 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA), SDG Cities Global Initiative
- 🛠️ **Method:** Webinar
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Local government representatives, sustainability and SDG experts

The webinar “Voluntary Local Review: From SDG Reporting to Action” centered on strengthening local governments’ monitoring and reporting capacities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a specific focus on translating these goals into on-the-ground action. Representatives from Istanbul, Ramallah, Fatih, and Niš shared insights from their Voluntary Local Review (VLR) journeys, discussing challenges, good practices, and data-driven methodologies in the local implementation of the SDGs. Beyond technical reporting, the session examined the strategic role of VLRs in policy development and facilitated a dynamic exchange on enhancing local capacities through evidence-based decision-making. By fostering collaboration and knowledge transfer, the event contributed to cultivating a data-driven culture in local sustainability governance and bridging the gap between SDG reporting and tangible local impact.

**The Roadmap for Sustainable Mobility:  
Feasibility, Financing, and Accessibility**

- 📅 **Date:** 22 July 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Online
- 👥 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🛠️ **Method:** Webinar
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Municipal staff, transport planners, technical experts

Organized as part of the NextGen Urban Mobility Academy (NUMA) under the EIT Urban Mobility RIS Education Program, the “Roadmap for Sustainable Mobility” webinar addressed key challenges in implementing sustainable urban transport projects. Experts shared case studies and insights on feasibility studies, financing models, and accessibility standards. Participants examined urban mobility through the lens of social equity and environmental impact. The event provided critical insights into decision-making processes that prioritize financial sustainability and inclusivity in municipal transport planning.

### Silent Forum: Expanding the Boundaries of Participation

- 📅 **Date:** 13 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, IMM Florya Disabled Persons Camp
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) Department of Social Services, IMM Directorate for Disability Services, Center for Individuals with Special Needs (ÖZGEM)
- 👥 **Method:** Participatory Forum and Experience Sharing
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, local government representatives, NGOs

The “Silent Forum: Expanding the Boundaries of Participation” served as a pioneering platform where deaf and hard-of-hearing participants could articulate their experiences, challenges, and solutions regarding urban life using Turkish Sign Language—their primary mode of communication. Debuting in Istanbul, the forum established an inclusive dialogue space that ensured equal and barrier-free participation. Participants addressed issues ranging from daily living to education, employment, and social inclusion, advocating for accessible communication as a fundamental right. The outcomes underscored the urgent need for innovative approaches in accessibility, employment equity, educational opportunities, and disaster management. Moving beyond mere representation, the forum demonstrated the power of direct engagement and advanced the development of inclusive, communication rights-based policies within local governance.

### On the Edge of Youth

- 📅 **Date:** 12–14 September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Bursa, Göynükbelen Camp Area
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Bursa Citizens' Assembly, Bursa Citizens' Assembly Youth Council, Bursa Metropolitan Youth Club
- 👥 **Method:** Collective camp and participatory forum
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Members of Youth Councils of Citizens' Assemblies across the Marmara Region

Hosted by the Bursa Citizens' Assembly, the “On the Edge of Youth” gathering convened Youth Councils from across the Marmara Region to bolster young people’s engagement in local governance. Spanning a three-day camp, the program featured workshops, forums, and deliberation sessions that cultivated a fertile ground for dialogue on youth aspirations, policy proposals, and shared future visions. The event successfully amplified youth voices, solidified cross-assembly networks, and advanced the development of an inclusive, participatory youth vision for the region

## Serious Game

### *Imagine for Girls: Open Space Design Game*

📅 **Date:** 19 August 2025

📍 **Location:** Istanbul – Sancaktepe Meclis Metro Yuvamız Istanbul Children’s Activity Center, Sancaktepe Sarıgazi Yuvamız Istanbul Children’s Activity Center

🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Department of Child Services, Yuvamız Istanbul

🛠️ **Method:** Game-based participatory design workshop

🎯 **Target Audience:** Young girls

"The "Imagine for Girls: Open Space Design Game" sought to amplify girls' voices in the creation of safe, inclusive, and equitable public spaces by fusing imagination with urban design principles. Through immersive game-based sessions, participants explored six thematic pillars—safety, accessibility, nature, health, participation, equality, and design—envisioning environments where they could feel both secure and liberated within their cities. The initiative empowered children to articulate their urban realities through drawing and storytelling, while simultaneously fostering a deeper awareness of gender equality and children’s rights. The generated concepts served as a valuable blueprint for local governments, guiding the development of child-friendly policies and equity-driven urban strategies.

## Working Session

### *Designing Digital Tools for Participatory Urban Transformation*

📅 **Date:** 18 September 2025

📍 **Location:** Istanbul, Feshane Art

🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Urban Transformation Planning, Yıldız Technical University

🛠️ **Method:** Participatory design workshop

🎯 **Target Audience:** District municipality representatives, technical staff, academics

The "Designing Digital Tools for Participatory Urban Transformation" workshop was convened to inject transparency, participation, and digital innovation into urban renewal processes. Structured around five thematic roundtables, the session gathered 40 representatives from 15 municipalities to tackle critical bottlenecks such as communication, coordination, and public trust in transformation efforts. Participants investigated real-time data sharing and online engagement platforms, ultimately outlining the core components of a unified digital participation model. By mapping systemic challenges and aligning solution concepts with specific digital tools, the workshop cultivated inter-institutional collaboration and knowledge exchange. Ultimately, the proposed model aspires to underpin a transparent, inclusive, and data-driven transformation culture across Istanbul.

## Exhibition

### **At the Edge of All Possibilities: Illustration Exhibition Open Call**

- 📅 **Date:** August 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Marmara Region
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Istanbul Illustration Days
- 🛠️ **Method:** Open call and exhibition
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Illustrators, artists, urban culture enthusiasts

Drawing inspiration from the ecological, cultural, and historical layers of the Marmara Sea, the “On the Shore of All Possibilities Illustration Exhibition Open Call” invited illustrators to re-examine the region’s urban memory through art. Selected artists created original works contemplating the nature, history, and fluid transformations of Marmara’s coastal cities. The resulting collection was featured at MARUF25 in the exhibition “Looking at Marmara from the Shore of All Possibilities”. This showcase underscored the capacity of art to articulate urban narratives, contributing to the cultivation of a collective urban memory through visual storytelling.

### **Tracing Heritage: Urban Sketching Gathering and Exhibition**

- 📅 **Date:** 13 Eylül 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul Art – Haliç Shipyard (Casa Botter, Cendere Art Museum, Taksim Republic Museum, Beykoz Silos, Galata Walls, Müze Gazhane, ArtIstanbul Feshane, Gülhane Cistern, Bebek Cistern Gallery, Yerebatan Cistern, Haliç Walls, Library Trolleybus, Beşiktaş Pier Library, Kadıköy Pier Library, Haliç Art, Moda Pier Library, Metrohan Art Space, Beyoğlu Cinema, Rumeli Fortress, Taş Mektep, Bulgur Palace, Ataköy Powder House, Yedikule Gasworks, Anatolian Fortress Museum, Istanbul Design Museum, Istanbul Art)
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Urban Sketchers Istanbul
- 🛠️ **Method:** On-site sketching and exhibition
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Sketchers, artists, urban heritage enthusiasts

The “Tracing Heritage: Urban Sketching Gathering and Exhibition” convened artists to document Istanbul’s multi-layered urban heritage through on-location sketching. Coordinated by Urban Sketchers Istanbul, the event invited participants to reinterpret Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Heritage sites through their unique artistic lenses. Participants captured the city’s visual memory, bridging the past and the present through their sketches. The resulting artworks were subsequently presented at MARUF25 within the “Tracing Heritage Through Sketches” exhibition, highlighting the role of art in preserving urban heritage while illuminating the emotional connection between people and the city’s cultural layers.

## Podcast

### “Cities Developing Solutions” Podcast Series

- 📅 **Date:** July–September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul (studio and online)
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🎧 **Method:** Podcast series
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Local government professionals, academics, urban enthusiasts

As part of MARUF on the Go, the “Cities Developing Solutions” podcast series offers a fresh perspective on the urban experience—envisioning the future of cities not merely through a spatial lens, but also through social, cultural, and political dimensions. Across the episodes, experts delve into a diverse array of subjects—ranging from data-driven urban policies to the right to mobility, and from the shared use of public space to the culture of debate. The series provides critical insights into the challenges and opportunities defining urban life in the present and for the future. By translating MARUF’s multi-stakeholder dialogue into an accessible audio format, the podcast creates a portable space for reflection—available anytime, anywhere, whether on a commute, during a coffee break, or on a walk through the park. In this way, Cities Developing Solutions integrates urban discourse into the rhythm of daily life, extending the spirit of learning and inquiry well beyond the physical limits of the conference.

Featured episodes include:

- What Are the Boundaries of Public Space? | Hayrettin Günç, Senior Program Manager, Global Designing Cities Initiative
- Can Data Speak, and Does Democracy Listen? | İtir Akdoğan, PhD, Research Director, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)
- Accessible Cities: Where Does Transformation Begin? | Hande Sart, Assoc. Prof., Boğaziçi University
- Is It Possible to Plan Cities with Artificial Intelligence? | Fatih Terzi, Prof. Istanbul Technical University
- The Mind of the City: What Are Forums For? | İlhan Tekeli, City and Regional Planning Professor & Social Scientist
- Tracing Culture, Living the City | Özlem Ece, Director of Cultural Policy Studies,

## Marmarathon

### Marmarathon – Two Little Urbanites

- 📅 **Date:** 18, 19, 22 August 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Istanbul, Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union
- 🛠️ **Method:** Ideathon
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Writers, illustrators, urban researchers, and child development experts

Marmarathon: Two Little Urbanites unfolded as a collective storytelling initiative, deeply rooted in the relationship between children and the city. Building upon MMU's seminal publication "Two Little Urbanites," the event convened a multidisciplinary group of writers, illustrators, urban researchers, and child development experts to reimagine urban existence from a child's perspective. Spanning three intensive days, participants engaged in workshops, mentorship sessions, and co-creation activities, crafting original narratives that channel the voices of children in today's cities. The resulting works were reviewed by a jury, featured at MARUF25, and presented by the finalists during the Marmarathon: Two Little Urbanites Grand Finale.

#### Final Jury

- Tan Oral
- Bahar Aksel
- Burcuhan Şener
- Lior Steinberg
- Nazlı Berivan Ak
- Selva Gürdoğan

#### Mentors

- Ayşe Göç Yalçinkaya
- Beyhan Gültaşlar
- Derya İyikul
- Ege Sevinçli
- Ezgi Küçük Çalışkan
- Görsev Argın Uz
- Müjde Başkale

#### Pre-Jury

- Beyhan Gültaşlar
- Ege Sevinçli
- Elif Songür Dağ
- Hatice Kübra Baştuğ
- Müjde Başkale

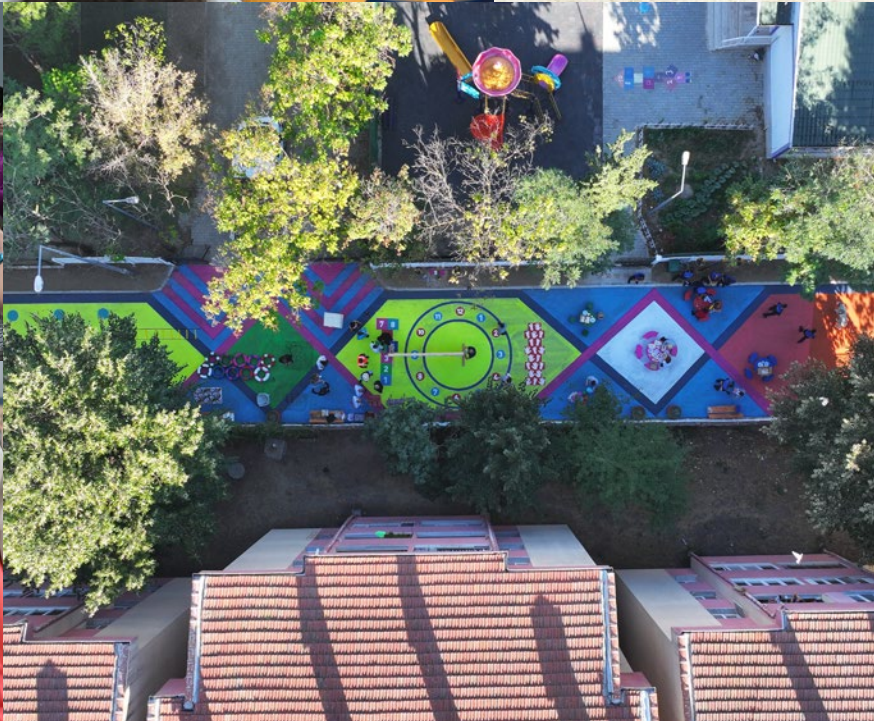
## Implementation

### Reclaiming Streets Across Marmara Throughout September

- 📅 **Date:** September 2025
- 📍 **Location:** Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, Eyüpsultan Municipality, Kapaklı Municipality, Tuzla Municipality, Yalova Municipality
- 🤝 **Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Superpool, Global Designing Cities Initiative (GDCI)
- 🛠️ **Method:** Field implementations and launch events
- 🎯 **Target Audience:** Local governments, urban planners, residents

The "Reclaiming Streets Across Marmara Throughout September" initiative reimaged streets across the region not merely as transit corridors, but as shared, people-centered public spaces. Under the Streets for Kids program, participating municipalities implemented a mix of temporary, pilot, and permanent transformations, repurposing vehicular areas for children and caregivers. Through tactical interventions ranging from pedestrianization to pop-up public installations, these activations unlocked the social, ecological, and cultural potential of the urban streetscape. The project's impact was showcased at MARUF25 within the "Reclaiming Streets" exhibition, underscoring the transformative power of design in fostering livable, inclusive, and resilient cities.







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**MINDS ON**

# MINDS ON

Within the holistic structure of MARUF25—where knowledge, production, and sensory experience were woven into a continuous narrative—the Minds On mode marked the intellectual genesis of the forum. As the inaugural pillar of the forum's creative and methodological journey, it invited participants to a mental exploration of the city and its multi-layered issues. This initial stop established the conceptual bedrock upon which all subsequent production and experience processes of MARUF25 were built. By opening new horizons in unfamiliar territories and expanding perspectives on familiar topics through new connections, this mode served as a critical starting point in MARUF's model of gradually deepening participation.

From the moment participants stepped into the forum, the formats within the Minds On mode immersed them in processes of listening, interpreting, questioning, and analyzing. Encounters with the knowledge and approaches of experts, practitioners, and professionals shaping the urban experience transformed this initial contact into an intellectual meeting ground—both individually and collectively. This foundation reinforced the intellectual infrastructure necessary for the effective construction of the subsequent co-production and sensory engagement stages.

Carrying MARUF's matured methodological approach forward, the Minds On mode allowed the key concepts, research, best practices, and fundamental urban rights—which form the intellectual backbone of the forum—to circulate freely. Rather than positioning the participant as a passive listener, it positioned them as an active subject through critical thinking, conceptual inquiry, and diverse learning practices. This mode brought together a rich spectrum of content designed to trigger different ways of thinking, including: Showcases, Quick Takes, How To-ol, Urban Talks, Discussions, Urban Basics, Local in Action, and Opening-Closing Sessions.

The intellectual priming provided by this mode ensured that participants proceeded into the production-oriented structure of Hands On and the sensory intensity of Senses On with greater awareness and readiness. Thus, Minds On became more than just a starting moment; it became an intellectual threshold that ignited curiosity, multiplied questions, framed concepts, and enabled participants to actively navigate their own MARUF journey. Looking back at MARUF25, this mode stands out as a central hub that set both the rhythm and direction of the forum, sustaining the learning-based energy that defined the experience.

MINDS ON OPENING

# Opening Session & Welcoming Performance | On the Shore of All Possibilities

1 October 2025 | 10.00-11.30 | V1

**Tags:** Quality of Life, Local Diplomacy, Governance, Community, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderators:** **M. Cemil Arslan**, PhD, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union & General Coordinator, MARUF

**Antonella Contin**, Assoc. Prof., Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

**Speakers:** **Anacláudia Rossbach**, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

**Başak Doğan**, Choir Conductor & Founder, Vokal Akademi

**Bernd Vöhringer**, President of the Chamber of Local Authorities, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

**Inés Sánchez De Madariaga**, Prof., Department of Urban Planning, School of Architecture, ETSAM & Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

**Madhusree Dutta**, Curator & Filmmaker

**Mustafa Bozbey**, President, Marmara Municipalities Union & Mayor, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Nuri Aslan**, Deputy Mayor, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Remy Sietchiping**, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

**Turan Konak**, Director General of Local Administrations, Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change

## SUMMARY:

The opening session of MARUF25 invited us all to a new beginning. Not just to identify problems, but to rethink, dream together, and seek better possibilities, marking the start of a three-day journey of reflecting on cities. We came together at the opening session to embark on a search for original and creative solutions, to experience ways of thinking that reconcile diverse perspectives, to explore paths of co-creation, and even to reconnect and strengthen our bonds. Gathering all MARUF participants, the session set the tone for shared reflection and co-creation. In the opening panel that followed the keynote speeches, speakers discussed the four streams of MARUF25, deliberating on how it is possible to build cities that are fair, resilient, caring and enable co-living. The session concluded with a musical performance by the choir “Chromas.” Using the improvisation-based communication technique known as “vocal painting,” the choir transformed the audience into active co-creators, offering a unique collective experience rooted in sound and spontaneity.





# MARMARA URBAN FORUM

1 - 3 OCTOBER 2025  
ISTANBUL  
HALIC CONGRESS CENTER

on the shore of all possibilities



# SHOWCASE

The "Showcase" concept enabled the effective presentation of best practices, research, initiatives, projects, and MARUF on the Go events that generate urban benefit, all within a limited time frame.

- **PhD Showcase:** Shortlisted PhD candidates pitched their thesis projects to a jury in just 3 minutes, vying to deliver the most impactful presentation.
- **Good Practice Showcase:** Qualified practitioners had 5 minutes to present exemplary projects led or implemented in collaboration with municipalities.
- **Start-up Showcase:** Pre-qualified start-ups pitched their innovative and creative urban solutions in concise 5-minute presentations.
- **Project Showcase:** Shortlisted project teams shared their work in 5-minute slots, highlighting key aspects and outcomes.
- **MARUF on the Go Showcase:** Institutions that held events as part of the MARUF on the Go program prior to the forum gave succinct 5-minute summaries of their activities and key takeaways.

MINDS ON SHOWCASE

# Good Practice Showcase: Resilient Cities

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | S6

**Tags:** Disaster, Local Development, Quality of Life, Climate

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Büşra Yılmaz, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

## PRACTICES AND SPEAKERS:

### MERCAN 100th Year Climate and Environment Science Center

**Arda Alp**, Head of Climate Change and Zero Waste Department, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality

### YAYSİS (Green Space Management System)

**Ahmet Cemil Tepe**, Chair, International Fund Projects Commission, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

### Earthquake Risk Reduction and Prevention Planning Project

**Duygu Yılmaz**, Director of Earthquake and Soil Investigation Branch, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

### Nature-Based Metropolitan Strategies: İmrahor Valley Implementation Project

**Ergün Serdar Karaduman**, Secretary General, KENT-LAB

### Kocaeli Environmental Master Plan

**Ekim Ateşer**, Infrastructure Planning Portfolio Leader - ARUP

MINDS ON SHOWCASE

# Start-up Showcase

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | S6

**Tags:** AI, Technology, Data, Local Development, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Moderator:** Büşra Yılmaz, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

## SPEAKERS:

**Ayselin Yıldız**, Prof., Founding Director, **Nefes AI Software Technologies Ltd.**

**Atakan Nalbant**, Co-Founder, **Binclusive**  
**Ayşe Melis Göksan**, Senior Architect, **Deeplay Creative Studio**

**Mehmet Baylan**, Co-Founder, **Larry**  
**Mehmet Can İrhan**, Co-founder, Product Marketing & Growth, **Redi**

**Halide Olgun Ak**, Chairperson of the Board, **Regl Çemberi**  
**Mine Okyay**, Senior Business Development Specialist, **Wastespresso**

**Ömer Faruk Akdağ**, Co-Founder, **Atık Nakit**

# Project Showcase: Resilient Cities

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📺 S6

**Tags:** Climate, Housing, Space, Disaster, Human

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** **Meltem Özden**, Jr. Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

## PROJECTS AND SPEAKERS:

### AGROSHIELD “Agricultural Risk Assessment and Resilience Strategies against Drought in the Southern Marmara Basin”

**Büşra İnce**, Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

### Project for Strengthening the Capacity of Non-Governmental Organizations in Disaster Risk Management

**Sevim Kahraman**, Project Manager, Secretary General, Disaster Platform

### Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Against Disasters and Emergencies

**Oğuz Şen**, Director of Social Support Services, Avcılar Municipality

### Ecology and Life Parks for Rebuilding Post-Disaster Life and Resilience

**Bediz Yılmaz**, Independent Researcher

### TeamAware (Team Awareness Enhanced with Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality)

**Merve Tunca Atay**, Project Development Expert, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

### Purple Staircase: Local Women’s Leadership in Disasters

**Ayşe Kaşıkırık**, Global Equality and Inclusion Network Association (KAPI)

### Solidarity-Driven Disaster Preparedness: Activating Migrant Communities in Istanbul

**Yamin Zeyna**, Organizing Member and Trainer, SADA

### Women for Women and Women for Water

**Berrin Sevgi**, BPW International Environment and Sustainable Development Goals Committee Member, BPW

### Malaysia SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Cities

**Mohd Syafiq Subri**, Malaysia SDG Cities Lead, Senior Executive Town Planner, Urbanice Malaysia

## NEUTRALPATH

**Ahmet Cemil Tepe**, Chairman of the International Fund Projects Commission, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

### Enhancing Local Environmental Stewardship Through Environmental DNA-Based Techniques in the Golden Horn Estuary

**Onur Doğan**, Institute of Environmental Sciences, Boğaziçi University

# PhD Showcase

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📺 S6

**Tags:** Disaster, Care, Mobility, Climate, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Büşra Yılmaz**, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Jury:** **Antonella Contin**, Assoc. Prof., Politecnico di Milano

**Aslı Ceylan Öner**, Prof., Vice Rector, İzmir University of Economics

**Azime Tezer**, Prof. Emeritus, Istanbul Technical University

**Cemil Arslan**, PhD, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Ela Babalık**, Professor, Middle East Technical University

**Erbay Arıkboğa**, Prof., Marmara University

**Güzide Miray Perihanoğlu**, Lecturer, Van Yüzüncü Yıl University

**Murat Erdoğan**, Prof., GAV-TUDAM

**Tarkan Oktay**, Prof., İstanbul Medeniyet University

## RESEARCHERS AND THESES:

**Modeling Complex Socio-Spatial System Behavior Under Earthquake Shock: The Case of Istanbul**

**Ali Yılmaz**, Istanbul Technical University

**Reclaiming Urban Rooftops: A Comparative Study on Rooftop Farming Practices**

**Melis Yılmaz**, Istanbul Technical University

**Evaluation of Mass Housing Open Spaces in the Context of Quality of Urban Life: Istanbul**

**Shaylan Oudeh**, Istanbul Technical University

**Early Childhood in Public Space**

**Ayça Yazıcı Pınar**, Yıldız Technical University

**Determination and Chemical Analysis of Stone Degradation in Historic Stone Buildings in Hatay Province**

**Ayşe Dolar**, Hatay Mustafa Kemal University

**A Model Proposal Including Rental Housing Provision and New Stakeholder Relationships In Social Housing Policies**

**Efe Haşim Sezen**, Yıldız Technical University

**Sustainable Ecological Neighborhood Model Proposal in the Context of Urban Localization Initiative**

**Esra Şentürk**, Istanbul University, Cerrahpaşa

**Quantifying and Monetizing Transport Externalities: A Comprehensive Framework for Policy Analysis**

**Görkem Akyol**, Istanbul Technical University

**A Comparative Study on Micro-Publics: Sitting Outdoors in Istanbul, Athens and Naples**

**Liana Kuyumcuyan**, The National Technical University of Athens

**A Research on Landscape Use of Some Natural Plants Growing in İstanbul in Terms of Ecological Memory and Sustainability**

**Nihan Sevinç Muşdal**, Istanbul University, Cerrahpaşa

# Good Practice Showcase: Just Cities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📺 S6

**Tags:** Space, Mobility, Technology, Climate

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** **Ayşe Gümeç Karamuk**, Jr. Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

## PRACTICES AND SPEAKERS:

### Sustainable Food Journey: Nilüfer Food Living Lab

**Pelinsu Deveci**, Director of Rural Services, Food and Plant Processing Office, Nilüfer Municipality

### Enhancing Urban Resilience to Heatwaves through Citizen Science

**Bahadır Keşan**, Director of Strategy Development, Maltepe Municipality

### Internationalisation Strategy

**Zeynep Tuğçe Çiftçibaşı Güç**, Head of International Affairs, Antalya Metropolitan Municipality

### Open Data Platform (Açık Yeşil - Açık Veri Platformu)

**Kemal Demir**, Computer Engineer, Smart City Project Manager, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

### Lean Municipalism (Yalın Belediyecilik)

**Mehmed Akif Aslan**, Strategy Development Manager, İnegöl Municipality

### Disaster-Oriented Digital Twin Project

**Tevfik Furkan Doğan**, Urban Planner, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

### Young Mayor's Advisors Project

**Murat Karaca**, Project Coordinator, Bahçelievler Municipality

### Metropolitan Social Forum

**Oriol Estela Barnet**, General Coordinator of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan of Barcelona, Metropolitan Strategic Plan of Barcelona

# Project Showcase: Co-livable Cities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 S6

**Tags:** Heritage, Space, Climate

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** **Büşra Yılmaz**, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

## PROJECTS AND SPEAKERS:

### CFE Cycle Friendly Employer

**Feridun Ekmekci**, National EuroVelo Coordinator – Bicycle Strategies Expert, ENVERÇEVKO Association

### Experience Sharing in Architectural Heritage Conservation

**Göksu Dinç**, Director of International Affairs, Şişli Municipality

### AIRMOB – Developing Skills and Capabilities for Innovative Air Mobility

**İpek Ösken**, Project Manager, Aviation and Space Technologies Application and Research Center, Istanbul Technical University

### United for Change

**Beril Sönmez**, Program Coordinator, Anadolu Culture, Arts, Education, and Research Association

### Get2Action

**Nalan Kaya**, Researcher, Social Innovation Agency

### Developing a Prevention Model Against Addiction for Migrant Youth

**Rukiye Gülerce**, PhD, Project Specialist, Turkish Green Crescent Society

### Enhanced Accountability and Transparency of Palestinian LGUs

**Abdallah Anati**, Executive Director, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities

### Sustainable Event Support Team (SEDES)

**Ayça Bayraktar Tayar**, Director of Lifelong Learning, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

MINDS ON SHOWCASE

# Good Practice Showcase: Caring Cities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 S6

**Tags:** Space, Mobility, Technology, Housing, Care

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** **Büşra Yılmaz**, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

## PRACTICES AND SPEAKERS:

### Urban Design Guide

**Cemile Öztürk**, Deputy Director of Urban Design, Mudanya Municipality

### Short Break (Kısa Mola)

**Yasemin Gözkonan Kahveci**, Director of Social Support Services, Izmit Municipality

### Environmental Noise Control System

**Fatih Yıldız**, Environmental Engineer, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

### IMM Women

**Kezban Alacüçük**, Director of Women and Family Services Department, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

### The Use of Lavender in Urban Green Spaces for Sustainable Development: The Bilecik Case

**Sevgi Akkoy**, Trainer, Bilecik Municipality

### Retirees' Cultural Center

**Betül Fırat**, Director of Strategy Development, Çekmeköy Municipality

### Sexual and Reproductive Health Information and Counseling Center (CISAM)

**Duygu Kahraman**, Sociologist, Kadıköy Municipality

### Life in My Neighborhood! Women take a break at Morbüs, kids at the Mobile Daycare!

**Zozan Cengiz**, Trainer, Avcılar Municipality

### Promoting Electric Mobility in Türkiye

**Murad Gürmeriç**, Senior Transportation Engineer - World Bank Group & Esin Temelli, Senior Transportation Planner - ARUP

### SHORE: Empower students as agents of change

**Afşin Çetinkaya**, SHORE Coordinator, Yıldız Technical University

### Children's Imagination as a Design Tool / Kamenica's Transit Oases

**Ibrahim Beqiri**, Architect & Designer, Founder, SHAPE & SHADE

# MARUF on the Go Showcase

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | S6

**Tags:** Participation, Mobility, People, Climate, Networks

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Büşra Yılmaz**, Urban Policy Expert & Sociologist, Marmara Municipalities Union

## EVENTS AND SPEAKERS:

### Inclusive Disaster Management: Independent Mobility Workshop for the Visually Impaired

**Implemented by:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Yıldız Technical University, Değişen Adımlar Association  
**Arda Gülbeyaz**, Sociologist, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Inclusive Disaster

### My Dream City, Just Space, Ecology and Art Workshop

**Implemented by:** The Spatial J/U/S/T  
**Damla Pehlevan Polat**, Landscape Architect (MSc), Spatial J/U/S/T

### Age-Friendly Neighborhood Experience

**Implemented by:** Kadıköy Municipality  
**Ece Çizel Girişken**, Sociologist, Kadıköy Municipality Social Services Department

### Designing a Digital Tool for Participatory Urban Transformation

**Implemented by:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Yıldız Technical University  
**İlkim Markoç Ergün**, Assistant Professor, Yıldız Technical University

### NEB Türkiye Co-Learn & Connect

**Implemented by:** YTU Yıldız Teknopark, TÜBİTAK  
**Sonia Baghernezhad Irani**, EU Funds Specialist, YTU Yıldız Teknopark

### Bursa Youth City Council

**Implemented by:** Bursa City Council, Bursa City Council Youth Assembly, Bursa Metropolitan Youth Club  
**Sudem Duran**, President, Bursa City Council Youth Assembly

### Announce the Unheard: Silent Forum

**Implemented by:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality  
**Suna Hayıroğlu**, Director of Disability Services, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

### Dream up for Girls: Open Space Design Game

**Implemented by:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality  
**Şenay Gül**, Director of Child Services Department, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Kent-Lab**  
 KENTLERİN İZLENİMLERİNİ VE GÖRÜMLERİNİ İZLEMEK İÇİN

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**MARMARA URBAN FORUM**  
 1-3 OCTOBER 2024  
 İSTANBUL  
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on the shore of all possibilities

**Yenilgi Hava Hareketliliği (YHH) Nedir?**

- Yenilgi Hava Hareketliliği (YHH) kavramı, şehirlerin iklim değişikliğine karşı dayanıklı ve sürdürülebilir olmalarını sağlar.
- YHH kavramı, şehirlerin iklim değişikliğine karşı dayanıklı ve sürdürülebilir olmalarını sağlar.
- YHH kavramı, şehirlerin iklim değişikliğine karşı dayanıklı ve sürdürülebilir olmalarını sağlar.
- YHH kavramı, şehirlerin iklim değişikliğine karşı dayanıklı ve sürdürülebilir olmalarını sağlar.
- YHH kavramı, şehirlerin iklim değişikliğine karşı dayanıklı ve sürdürülebilir olmalarını sağlar.
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**Urban Social Forum**  
 on social challenges on a tight scale

Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona

**MARMARA URBAN FORUM**  
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# QUICK TAKE

Designed to address a broader spectrum of urban issues by favoring concise, essential information over exhaustive explanations, the “Quick Take” sessions presented dynamic content that cut to the core of the matter, establishing a foundation for diverse urban topics.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Metropolitan Planning and Finance for Adequate Housing: Expert Group Meeting Kick-Off

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.00-15.30 | 📍 D1

**Tags:** Housing, Space, Policy, Quality of Life, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** UN-Habitat

**Moderator:** Rafael H Forero H, Policy, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-Habitat

**Speakers:** M. Cemil Arslan, PhD, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union & General Coordinator, MARUF

Remy Sietchiping, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

**Summary:** The main purpose of the “Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Metropolitan Planning and Finance for Adequate Housing” was to promote a strategic dialogue aimed to develop a comprehensive analysis of public policies at metropolitan scale that can drive and optimise universal access to adequate housing. At this session, UN-Habitat kicked off the dialogues within the EGM, where participants reflected on how to articulate housing policies through metropolitan management strategies that considered the seven key aspects of adequate housing: security of tenure, basic services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, and cultural adequacy. Through the exchange of perspectives, the aim was to identify innovative strategies that promote the development of metropolitan housing policies, prioritising an approach that ensures equity, sustainability, and the well-being of urban communities.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Invisible Labor: Who Gives a Care?

1 October 2025 | 15.30-16.00 | C4

**Tags:** Care, People, Quality of Life

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Global Alliance for Care

**Moderator:** Ayşe Göç Yalçınkaya, International Affairs and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speaker:** Jacqueline Leduc Estrada, Program Officer, Global Alliance for Care

**Summary:** This session sought to make care work visible by exploring what care means, why its visibility matters, and how the so-called care crisis shapes our societies. In doing so, it positioned care as a vital element for building more inclusive and resilient cities.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Challenges and Opportunities in Housing Management

1 October 2025 | 15.30-16.00 | D1

**Tags:** Housing, Policy, Governance, Economy, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** UN-Habitat

**Moderator:** Rafael H Forero H, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-Habitat

**Speaker:** Joshua Maviti, Program Management Officer, UN-Habitat

**Summary:** This keynote session tackled a critical question: how can we manage urban housing systems to meet today's complex challenges and seize new opportunities?

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Kreşendo x Roof Coliving: Places That Bring Us Together

1 October 2025 | 16.30-17.00 | D3

**Tags:** Culture, Space, Art, Participation, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Kreşendo, Roof Coliving

**Speakers:** Beril Sarıaltun, Founder & Director, Kreşendo

Emre Güzel, Founding Director, Roof Coliving

**Summary:** What comes to mind when we say 'Places That Bring Us Together'? This question was at the heart of a project by Kreşendo, in partnership with Roof Coliving, Ataşehir, Maltepe, and Şişli Municipalities, and supported by the IKSİ Ortaklaşa Grant Program. Their exploration culminated in a comprehensive guide. The guide provides frameworks for developing participatory and inclusive cultural policies and spaces, alongside practical tools for use by both municipalities and cultural actors. This event marked the official launch of the guide, allowing participants to examine this best-practice model in depth.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Greening the Grey: Cities in Transition

2 October 2025 | 11.30-12.00 | D1

**Tags:** Nature, Space, Climate, Mobility

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** Mina Hasman, PhD, Sustainability Director, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

**Speaker:** Paul Lecroart, Senior Urbanist, Institut Paris Region (Paris Metropolitan Planning & Environmental Agency)

**Summary:** Many cities around the world are exploring how concrete-dominated spaces can be revitalized and reconnected with nature. This session aimed to inspire the transformation from grey to green through striking examples from Paris and other European cities — from extensive ecosystem networks created by interlinked green spaces to bold projects that reimagine highways with a focus on humans and all living beings, showcasing innovative interventions at various scales.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE, URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: The Car That Wanted to Be a Bike

2 October 2025 | 11:30 - 12:00 | C11

**Tags:** Care, Culture, Art, Mobility, Child

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Humankind

**Moderator:** Beyza Gürdoğan, Architect & Urban Designer, Superpool

**Speaker:** Lior Steinberg, Urban Planner & Co-founder, Humankind

**Summary:** Can children imagine more livable and human-centered cities through picture books? In this talk centered on Lior Steinberg's "The Car That Wanted to Be a Bike", the focus was on how children envision sustainable and inclusive cities where they can move freely, and the role of stories in shaping these visions. The session explored how narratives and storytelling offer new possibilities for children to sense, perceive, and navigate urban spaces.

MINDS ON QUICK TAKE

# Demography 101

2 October 2025 | 15.30-16.00 | C5

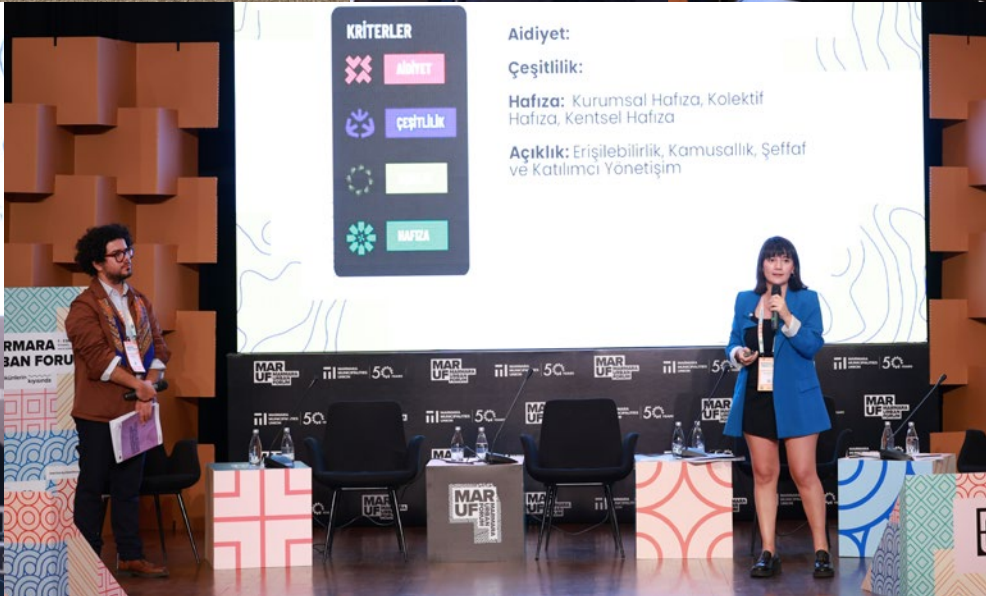
**Tags:** People, Economy, Governance, Demography, Migration

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Merve Ağca, Environmental Management Coordinator & Migration and Social Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speaker:** Mehmet Doğu Karakaya, PhD, TurkStat Expert, Turkish Statistical Institute

**Summary:** This session offered a conceptual framework for understanding population as more than just a number, reframing it as a dynamic force with profound spatial, economic, and administrative impacts.



# CLOSED MEETING

Organized around the specific agendas of select institutions and stakeholders, Closed Meetings were restricted from general participation. These sessions played a pivotal role in facilitating strategic knowledge exchange and inter-institutional coordination.

In this context, various meetings focusing on governance, collaboration, coordination, climate change, and disaster management were convened. Prominent examples included the Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe, the Marmara Municipalities Union Assembly Meeting, the Mayors & AFAD Executives Meeting, and the İNŞA x CapaCITIES 2.0: High-Level Dialogue for Climate-Neutral Cities.

MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# The Role of Municipalities in National Climate Targets

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C10

**Tags:** Climate, Energy, Governance

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** WWF Türkiye, 350 Türkiye

**Moderator:** Tanyeli Behiç Sabuncu, Climate and Energy Practice Manager, WWF-Türkiye

**Speakers:** Efe Baysal, Director, 350 Türkiye  
İpek Tetik, Architect, Directorate of Climate Change

**Summary:** This session informed municipalities about Türkiye's new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), presented climate projections for both the country and their own cities to support science-based planning, and outlined the steps municipalities can take in the NDC implementation process. It also addressed opportunities to localize the benefits of the energy transition, alongside the barriers that prevent municipalities from contributing more effectively to national climate goals. The session fostered a crucial dialogue among central government institutions, municipalities, and civil society to advance climate action.

MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MMU General Assembly

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C10

**Tags:** Participation, Governance, Region

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Summary:** Marking its 50th anniversary, the Marmara Municipalities Union convened its General Assembly at MARUF25.

MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# Resilience and Beyond: Mayors & AFAD Meeting

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C10

**Tags:** Disaster, Roles, Governance

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Disaster and Emergency Management  
Authority of the Republic of Türkiye (AFAD)

**Speakers:** Mustafa Bozbey, President, Marmara  
Municipalities Union & Mayor, Bursa Metropolitan  
Municipality

Gökhan Yılmaz, Head of Division, Disaster and  
Emergency Management Authority of the Republic of  
Türkiye (AFAD)

**Summary:** This session brought together mayors and AFAD representatives to discuss the roles of local and central governments in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Participants explored strategies to enhance resilience and shared best practices for strengthening inter-institutional cooperation.

MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Opening Session

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C1

**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women

**Summary:** As part of the Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe, organized by NALAS in cooperation with UN Women, the sessions addressed the role of women mayors in strengthening local governance, inclusive peace, and resilience. Participants, including mayors, municipal councillors, and representatives from local government associations across the region, shared experiences and good practices to foster regional cooperation.

MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Berlin Process and EU Accession – What It Means for Local Governments

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C1

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Region  
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~~~~~  
**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
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**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women  
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MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Localizing the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda: The Role of Mayors in Advancing Inclusive Peace and Resilience

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📍 C1

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Region  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
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**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women  
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MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Women's Leadership and Participation in Local Governance

📅 2 October 2025 | ⌚ 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C1

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Region  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
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**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women  
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MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Closing Remarks

📅 2 October 2025 | ⌚ 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C1

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**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Region  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
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**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women  
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MINDS ON CLOSED MEETING

# İNŞA x CapaCITIES 2.0: High-Level Roundtable for Climate-Neutral Cities

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C10

**Tags:** Climate, Networks, Roles, Governance

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** CapaCITIES

**Moderators:** Deniz Çelik Bulgurlu, Climate-Neutral Cities Advisor, Climate KIC

Özge Sivrikaya, Sustainability and Climate Change Center Director & Senior Project Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** Serhat Melik, Horizon Europe Program Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility, EU Missions and NEB National Contact Person, TÜBİTAK

Thomas Osdoba, NetZeroCities Program Director, Climate KIC

**Summary:** This closed meeting opened a discussion on how to establish the necessary governance mechanism - a “national climate platform” - to ensure that climate change efforts carried out by institutions from different sectors are aligned and collaborative, and to define the sharing of roles across sectors. It explored how local governments can participate in this platform, as well as the barriers and opportunities for designing it effectively. Bringing together senior representatives of local governments, international organizations, and the central government, the session has served as an important step toward the establishment of a potential platform.







# HOW TO-OL

Preceding the Circle of Possibilities, these concise yet inspiring talks were addressed to professionals driving change and generating creative, inclusive solutions in urban spaces. They provided insights and experiences focused on “how to achieve” results across various topics.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Be a Facilitator?

1 October 2025 | 14.00-14.30 | D6

**Tags:** People, Community, Roles, Participation, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** Szilvia Zsargo, Facilitator, Demnet

**Summary:** This session was built on the premise that complex urban challenges require inclusive, multi-actor processes. It explored how effective facilitation can transform diverse viewpoints from potential sources of conflict into productive, collaborative energy. Participants examined practical facilitation tools and discussed how to channel disagreements into constructive, even restorative, outcomes. After inspiring talks that broadened perspectives, the session shifted to a 'circle of possibilities' format - a dedicated space for exchanging real-world experiences and experimenting with different facilitation approaches.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Build a Common Ground in a Polarized World?

1 October 2025 | 15.30-15.50 | D6

**Tags:** Community, Roles, Participation, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** Zakia Elvang, Executive Director, We Do Democracy

**Summary:** Against a backdrop of deepening political, social, and cultural divides, this session introduced Democracy Fitness - a practice dedicated to dialoguing across differences and strengthening the muscles of democratic interaction. Blending physical and mental engagement - the workshop equipped participants with tools to build common ground and foster constructive relationships across differing views, identities, and priorities. Through a series of practical exercises, they practiced how to understand diverse perspectives and express disagreement in healthy, productive ways.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Stay Whole While Driving Change?

1 October 2025 | 15.50-16.10 | D6

**Tags:** Human, Community, Care, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** Kivilcim Kiran, Clinical and Organizational Psychologist, MindCare Academy

**Summary:** This session focused on the psychological resources required for creating sustainable change. Through insightful exchanges, attendees explored how to maintain personal balance and nurture their own well-being as well as that of their relationships. The presentation highlighted the importance of self-renewal and a balanced life, introducing relaxation techniques and practices to replenish energy while addressing the risks of burn-out from overload. Ultimately, the workshop offered practical strategies for sustaining well-being and fostering healthy relationships over the long term.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Be an Urban Change-Maker?

2 October 2025 | 11.30-11.50 | D6

**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Networks, People, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** Gerald Babel-Sutter, CEO & Founder, Urban Future (UFGC)

**Summary:** Cities are in a constant state of change, but steering that change demands new roles and responsibilities. This session equipped participants with the mindsets and methods needed to become active agents of urban transformation. Through focused discussions, they explored their potential to directly influence the evolving dynamics of their cities.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Ignite and Scale Up Change?

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.50-12.10 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** Roles, Governance, Networks, People, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** **Andrea Torres**, Director Program Support and Learning, Van Leer Foundation

**Summary:** This session explored the full lifecycle of social change, from sparking initiatives to nurturing their growth and ensuring they last. Participants discussed strategies for developing and scaling effective policies and services that support the well-being of children and their caregivers, from the prenatal stage through the first five years of life.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Make Change in the City Happen?

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-14.20 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** People, Community, Roles, Governance, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Speaker:** **Ali Faruk Göksu**, Urban Planner, Urban Strategy

**Summary:** This session explored how to put people and communities at the heart of urban change. Moving beyond traditional planning, it examined a holistic process—from imagining new possibilities and conducting initial research to mobilizing diverse actors for collective action—all illustrated with concrete examples. The discussion focused on actionable strategies, practical tools, and common obstacles, effectively creating a shared roadmap for driving meaningful urban transformation.

MINDS ON HOW TO-OL

# How to Be an Urbanist in a Changing World?

3 October 2025 | 10.00-10.20 | D6

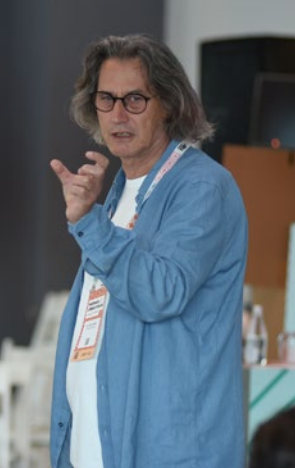
**Tags:** Community, Roles, Networks, Resources, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** All Things Urban

**Speaker:** Anastasia Sukhoroslova, CEO & Founder, All Things Urban

**Summary:** Global crises, climate change, and rapidly evolving social dynamics are compelling urban professionals to redefine their roles. In this context, the presentation highlighted that being an urbanist in a changing world demands a new set of skills, from managing uncertainty and adopting multidisciplinary approaches to collaborating with diverse actors and thinking flexibly. Following this inspiring talk, a “circle of possibilities” was formed, giving participants a space to share experiences and forge a collective vision, enriched by their multiple perspectives.





# URBAN TALKS

Featuring special guests, this conversation series on urban life delved into subjects such as urban culture, sociology, literature, and art. Through the personal experiences, fields of expertise, and urban visions of these distinguished guests, the visible and invisible layers of the city were explored.

MINDS ON URBAN TALK, URBAN CINEMA

# Director's Talk: "Manguel's Journey to Türkiye: In the Footsteps of Tanpınar" with Melik Külekci

1 October 2025 | 18.30-18.45 | D2

**Tags:** Space, Heritage, Art, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Moderator:** Nazlıcan Akci, Management Development Center Director & Senior Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speaker:** Melik Külekci, Director, Notias Film

**Summary:** With the support of Yapı Kredi Publications, the main sponsor of the Urban Library, a special screening was held alongside the Urban Cinema program at MARUF25. Following its premiere at Yapı Kredi Culture & Arts in June 2025, Manguel's Journey to Türkiye: In the Footsteps of Tanpınar took audiences on a rich exploration of Türkiye's literary landscapes. The film chronicles the observations of writer Alberto Manguel, invited to Türkiye in 2013 for the Istanbul Tanpınar Literature Festival (İTEF). Based on his travels to Istanbul, Erzurum, Konya, Ankara, and Bursa while writing In the Footsteps of Tanpınar: Five Cities, the documentary captures both Tanpınar's enduring legacy and Manguel's own intellectual journey. Begun by director Didem Şahin in 2013, the film was completed by Melik Külekci following Şahin's untimely passing. Külekci participated in a brief post-screening Q&A, offering insights into the creative process and the cinematic exploration of Tanpınar's path.

# Urban Talk: Tracing Urban Memory

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 17.45-18.45 | 📺 V1

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Heritage, Space, Human, Culture  
~~~~~

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
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**Speakers:** Merin Sever, Executive Editor, Researcher, Can Publishing  
~~~~~

Ceren Sungur, YouTube Streamer  
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**Summary:** What does it mean to preserve the memory of a city? How is this memory built, transmitted, and lost? Why is tracing memory important in a multi-layered city like Istanbul, and what continuities and ruptures does it reveal? Pursuing these questions, the Urban Talks approached urban memory not merely as a way to record the past, but as a dynamic relationship with the city's present and future. Merin Sever and Ceren Sungur discussed how urban continuities persist through transformation, the contexts in which ruptures emerge, and how these gaps can be interpreted. The conversation went beyond assessing the current state, offering a shared space for reflection and exploration of ways to keep the city's memory alive.

Şehir Konuşmaları

Urban Talk

# Kent Belleğinin İzinde

*Tracing Urban Memory*



Speaker  
**Merin Sever**

Executive Editor, Researcher,  
Can Publishing



Speaker  
**Ceren Sungur**

Streamer, Youtube

1-3 OCTOBER 2025

HALIÇ CONGRESS CENTER, ISTANBUL  
[marmaraurbanforum.org](http://marmaraurbanforum.org)





# DISCUSSION

The “Discussion” sessions provided a space for experts to gather around a table and discuss diverse theories, strategies, proposals, or solutions within a specific field. In these sessions—where multidisciplinary expert opinions on urban issues underwent in-depth analysis and proposed solutions were evaluated and synthesized—the exchange of ideas and critical thinking were actively fostered.

# Colours of Economy: Crises and Possibilities

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 C5

**Tags:** Economy, Care, Nature, Energy, Demography

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Moderator:** Şebnem Şahin, PhD, Chief Economist, UNDP

**Speakers:** Çağla Ünlütürk, Prof., Department of Women's Studies, Pamukkale University

Leonie Westhoff, PhD, Labour Market Economist, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

**Summary:** This session took a multidimensional approach to examining the structural dilemmas of the current economic system and their cross-sectoral impacts. By bringing together interrelated themes such as the green transition, the care economy, and demographic transformations, it fostered a discussion on today's economic deadlocks and future possibilities.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION, SIDE EVENT

# Would You Mind If We Swim? On Rebuilding Istanbul's Coastal Culture

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 Shore-1

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Water, Space, Participation, Community, Quality of Life  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
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**Moderators:** **Fatih Kala**, Architect & Co-founder, Tabure Urban Design Studio

**Mervan Önen**, Architect & Co-founder, Tabure Urban Design Studio

**Zeynep Aybala Tümer**, Architect, Tabure Urban Design Studio  
~~~~~

**Summary:** This event addressed the limitations of Istanbul's relationship with the sea through access issues and prevailing myths. Using data and visuals, the event illustrated the transformation of waterfronts into passive landscapes and challenged common prejudices about the sea. The session aimed to highlight the importance of reconnecting with the sea and fostering collective ownership. Through an interactive format, this interactive session gathered participants' experiences, discussed new forms of sea-human interaction, and generated fast, low-cost, and inclusive solutions.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# Resilient Local Governance in Wartime: Reform, Decentralization, and Reconstruction in Ukraine

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C5

**Tags:** Governance, Disaster, Demography, Community, Democracy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** PLATFORMA, NALAS

**Moderators:** Bella Tskhelishvili, Eastern Partnership and Geographic Dialogues, CEMR & PLATFORMA  
Elton Stafa, Program Director, NALAS

**Speakers:** Durmish Guri, Director of Projects & Programs, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)  
Iaroslav Tsvirkun, Mayor, Pereshchepyne Municipality  
Kelmend Zajazi, Executive Director, NALAS  
Nataliya Lazarenko, International Cooperation Manager, Association of Ukrainian Cities

**Summary:** Organized in partnership with PLATFORMA, this session aimed to explore the impact of the ongoing war on local governance in Ukraine, highlighting the role of decentralization, reforms, and reconstruction efforts. It showcased how local governments in Ukraine have maintained service delivery, strengthened resilience, and led the rebuilding of communities amidst the crisis. The discussion also addressed how international cooperation and multi-level governance can play a vital role in fostering peace and sustainable development.

# Marmara Region Spatial Strategies Coordination Meeting

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C10

**Tags:** Local Development, Region, Space, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Fatih Terzi**, Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Speakers:** **Antonella Contin**, Assoc. Prof., Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

**Cem Ocak**, Principal Banker, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

**Ergül Halisçelik**, Assoc. Prof., Secretary General, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Mehmet Çakılcıoğlu**, PhD, Urban Planner, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Naki Çetin**, Secretary General, Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality

**Nazlı Yazgan**, Head of Bursa Planning Agency & Deputy Secretary General, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Suat Parıldar**, Provincial Director of Agriculture and Forestry, Istanbul Directorate of Provincial Agriculture and Forestry

**Xavi Tiana Casablancas**, Coordinator of General Manager Bureau, Barcelona Metropolitan Area

**Ziya Taşkent**, PhD, Secretary General, Istanbul Development Agency

**Summary:** Ensuring that the Environmental Master Plans and other spatial plans prepared for the Marmara Region align with investments is a critical milestone for the sustainable development of cities and the fair distribution of prosperity. In this session, senior representatives from metropolitan municipalities, development and planning agencies, directorates of agriculture and forestry, and other relevant institutions came together to align strategic investment incentives and spatial plans under a shared vision, discussing decisions that will shape the region's future.

# From Seed to Structure

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | C5

**Tags:** Space, Nature, Climate, Energy, Policy

**Steam:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul,  
The Circle

**Moderator:** Nesli Kayalı, Program Director, The Circle

**Speakers:** Ahmet Topbaş, Founder ve Director, ATTEC  
Structural Design

**Ahmet Türer**, Prof., Department of Civil Engineering,  
Middle East Technical University (METU)

**Demet Sürücü**, PhD, Timber Building Construction  
and Research Center Deputy Manager, Bahçeşehir  
University

**Göksel Korkmaz**, President, Turkish Forest Products  
Industrialists and Businessmen Association

**İrfan Filik**, Head of Department, General Directorate of  
Forestry

**Kadir Doğan**, Civil Engineer, National Timber  
Association & Young Timber Engineers and Architects  
Group

**Mehmet Akif Asmaz**, Chairman, Asmas Timber A.Ş

**Selçuk Avcı**, Co-founder, Avcı Architects

**Susanne Rudenstam**, Managing Director, Swedish  
Wood Building Council

**Summary:** As the construction of climate-friendly cities gains momentum, the use of nature-based, renewable materials is becoming increasingly important. This session explored how comprehensive wood-based building strategies can inspire the wider use of wood in Türkiye, focusing on its integration with local forestry policies, production chains, and design culture. Using the Swedish example as a mode, the discussion addressed how a roadmap can be developed for Türkiye. The journey of wood, from seed to structure, was examined through the lenses of sustainable forest management, building technologies, and design policies.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# Alternative Pathways in Urban Transformation: Housing Cooperatives

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C5

**Tags:** Housing, Community, Governance

**Steam:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Center for Spatial Justice (MAD)

**Moderators:** Bahar Bayhan, Urban Policy Program Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

Hüseyin Eryılmaz, Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

**Speakers:** Eren Onur, Architect, Janu Architecture

Gizem Aksümer, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

Haluk Levent, Prof., Faculty of Business, Istanbul Bilgi University

Kumru Çılgin, PhD, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

Yaşar Adnan Adanalı, Founding Director, Postane

**Summary:** This session discussed alternative possibilities to current urban transformation and strengthening practices in Türkiye within the framework of housing cooperatives. Structured as a roundtable discussion, the session addressed housing cooperatives as a model based on solidarity and participation, evaluating financing, community organization forms, and the potential roles of local governments from different perspectives.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# Local Governments Associating: Democracy, Diplomacy, Solidarity

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📍 C10

**Tags:** Networks, Region, Local Development, Local Diplomacy, Democracy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **M. Cemil Aslan**, PhD, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union & General Coordinator, MARUF

**Speakers:** **Abdallah Anati**, Executive Director, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)  
**Adelina Farrici**, Executive Director, National Association of Municipalities of Albania  
**Durmish Guri**, Director of Projects & Programs, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)  
**Irina Luncasu**, Projects Coordinator & Gender Focal Point, Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM)  
**Kelmend Zajazi**, Executive Director, NALAS  
**Nataliya Lazerenko**, International Cooperation Manager, Association of Ukrainian Cities  
**Sazan Ibrahim**, Executive Director, Association of Kosovo Municipalities  
**Selahattin Yıldırım**, Former Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union  
**Sergiu Târa**, Executive President, Association of Communes of Romania (ACoR)  
**Simona Bošković**, Secretary of Committee for International Cooperation and EU Integration, Union of Municipalities of Montenegro  
**Şengül Altan Arslan**, PhD, Deputy Secretary General, Union of Municipalities of Türkiye

**Summary:** This session explored the journey of local government associations from efforts to strengthen local democracy to creating global impact through transnational solidarity networks. Participants addressed how multi-level collaborations—spanning from the local to the global along with practices of local diplomacy can serve as transformative tools in building more inclusive, resilient, and adaptive systems of local governance.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# Shifting Grounds: Agents of Change for Just Transition

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📍 C5

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**Tags:** Local Development, Region, Nature  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
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**Partner:** Politecnico di Milano  
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**Moderator:** Antonella Contin, Assoc. Prof., Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano  
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**Speakers:** Dicheng Yang, Researcher, Politecnico di Milano  
~~~~~

**Eda Yücesoy**, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Fiorabla Vela**, Assoc. Prof., Head of Business Department, University of Vlora Ismail Qemali

**Murat Güvenç**, Prof., Chair, İlhan Tekeli Foundation for Urbanism Culture

**Rafael H Forero H**, Policy, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-Habitat  
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**Summary:** This session explored transformative possibilities through the lens of change agents, emphasizing adaptive, and collective approaches to just transitions. Drawing on experiences from often overlooked regions—such as post-industrial zones, rural-metropolitan edges, and contested or post-conflict areas—the session highlighted how civic actors and institutions create new ecological and cultural pathways.

# Key Aspects of Metropolitan Planning to Promote Adequate Housing

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C10

**Tags:** Housing, Space, Quality of Life, Services, Governance

**Steams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** UN-Habitat

**Moderator:** Rafael H Forero H, Policy, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-Habitat

**Speakers:** Ahmet Büyükduman, PhD, Real Estate Appraiser, Istanbul Real Estate Valuation and Advisory Co.

**Ali Emre Soner**, Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**And Akman**, PhD, Co-founder, Building Biology and Ecology Institute

**Aslı Ceylan Öner**, Prof., Vice Rector, İzmir University of Economics

**Bahar Bayhan**, Urban Policy Program Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

**Ceren Lordoğlu**, Assoc., Prof., Department of Sociology, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

**Elif Akay**, Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Fioralba Vela**, Assoc., Prof., Head of Business Department, University of Vlora Ismail Qemali

**Gisela Labrador**, Deputy Director of Metropolitan and Regional Planning, Bogota Cundinamarca Metropolitan Region

**Gizem Aksüner**, Assoc., Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Mimar Sinan Fine Art University

**Göktuğ Köseahmet**, Research Assistant, Gebze Technical University

**Haluk Levent**, Prof., Faculty of Business, Istanbul Bilgi University

**Işıl Erol**, Prof., Department of International Finance, Özyeğin University

**Joshua Maviti**, Program Management Officer, UN-Habitat

**Kerem Yavuz Arslanlı**, Assoc., Prof., Department of Urban Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Maria del Pilar Tellez S.**, Metropolitan and Territorial Department Expert, UN-Habitat

**Norliza Hashim**, Chief Executive Officer, Urbanice Malaysia

**Remy Sietchiping**, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

**Renata Nogueira Herculano**, Deputy Secretary of Urban Planning, Belo Horizonte City Hall

**Stephan Klempf**, Architect, F64 Architekten

**Turan Hançerli**, Deputy Chairman, Istanbul Planning Agency (İPA)

**Yaşar Adnan Adanalı**, Founding Director, Postane

**Şevket Ercan Kızılay**, Assist. Prof., Department of Sociology, Düzce University

**Summary:** Metropolitan planning of housing makes it possible to overcome the administrative and functional fragmentation that often characterises complex urban areas. This dialogue, organized in partnership with the UN-Habitat, explored strategies to integrate the right to housing into territorial planning instruments at the metropolitan scale, ensuring the inclusion of key principles such as access to basic services, habitability, accessibility, and cultural adequacy.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# The Golden Jubilee of MMU: The Lost & Found of Urban Services

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C5

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**Tags:** Quality of Life, Services, Policy, Space, Heritage  
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**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
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**Moderator:** Hayrettin Günç, Senior Program Manager,  
Global Designing Cities Initiative  
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**Speakers:** M. Cemil Arslan, PhD, Secretary General,  
Marmara Municipalities Union & General Coordinator,  
MARUF

Antonella Contin, Assoc. Prof., Department of  
Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

Xavi Tiana Casablanças, Coordinator of the General  
Manager Bureau, Barcelona Metropolitan Area  
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**Summary:** Cities are constantly redefining themselves; however, not all emerging ideas are new. Strategies such as pedestrianization, mixed-use neighborhoods, green infrastructure, and waterfront reclamation—once regarded as utopian or unfeasible—have re-emerged today as critical responses to pressing issues including the climate crisis, social justice, and quality of life. Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU) has played a significant role in enabling such projects to be realized in many cities since 1975. This session focused on these approaches and the projects of MMU on its 50th anniversary.

# Metropolitan Financing for Large-Scale Housing Solutions

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C10

**Tags:** Housing, Economy, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** UN-Habitat

**Moderator:** Rafael H Forero H, Policy, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-Habitat

**Speakers:** Ahmet Büyükduman, PhD, Real Estate Appraiser, Istanbul real Estate Valuation and Advisory Co  
Ali Emre Soner, Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

And Akman, PhD, Co-founder, Building Biology and Ecology Institute

Antonella Contin, Assoc. Prof., Department of

Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

Aslı Ceylan Öner, Prof., Vice Rector, Izmir University of Economics

Bahar Bayhan, Urban Policy Program Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

Ceren Lordoğlu, Assoc. Prof., Department of Sociology, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

Elif Alkay, Prof., Department Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

Fioralba Vela, Assoc. Prof., Head of Business Department, University of Vlora Ismail Qemali

Gisela Labrador, Deputy Director of Metropolitan and Regional Planning, Bogota Cundinamarca Metropolitan Region

Göktuğ Köseahmet, Research Assistant, Gebze Technical University

Haluk Levent, Prof., Faculty of Business, Istanbul Bilgi University

Joshua Maviti, Program Management Officer, UN-Habitat

Kerem Yavuz Arslanlı, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban Planning, Istanbul Technical University

Maria del Pilar Tellez S., Metropolitan and Territorial Development Expert, UN-Habitat

Norliza Hashim, Chief Executive Officer, Urbanice Malaysia

Remy Sietchiping, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

Renata Nogueira Herculano, Deputy Secretary of Urban Planning, Belo Horizonte City Hall

Şevket Ercan Kızılay, PhD, Department of Sociology, Düzce University

Turan Hançerli, Deputy Chairman, Istanbul Planning Agency (İPA)

Xavi Tiana Casablanças, Coordinator of the General Manager Bureau, Barcelona Metropolitan Area

Yaşar Adnan Adanalı, Founding Director, Postane

**Summary:** Financing is a critical pillar for the implementation of sustainable housing policies and the delivery of affordable housing solutions. This dialogue, organized in partnership with the UN-Habitat, focused on analysing innovative financing schemes and instruments at the metropolitan level, including land financing mechanisms, housing affordability instruments, land value capture tools, and equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

MINDS ON DISCUSSION

# Population Dynamics: People Move, Policy Follows

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 16.00-17.00 | 📍 C5

**Tags:** People, Services, Governance, Demography, Migration

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Yasemin Akis Kalaylıoğlu**, PhD, Program Specialist, United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)

**Speakers:** **Dalkhat Ediev**, Prof., North-Caucasian State Academy

**M. Murat Erdoğan**, Prof., Emeritus, Hacettepe University

**Stephanie Loose**, Country Program Manager, UN-Habitat Afghanistan

**Summary:** In this session, the concept of demography was examined within the urban context. The speakers discussed the relationship between population and the shaping of urban space, its impact on public services, and its connection to governance processes. The session addressed key trends such as population growth, aging, migration, and their effects on cities through density and capacity scenarios, as well as policy development processes.

# Local Policies in Preventing Irregular Migration and Social Cohesion After Voluntary Return

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C1

**Tags:** Local Development, Governance, Region, Migration

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city? How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Moderator:** Berkan Pazarıcı, Portfolio Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Speaker:** Mina Maqsood, Project Manager, ICMPD Silk Routes Regional Office

**Participants:** Amr Marei, Head of Office, UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

**Aydın Söylemez,** Director, Beşiktaş Municipality

**Beyza Akkuş,** Senior Refugee Protection Officer Assistant, UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

**Burcu Akpınar,** Jr Specialist, Yeşilay Society

**Büşra Dilan Çakır,** Social Services Specialist, Büyükçekmece Municipality

**Didem Danış,** Assoc. PhD, Galatasaray University

**Dolf te Lintelo,** PhD, Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

**Duygu Başoğlu,** Architect, ARUP

**Eda Nur Çerli,** Student, İstanbul Medeniyet University

**Elif Yücebaş,** PhD, Dokuz Eylül University

**Emrah Kılınc,** Migration and Adaptation, Social Services Specialist, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Esen Can Eyüboğlu,** Specialist, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Gizem Külekçioğlu,** Project Manager, İstanbul Bilgi University

**Gülsüm Akın,** Social Services Specialist, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**M. Murat Erdoğan,** Prof., Emeritus, Hacettepe University

**Melisa Taş,** Social Services Department Chief, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Merve Aksoy,** Social Services Specialist, Büyükçekmece Municipality

**Müge Dalkıran,** Researcher, İstanbul Koç University Migration Studies Center (MiReKoc)

**Murat Altunbezer,** Social Services Specialist, Beylikdüzü Municipalities

**Nihal Eminoğlu,** PhD, Ankara University

**Öykü Selen Yücecam,** Social Services Specialist, Büyükçekmece Municipality

**Recep Kırdar,** Social Worker, Tuzla Municipality

**Rukiye Gülerce,** Specialist, Yeşilay Society

**Selçuk Şatana,** Senior Refugee Protection Officer, UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

**Songül Zeyrik,** Social Worker, Tuzla Municipality

**Suna Gülfer İhlamur Öner,** Prof., Marmara University

**Umay Çarpan,** Social Services Specialist, Büyükçekmece Municipality

**Summary:** This session addressed the role of local solutions and international cooperation in voluntary return processes. Participants shared good practices supporting the reintegration of migrants, fostered knowledge and exchanged experiences among local governments, central authorities, civil society organizations, and international stakeholders from different countries.







# URBAN BASICS

Shaped by expert presentations designed to revisit our fundamental urban rights, these talks focused on specific rights such as water, energy, breath, time, and digitalization, examining them within their historical and contemporary contexts. Aiming to reignite public discourse on fundamental rights and responsibilities, these presentations underscored the principles of justice and equity in urban governance.

MINDS ON URBAN BASICS

# Urban Basics: Right to Energy

1 October 2025 | 15.30-16.00 PM | C6

**Tags:** Energy, People, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Speaker:** **Eva Schwab**, Policy Officer, European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)

**Summary:** Conceptually, this session addressed urban energy inequalities, grounded in the principle that fair, sufficient, and continuous access to energy is a fundamental urban right. It explored the social, economic, and health impacts of this inequality. The session presented the definition of energy poverty, along with key measurement methods and indicators. It also examined the responsibilities of local governments in planning, regulation, and guidance from the perspective of the right to energy.

MINDS ON URBAN BASICS

# Urban Basics: Right to Time

2 October 2025 | 11.30-12.00 | D3

**Tags:** Care, Mobility, Quality of Life, Policy, Demography

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** **Time Use Initiative, Local and Regional Time Network**

**Speakers:** **Björn Gernig**, Executive Board Member, German Association for the Policy of Time

**Marc Martorell Escofet**, Policy Officer, Time Use Initiative

**Summary:** This session began by reminding us that time is one of the most invisible, yet most valuable, rights in modern urban life. It explored how people can reclaim time in their daily lives and how the right to time can be defended in areas like gender equality, mobility, the care economy, and work-life balance. A central goal was to envision pathways for transforming cities into fair, accessible, and time-friendly spaces for all.

MINDS ON URBAN BASICS

# Urban Basics: Digital Inequalities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-12.00 | 📺 V1

**Tags:** Governance, Quality of Life, Participation, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Speaker:** Emre Eren Korkmaz, PhD, Oxford Centre for Technology and Development

**Summary:** This session emphasized that access to digital technologies is now a fundamental equality issue. It discussed how the digital divide is deepening in areas like education, employment, public services, and civic participation, and explored what local governments can do to reduce these inequalities. The discussion also addressed ways to build an inclusive and equitable digital future for all.

MINDS ON URBAN BASICS

# Urban Basics: Right to Water

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-16.00 | 📺 D3

**Tags:** Human, Climate, Water, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** Elif Kahraman, Jr. Environmental Management Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speaker:** Akgün İlhan, PhD, Department of Tourism Management, Bogazici University

**Summary:** This session tackled the idea that, in the face of global climate crisis, rapid urbanization, and social inequality, water is not merely a resource or a privilege, it is a fundamental right. The discussion examined the right to safe, fair, and sustainable water access from multiple urban perspectives.

# Urban Basics: Right to Breathe

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 16.30-17.00 | 📍 D1

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**Tags:** Human, Child, Climate, Quality of Life  
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**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
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**Partner:** Van Leer Foundation  
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**Speakers:** Bhavreen Kandhari, Founder, Warrior Moms  
Sean Maguire, Executive Director of Strategic  
Partnerships, Clean Air Fund  
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**Summary:** Grounded in the principle that clean air is a fundamental human right, this session united the voices of activists championing children's right to breathe clean air with the experiences of global initiatives fighting pollution. Focusing on securing universal access to clean air as swiftly as possible, it explored how the power of grass-roots movements can combine with institutional and governmental collaboration to drive lasting change.







# LOCAL IN ACTION

The “Local in Action” sessions brought urban practices creating positive impact on local, regional, or global scales to the stage. By presenting detailed best practices, case studies, and success stories, this format spotlighted innovative and sustainable urban solutions. Sharing these actions—born from local initiatives yet capable of inspiring on a broader scale—aimed to encourage action-oriented learning and positive change for participants.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Social Mapping: Towards Evidence-Based Local Social Inclusion

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C4

**Tags:** Policy, People, Services

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?,  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** German Agency for International Corporation (GIZ), Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)

**Moderator:** Biljana Dijanisieva, Regional Program Officer, Regional Program on Social Protection and Prevention of HT · Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Speakers:** Berk Çoker, Director of Communications, Partnerships, and External Relations, INGEV

Frosina Simonovska Antevski, Special Educator and Rehabilitator, Association Poraka Nasha

Natalija Spasovska, Advisor, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**Summary:** This session, organized in cooperation with NALAS and GIZ, explored how social mapping could be used in evidence-based policymaking to strengthen social inclusion at the local level. Participants learned about methods for identifying the needs of vulnerable groups, monitoring access to services, and designing inclusive policies through examples and good practices.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# The Data Has Spoken

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C6

**Tags:** AI, Technology, Data, Policy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** KONDA

**Moderator:** Aydin Erdem, General Manager, KONDA

**Speakers:** Bürge Elvan Erginli, Researcher, KONDA

Dolf te Lintelo, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

H. Murat Güvenç, Prof., İlhan Tekeli Foundation for Urbanism Culture

Seçkin Karataş, General Manager, Community Volunteers Foundation

**Summary:** This session, organized by KONDA, discussed how data-driven social analyses created a transformative impact on decision-making processes. Representatives from the private sector, academia, and civil society assessed the contributions, limitations, and new possibilities that data offers to decision-making mechanisms. The session highlighted not only “data”, but also the intelligence and speed added to data by artificial intelligence.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Cities at War Times: Serving While Surviving

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | D3

**Tags:** Disaster, Governance, Resources, People, Local Diplomacy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Nihal Eminoğlu, PhD, Department of Politics and Economics, Ankara University

**Speakers:** Olha Pikula, Councillor, Mariupol City Council  
Riyad Awad, Mayor, Tulkarm Municipality

**Summary:** This session discussed the critical role of municipalities in ensuring the safety of urban residents and maintaining essential public services during times of war and crisis. Municipal representatives from different countries shared their experiences, highlighting resilience strategies and examples of solidarity developed in the face of destruction, displacement, and resource scarcity.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION, SIDE EVENT

# Creative Industries as a Strategic Area for Development

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C3

**Tags:** Culture, Economy, Art, Local Development

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Social Innovation Agency

**Moderator:** Ali Güney, Social Innovation Agency Director, Konya Metropolitan Municipality

**Speakers:** Berat Kuzu, President of the Creative Industries Commission, Ankara Chamber of Commerce

Erman M. Demir, Assoc. Prof., Department of Film Design and Management, Başkent University

Funda Lena, PhD, Founder, KREKSA - ARTENPRENEUR

**Summary:** This session explored cultural industries from a multifaceted perspective, highlighting their role in shaping urban identity and driving economic development. The panel focused on integrating creative industries into urban life and examining culture-driven development models. Speakers from diverse disciplines shared insights from their research and practice, offering policy recommendations for sustainable, accessible, and innovative cultural sectors. The session concluded by providing an inspiring vision for the future of cultural industries.

# Governing the City Together Beyond Bureaucracy

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C4

**Tags:** Policy, Roles, Governance, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Istanbul Planning Agency (İPA)

**Moderator:** Mehmet Çakılcıoğlu, PhD., Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Speakers:** Arda Batu, Secretary General, Turkish Business Confederation (TÜRKONFED)

Laden Yurttagüler, Member of the Board of Trustees, Support Foundation for Civil Society

Şengül Altan Arslan, PhD, Deputy Secretary General, Union of Turkish Municipalities

**Summary:** The session began with the observation that relationships among central and local governments, professional chambers, civil society, and the private sector are often constrained by rigid procedures and protocols. Discussions focused on exploring how to move beyond these boundaries to foster more flexible, trust-based, and innovative models of collaboration among different actors. Drawing from public administration, business, and civil society perspectives, speakers emphasized the importance of multi-actor dialogue and co-creation in urban governance.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# From Data to Policy: Child-Focused Local Governance

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C6

**Tags:** Governance, Services, Disaster, Children

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Turkish Economic and Social Studies  
Foundation (TESEV), UNICEF

**Moderator:** İtir Akdoğan, PhD., Research Director,  
Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation

**Speakers:** Andrea Torres, Director, Program Support  
and Learning, Van Leer Foundation

Aysel Madra, Research Coordinator, Suna's Daughters

Gökçen Yılmaz Tokgöz, Program Specialist - Emergency  
Coordinator, UNICEF

Hayriye Görkem Güner, PhD., Social Policy Officer,  
UNICEF

**Summary:** Organized in partnership between TESEV and UNICEF, this session focused on the importance of data-driven policy-making, service delivery, and budgeting in child-centered urban governance. Participants shared examples related to creating safe and inclusive learning environments for children, supporting early childhood development through local policies, and advancing disaster risk reduction efforts. The discussion emphasized the value of holistic approaches that place children's rights and well-being at the heart of local governance.

# Resilience in Action: Local Preparedness for Environmental Challenges

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 D1

**Tags:** Governance, People, Policy, Services, Democracy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

**Moderator:** Olga Krajewska, Expert for Climate Neutral Cities, ICLEI Europe

**Speakers:** Anthony Buchanan, Councillor and COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People, Council of Europe

Baran Güneş, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Mudanya

Bernd Vöhringer, President of the Chamber of Local Authorities, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Tamara Snofl, Mayor, Municipality of Kungota (Slovenia)

Teuvo Hatva, Regional Councillor, Kainuu (Finland) and Co-Rapporteur on Water Resources Under Stress: Towards Better Local and Regional Governance

**Summary:** This session focused on how local and regional authorities can anticipate, manage, and respond to environmental risks more effectively. Panelists discussed various dimensions of local environmental management, including water governance, coastal erosion, and the growing risks associated with climate change. The discussion emphasized the need to strengthen preparedness, response, and local resilience, while highlighting the importance of multi-level cooperation in environmental governance.

# Elephant in the Room: Urban Poverty

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 D3

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**Tags:** Economy, Housing, Mobility, Services, Demography

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**Streams:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a fair city?

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**Partner:** Oxfam Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV)

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**Moderator:** Alim Arlı, Prof., Marmara University

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**Speakers:** Ersin Kopuz, Program Director, Habitat Association

**Gökçen Durutaş**, Project Coordinator, Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (KEDV)

**Önder Uçar**, PhD., Advocacy and Research Coordinator, Deep Poverty Network

**Tais Herig**, Urban95 Consultant, Van Leer Foundation

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**Summary:** This session addressed urban poverty not merely as an economic issue, but as a multi-dimensional phenomenon encompassing housing, transportation, access to basic services, and social inclusion. Participants discussed how poverty is experienced across different segments of urban life and how local governments can place it at the core of their policy agendas through holistic approaches. The discussion emphasized the need to rethink urban poverty through the lenses of social justice, participation, and solidarity.

# Urban Wellbeing: Right or Privilege?

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 V1

**Tags:** Space, Care, People, Quality of Life, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Ece Ceylan Baba, Prof., Dean of  
Architecture Faculty, Yeditepe University

**Speakers:** Fevzi Alp Atar, General Manager, İSTON

Mario Raimondi Pruss, Partner & Director, Humankind

Renata Nogueira Herculano, Deputy Secretary of  
Urban Planning, Belo Horizonte City Hall

Sena Nur Gölcük Taşkiran, Urban Policies Program  
Specialist, Center for Spatial Justice

**Summary:** This session explored urban well-being in the context of whether it is a fundamental right enabling individuals to realize their potential or a privilege reserved for certain groups. Discussions spanned multiple layers, including accessibility, justice, design, culture, and aesthetics, emphasizing that urban well-being is shaped not only by individual quality of life but by the holistic interaction of the built environment, public spaces, and social, cultural, economic, ecological, and psychological dimensions. Participants examined how the growing barriers across the physical, digital, and social layers of the city can be transformed into opportunities for shared life and inclusive well-being.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Cities that Listen, Cities that Lead: Stories from Palestine's Local Frontlines

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C3

**Tags:** People, Local Development, Governance, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)

**Moderator:** Oday Jabari, Local Governance Expert, Belgian Agency for International Cooperation - Enabel

**Speakers:** Abdalkarim Zubaydi, President, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)

Abdallah Anati, Executive Director, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)

Riyad Awad, Mayor, Tulkarm Municipality

**Summary:** This session brought together mayors and national stakeholders from Palestine to share grounded insights on inclusive development and local resilience in one of the world's most complex governance landscapes. Drawing on on-the-ground experiences in community planning, municipal cooperation, and local leadership, the session explored how Palestinian cities are navigating adversity while advancing meaningful, locally-rooted change that resonates with global aspirations.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Crafting a Just City Together with Culture and Art

1 October 2025 | 15.30-16.30 | D3

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Community, Governance, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV)

**Moderator:** Görgün Taner, General Manager, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV)

**Speakers:** A.Muttalip Gürel, Mayor, Küçükkuuyu Municipality

Aydın Dinçer, Mayor, Marmara Adalar Municipality

Utku Cihan, Mayor, Hopa Municipality

Özlem Ece, Director of Cultural Policy Studies, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV)

**Summary:** This session explored how cultural justice can be implemented at the local level. It shared experiences from cultural and artistic projects under the EU-funded "Ortaklaşa: Culture, Dialogue, and Support Program" and evaluated the impact of these efforts on local cultural policies. The session focused on how collaborations between civil society and local governments through culture and arts can foster a participatory, inclusive, and just urban life.

# Implementation of the SDGs in Elevating the Community Development

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | C3

**Tags:** Economy, Policy, Local Development

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** International Islamic University Malaysia, Istanbul Technical University

**Moderator:** Norzailawati Mohd Noor, Prof., International Islamic University of Malaysia

**Speakers:** Fatih Eren, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

Iliyani Binti Ibrahim, Assoc. Prof., International Islamic University of Malaysia

M. Zainora Binti Asmawi, Assoc. Prof., International Islamic University Malaysia

Syakir Amir Ab Rahman, Assoc. Prof., International Islamic University Malaysia

**Summary:** This session discussed how partnerships among the government, private sector, and civil society in Malaysia enable the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level. Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM), one of the key actors in this process, integrates SDG principles into its initiatives to promote social and economic development. The survey findings shared at MARUF aimed to connect research outcomes with global stakeholders, strengthen industry–university collaborations at both national and international levels, and highlight the practical reflections of academic work on everyday life.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Caring Cities

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 16.00-17.00 | 📍 C4

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**Tags:** Care, People, Policy, Governance, Mobility

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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

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**Partners:** Global Alliance for Care, European Social Network

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**Moderator:** Ayşe Göç Yalçınkaya, International Affairs and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

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**Speakers:** Enif Yavuz Dipşar, Head of Social Services Department, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality  
Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, Prof., Architectural School ETSAM, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid  
Jacqueline Leduc Estrada, Program Officer, Global Alliance for Care

**Summary:** This session provided in-depth discussions on publicizing care and integrating it into urban life, featuring best practice examples from Latin America, Europe, and Istanbul. Participants went beyond the scope of social services to examine the role of care-oriented urban planning, infrastructure, and transportation systems. The discussion emphasised how policies and investments in these areas can create more inclusive, accessible, and equitable living conditions for all urban residents. The session highlighted how local governments can integrate care policies into urban planning processes to strengthen social equity and justice.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# The Modern Prometheus: Locating the Watts and Whos of Energy

1 October 2025 | 16.00-17.00 | C6

**Tags:** Energy, Climate, Resources, Economy, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** ECHO

**Moderator:** Ozan Erdinç, Prof., Yıldız Technical University

**Speakers:** Emre Oğuzöncül, Principal, Sustainable Business and Infrastructure, EBRD  
Ioanna-Mirto Chatzigeorgiou, Project Man., Electra Energy

Jakub Kułach, Head of Division, Warsaw City Hall  
Sermin Onaygil, Prof., Istanbul Technical University

**Summary:** This session focused on emerging trends in the energy sector within the context of a just transition, including energy communities, energy cooperatives, and renewable energy. Participants discussed the financing of energy initiatives and the restructuring of local energy systems. Bringing together representatives from academia, central government, civil society, and international financial institutions, the session highlighted the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in the energy transition and explored strategies that can be implemented at the local level.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Rights on Sale: Housing

1 October 2025 | 16.00-17.00 | D1

**Tags:** Housing, Governance, Policy, Participation, Region

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** UN-Habitat

**Moderator:** Rafael H. Forero H, Policy, Governance and Metropolitan Expert, UN-HABITAT

**Speakers:** Elif Alkay, Prof., Istanbul Technical University  
Gisela Labrador Araujo, Deputy Director for Metropolitan and Regional Planning, Bogota-Cundinamarca Metropolitan Region

Gürkan Kaya, General Manager, KİPTAŞ (Istanbul Housing Development Plan Industry and Trade Inc.)

**Summary:** This session examined how multi-level governance can support the coordinated implementation of housing policies across different administrative regions, emphasizing the strengthening of accountability, equity, and participation. Organized in collaboration with UN-Habitat, the session discussed institutional frameworks, legal mechanisms, and multi-level governance models that enable consistent housing strategies in complex metropolitan and regional areas. The discussion particularly focused on inclusive governance approaches that bring together civil society, local authorities, private sector stakeholders, and regional actors.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Digital Future: From Global Agenda to Local Action

2 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C4

**Tags:** Local Development, Community, Policy, Governance, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?, How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** UNDP

**Moderator:** Ceyda Alpay, Head of Experimentation, UNDP

**Speakers:** Bilal Uludağ, President, Çukurova Municipalities Union & Mayor, Sarıçam Municipality

**Biljana Cvetanovska Gugoska**, Local/Urban Regional Program Specialist, UNDP

**Summary:** This session highlighted the critical role of local development in shaping sustainable and resilient cities. It explored how collaborative efforts that bring together different stakeholders can promote inclusive growth. Actual project examples presented during the session provided participants with practical strategies and inspired them to explore innovative approaches to local development. Solutions applied in areas such as digital skills, small-scale enterprises, and local projects were emphasized.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Reimagining Local Governance: Social Justice and Public Politics

2 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C6

**Tags:** Governance, Policy, Participation, Democracy

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Union of Municipalities of Türkiye

**Moderator:** Şengül Altan Arslan, PhD, Deputy Secretary General, Union of Municipalities of Türkiye

**Speakers:** Akif Argun Akdoğan, Prof., Ankara Social Sciences University

Aslıhan Aykaç Yanardağ, Prof., Ege University

**Çağlar Keyder**, Prof., Boğaziçi University

**Summary:** This session focused on how local governance models could be redesigned to strengthen social justice and implement inclusive public policies. Participants discussed the innovative roles that local governments could play in reducing inequalities and enhancing democratic participation. With contributions from academia and local government representatives, the session explored new approaches to building fair, participatory, and resilient urban governance.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# MARUF x Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe | Smart Financing for Equality: Advancing Fair and Inclusive Opportunities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📺 D3

**Tags:** Economy, Roles, Governance, Community, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** NALAS, UN Women

**Moderator:** Ermira Lubani, Program Specialist, Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB ECA), UN Women

**Speakers:** Elton Stafa, Program Director, NALAS  
Marija Savovska, Executive Director, Akcija Zdruzenska, North Macedonia  
Tanja Spičanović, Deputy Mayor, Bar Municipality, Montenegro

**Summary:** In the session organized by the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) in collaboration with UN Women, participants discussed how public budgets and financial tools could transform cities to promote equality under the leadership of women mayors. The session highlighted how equality-oriented “smart financing” approaches can serve as a leverage for fair development and social transformation.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# MARUF x CIVICSHIP FORUM | Best Practices and Insights from THE:PLACE Program

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📍 C4

**Tags:** Networks, Local Development, Culture, Community, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Urban.koop, Stiftung Mercator

**Moderator:** Hüseyincan Eryılmaz, Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

**Speakers:** Begüm İntepeler, Chairwoman, Pi Youth Association (PIYA)

**Emre Güzel**, Founding Director, Roof Coliving

**Esra Karadaş**, General Coordinator, Mesopotamia Foundation

**Gizem Fidan Kaya**, Project Manager, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)

**Kemal Vural Tarlan**, Chair & General Coordinator, Kırkayak Kultur

**Summary:** The session focused on projects developed within the scope of the THE:PLACE program and showcased concrete examples of collaboration between civil society and municipalities. Successful models from various cities were presented, covering areas such as cultural production, participatory governance, social inclusion, and urban transformation. The discussion highlighted how these experiences created opportunities for mutual learning and strengthened intercity collaboration through good practices.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Learn from Nature's Wisdom to Shape the City

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 🗺️ D1

**Tags:** Nature, Space, Climate, Food

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** Azime Tezer, Prof. Emeritus, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Speakers:** Joao Dinis, Climate Action Director, Cascais City  
Mina Hasman, Sustainability Director, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill  
Simon Racé, Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions Expert, ICLEI Europe

**Summary:** This session explored Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) in urban and global contexts. Participants discussed developing urban solutions inspired by nature and opportunities for agroecological transitions. The session aimed to uncover strategies and practices that enable cities to thrive in harmony with nature.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Tick-Tock, Tick-Tock: Time Use Policies at the Local Level

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 🗺️ D3

**Tags:** Quality of Life, Care, Mobility, Local Development, Demography

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Time Use Initiative, Local and Regional Time Network

**Moderators:** Björn Gernig, Executive Board Member, German Association for the Policy of Time (DGfZP)  
Marc Martorell Escofet, Policy Officer, Time Use Initiative

**Speakers:** Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, Prof., Architectural School, ETSAM – Universidad Politécnica de Madrid  
Laura de Caralt, Gender and Time Policies Expert, Barcelona City Council

**Summary:** In this session, representatives from various cities shared policies and practices that promote the fair and efficient use of time. Through innovative approaches and good practices that facilitate everyday life, participants explored how “time-friendly cities” can be realized. The discussion also highlighted how such approaches can contribute to equality, well-being, and sustainability in urban life.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Before AI, After AI

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 🗺️ V1

**Tags:** Technology, Data, AI

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Beyond Studio, British Council

**Moderator:** Sam Michel, Director, BEYOND Studio

**Speakers:** Gillian Easson, Executive Director, Creative Dundee

Guy Gadney, CEO & Founder, Charismatic.ai

Jocelyn Burnham, Independent AI Communicator for Arts & Culture

**Summary:** The session brought together experts from the creative industries, technology sector, and cultural policy fields to discuss the impact of artificial intelligence on urban life. Speakers highlighted AI's potential to transform creative production, enhance participation, and expand cultural accessibility. Discussions focused on how AI can enrich the social and cultural fabric of cities and how cross-sectoral collaboration between public and private actors can foster inclusive and innovative solutions.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Welcome to the Age of Aging Cities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 🗺️ C6

**Tags:** Care, People, Services, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Murat Şentürk, Prof., Istanbul University

**Speakers:** Ayşe Ünlüce, Mayor, Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality

Pınar Okyay, Prof., Deputy Secretary General, İzmir Metropolitan Municipality

Shereen Hussein, Prof., The London School of Hygiene &

Tropical Medicine

**Summary:** The session focused on how cities can become more age-friendly in response to the growing needs of an aging population. Services, social policies, and spatial arrangements developed by municipalities and relevant institutions were discussed alongside perspectives on public health and care. Participants drew inspiration from national and international good practices to explore experiences that support inclusive and accessible urban environments.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# The Past is Digital: New Approaches Reshaping Cultural Heritage

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 D1

**Tags:** Space, Heritage, Culture, Technology, Data

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Beyond Studio, British Council

**Moderator:** Denise Waddingham, Country Director Türkiye, British Council

**Speakers:** Chiara Mignani, PhD, Social Impact Consultant and Researcher, King's College London

Georgia Haseldine, PhD, Senior Curator, V&A East Storehouse

Lucrezia Gigante, PhD, Research Associate, University of Glasgow

**Summary:** The session examined the opportunities and risks of digitalization for cultural heritage. Participants explored how cultural heritage can be reimagined in the digital age, considering both the potential benefits and risks such as loss, exclusion, and oversimplification. Discussions highlighted how creative approaches can help cities balance innovation with responsibility while preserving the significance of the past for the future.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# We Only Live Once: Improving Quality of Life in Cities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 D3

**Tags:** Policy, Community, Quality of Life, Governance, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** UN Habitat Quality of Life Initiative

**Moderator:** Agata Krause, PhD, Senior Adviser, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat

**Speakers:** Abdulrahman Ibrahim, Chief Data and Innovation Officer, Al-Madinah Region Development Authority

Hasan Taşçı, PhD, Deputy Mayor, Esenler Municipality

Tanja Obradovic, PhD, Head of Planning Inspection, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of Serbia

Zübeyir Nişancı, Assoc. Prof., Marmara University

**Summary:** The session focused on enhancing urban quality of life through local data, inclusive policies, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Participants discussed key challenges, emerging trends, and successful practices, highlighting the contribution of the UN-Habitat Quality of Life Initiative to a more resilient and equitable urban vision.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# City of Cars: Are We Moving Only Drivers?

2 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | V1

**Tags:** Space, Mobility, People, Climate, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** **Görsev Argın Uz**, PhD, Director of Training and Projects, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** **Lior Steinberg**, Urban Planner & Co-Founder, Humankind

**Paul Lecroart**, Senior Urbanist, Institut Paris Region (Paris Metropolitan Planning & Environmental Agency)

**Shreya Gadepalli**, Founder & Managing Trustee, Urban Works Institute

**Utku Cihan**, Mayor, Hopa Municipality

**Summary:** The session focused on transforming car-oriented cities into people-centered urban environments. Participants from various cities shared their local experiences implementing active mobility and human-centered solutions. Through these examples, the discussion explored ways to redesign streets, public spaces, and transport systems to better meet the needs of residents. The session highlighted how an alternative approach to mobility can influence not only transportation models but also social interaction, environmental sustainability, and overall urban quality of life.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Is There Life After Disaster?

2 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | C4

**Tags:** Space, Community, Disaster, Housing, Human

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** **Ezgi Orhan**, Assoc. Prof., Çankaya University

**Speakers:** **Abdurrahman Tutdere**, Mayor, Adiyaman Municipality

**Gonzalo Lizarralde**, PhD, Architect, Université de Montréal

**Ülge Uğurlu**, Team Leader, VNG International

**Summary:** This session examined the design of temporary post-disaster shelters through a human rights-based lens, focusing on creating healing spaces that uphold human dignity after trauma. Participants shared insights on recovery processes and practical experiences from diverse regions. Best practices in post-disaster reconstruction were discussed and strategies for future disaster preparedness were evaluated.

# Little Urbanites: Growing with the City

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-16.30 | 📍 D1

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**Tags:** Children, Care, Quality of Life, Policy, Services

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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

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**Partner:** Van Leer Foundation

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**Moderator:** Selva Gürdoğan, Founder, Superpool

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**Speakers:** Andrea Torres, Director, Program Support and Learning, Van Leer Foundation

**Hande Pasin**, Psychologist, Bebek95

**Larissa Menescal**, Urban Planner and Public Policy Specialist, Fortaleza City Hall - IPPLAN - Planning and Researching Institute / InREDE - Brazilian Network of Planning Institutes

**Mohammad Nemrawi**, Head of the Maintenance Department, Greater Irbid Municipality

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**Summary:** This session explored the critical role of early childhood in shaping the future of cities. Policies, services, and spatial arrangements implemented by municipalities, civil society, and other partner institutions were discussed. The session highlighted good practice examples developed to ensure that children grow up in safe, accessible, and supportive environments. Participants drew inspiration from experiences from different cities and countries, exchanging ideas on how to implement child-friendly strategies in their own contexts. Additionally, the session reflected on the long-term social and economic impacts of these policies and their role within inclusive urban planning.

# A Tale of Two Inland Seas: Marmara and Baltic

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 16.00-17.00 | 📺 D3

**Tags:** Nature, Climate, Water, Region, Resources

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** **Mustafa Sari**, Prof., Dean of the Maritime Faculty, Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University

**Speakers:** **Fatma Bayram Partal**, PhD, Senior Researcher, TÜBİTAK MAM

**Lasse Kurvinen**, Chair of HELCOM Working Group on Biodiversity, Protection and Restoration & Senior Specialist, Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland

**Sera Tolgay Marshall**, Researcher, University of Cambridge

**Summary:** In this session, the status and challenges of inland sea ecosystems were examined through the examples of the Marmara and Baltic Seas. Participants discussed the threats facing these ecosystems, biodiversity loss, and sources of pollution based on studies conducted in both seas. Throughout the session, insights and local practices from different inland sea ecosystems were presented from a comparative perspective. By sharing good practice examples, participants exchanged ideas on strategies that could be applied in the future for ecosystem management and restoration.

# Common Use Facilities: A Model for Inclusive Local Economic Development and Shared Futures

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C4

**Tags:** Local Development, Economy, Governance, Migration

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Moderator:** Pinar Yapanoğlu, Portfolio Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Speakers:** Ali Berker, Prof., Hacettepe University  
Beverly Hurley, Executive Chair, TKO: Supporting Entrepreneurs & Growth Businesses  
Hüseyin Özmen, R&D Director, Gürsu Municipality  
Meryem Yılmaz, Project Management Specialist, Üsküdar Municipality  
Nursema Çiftçi, Project Development Specialist, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Summary:** This session focused on the contribution of the Shared Facilities model, developed under the ENHANCER Project, to local inclusive economic development. Participants shared good practice examples demonstrating the tangible benefits of the model. Throughout the session, discussions highlighted the critical role of local governments in ensuring the sustainability and scalability of the model, as well as its adaptability across different regions.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Seeds and the City: Food Provision in Metropolises

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C6

**Tags:** Food, Economy, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** Zafer Yenil, Prof., Sabancı University & Istanbul Policy Center

**Speakers:** Dalya Hazar, Deputy Secretary General, Healthy Cities National Network of Türkiye

**Fikret Adaman**, Prof., Department of Economics, Boğaziçi University

**Merve Anil**, Research Associate, Royal College of Art

**Summary:** This session took stock of pressing food-related issues, including food inflation, healthy nutrition, and food security. Participants discussed the state of urban food systems and highlighted the vital role of urban agriculture. The session also featured concrete examples and good practices for strengthening local food supply chains.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION

# Architecture: Wall Building or Well-Being?

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | D1

**Tags:** Housing, Space, Quality of Life, Nature, Culture

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** Burcu Kütükçüoğlu, Assoc. Prof., Bilgi University

**Speakers:** Selçuk Avcı, Founder, Avcı Architects  
Stephan Klempf, Project and Team Leader, f64  
Ünal Karamuk, Co-founder, Karamuk Kuo

**Summary:** The pandemic transformed homes from simple shelters into multifunctional centers that accommodate work, education, and daily life. During this period, the importance of spatial quality as a key determinant of individual well-being became increasingly evident. The session emphasized that architecture's role extends beyond the construction of isolated units—it must now bridge the gap between urban and rural contexts through sustainable, nature-integrated designs that support physical, emotional, and social well-being. Participants discussed the concept of livability “beyond square meters” and explored how design can enhance both individual and collective development.

# From Consumption to Conservation: Rethinking Tourism in Heritage Sites

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | D3

**Tags:** Heritage, Culture, Space, Economy, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** İrem Kurtuluş Korkmaz, Senior Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** Dimitris Manoukas, Community Relations Specialist, Rural Radicals

Lucrezia Gigante, Research Associate in Museum Studies, University of Glasgow

Mehmet Yıldız, Deputy Secretary General, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

Tolga Volkan Aslan, Head of Cultural Affairs Department, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

Tülin Hadi, Chair, Istanbul Citizens' Assembly

**Summary:** This session addressed the delicate balance between tourism activities and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. Participants discussed tourism as a dual phenomenon that contributes to economic growth while exerting pressure on urban identity and heritage. The session explored approaches that maintain the balance between conservation and utilization in both rural and metropolitan contexts, within the framework of cultural tourism, heritage management, and sustainable tourism.

MINDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION, SIDE EVENT

# Natural Disaster-prone Historic Metropolitan Environment

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C5

**Tags:** Disaster, Climate, Space, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Heritopolis, MetroHUB, Habitat UNI, Istanbul Technical University (İTÜ)

**Moderator:** Lana Kudumovic, Assoc. Prof., Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University

**Speakers:** Antonella Contin, Prof., Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

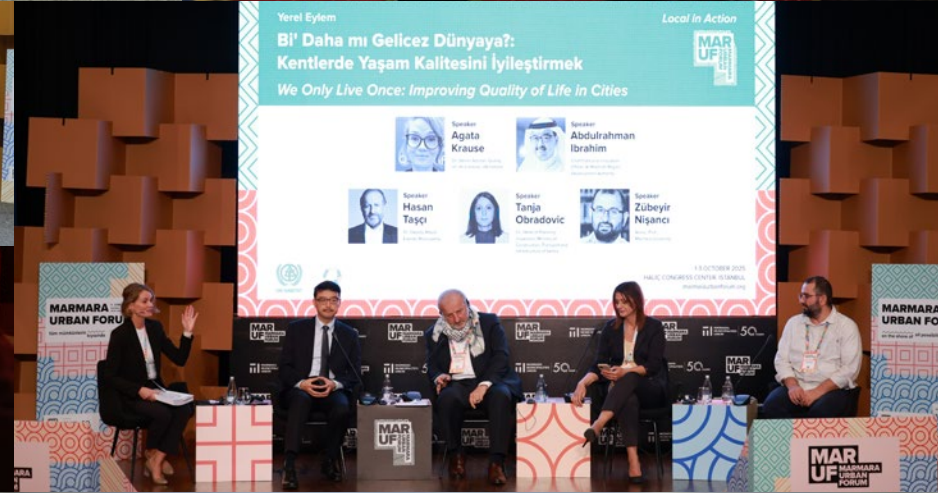
Mehmet Küçükmehtemoğlu, Prof., Faculty of Architecture, İstanbul Technical University

Muhammed Ziya Paköz, Assoc. Prof., Urban Planner, Istanbul Technical University

Ömer Dabanlı, Assoc. Prof., Vice Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University

Remy Sietchiping, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

**Summary:** This session focused on urban planning, heritage conservation, and post-disaster reconstruction approaches in historic urban areas prone to natural disasters, with a particular emphasis on Istanbul's Historical Peninsula. The session highlighted the role of the metropolis and emphasized the importance of community participation, cultural memory, and intangible heritage in recovery processes, presenting a human-centered approach to resilience and sustainable reconstruction. International case studies and expert analyses provided guidance for developing inclusive policies addressing complex, multidimensional urban recovery challenges related to earthquakes and climate.





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**CLOSING**

# Closing Session | In Pursuit of New Possibilities

3 October 2025 | 11.30-12.30 | D6

**Tags:** Networks, Community, Governance, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderators:** **Burcuhan Şener**, Director of International Affairs, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Ezgi Küçük Çalışkan**, PhD, Urban Planning & Urban Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Görsev Argın Uz**, PhD, Director of Training and Projects, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** **M. Cemil Arslan**, PhD, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union & General Coordinator, MARUF

**Mehmet Yıldız**, Deputy Secretary General, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Remy Sietchiping**, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat

**Kelmend Zajazi**, Executive Director, NALAS

**Onur Atay**, Co-founder, Urban.koop

**Andrea Torres**, Director Program Support and Learning, Van Leer Foundation

**Selva Gürdoğan**, Founding Partner, Superpool

**Hayrettin Günç**, Senior Program Manager, Global Designing Cities Initiative

**Ervin Sezgin**, PhD, Urban Planner

**İlhan Tekeli**, City and Regional Planning Professor & Social Scientist

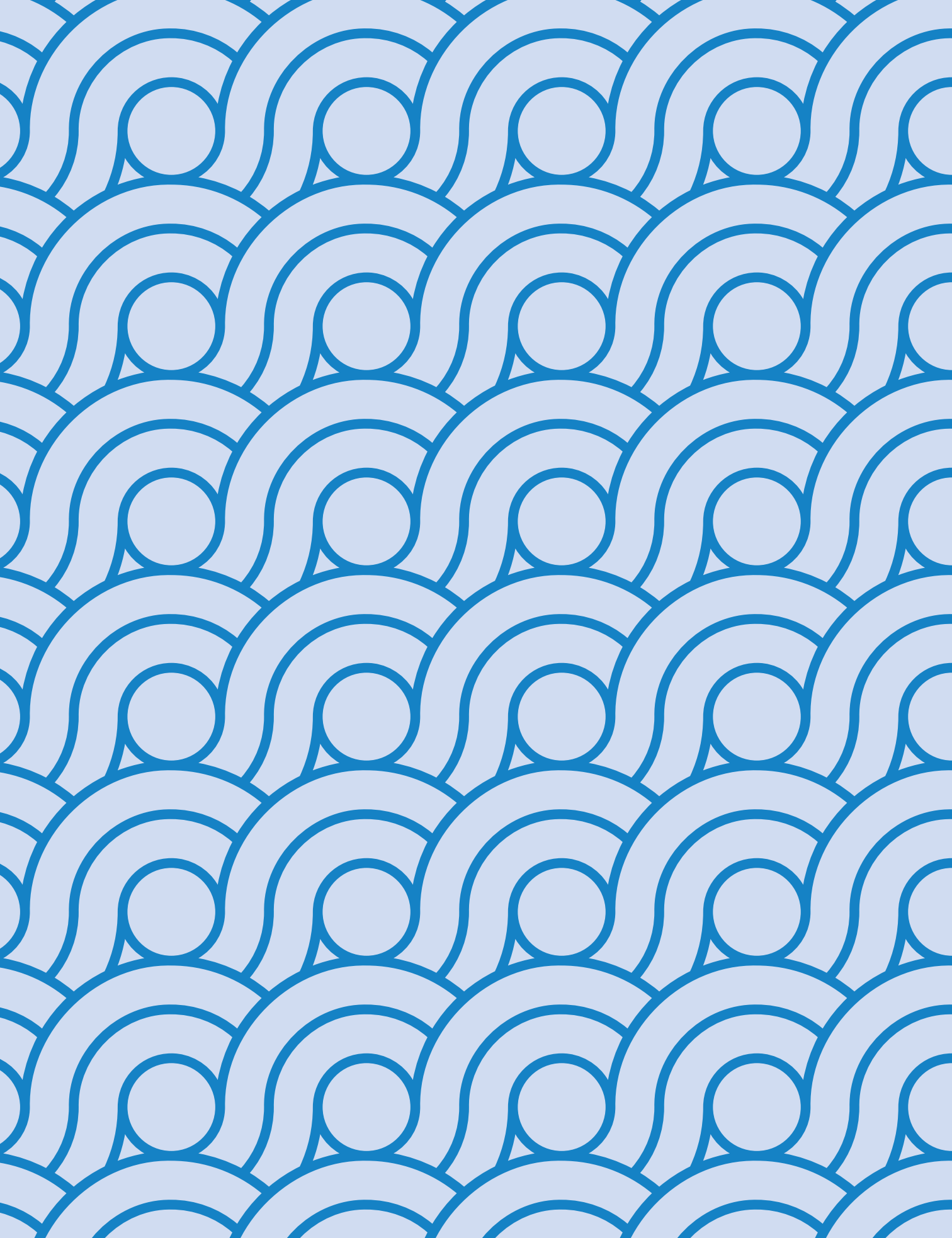
**Samet Keskin**, Data and Technology Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Ceren Ay**, Sign Language Instructor and Interpreter

**Summary:** On the final day of MARUF, we gathered one last time before dispersing from the Haliç Congress Center into the city. After three days of thinking, talking, imagining, and re-envisioning our cities together, we took a moment to look back at this collective creation “from the shore of all possibilities.” Together, we questioned whether we were able to truly delve deep at MARUF and whether we found answers to the questions we’ve been seeking. The closing session of MARUF25 invited us to reflect on the experiences we’ve shared while setting out to trace “new possibilities” for the future of our cities and societies. Here, we dreamed together about what we would take with us, the steps we would take in the future, and where our next encounters might be. This gathering was not a farewell, but rather the first step toward the next stages of a shared journey.









**HANDS ON**

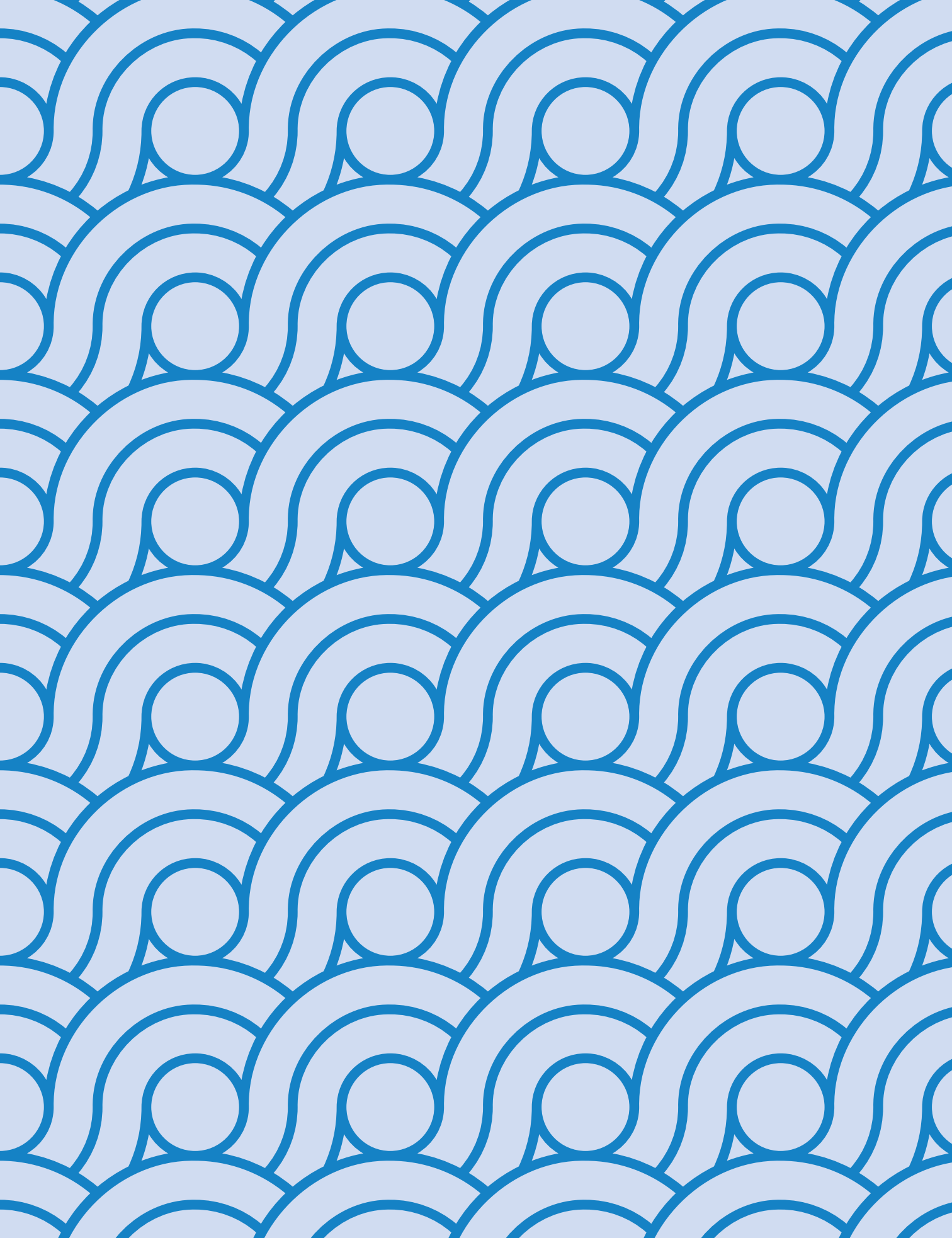
# HANDS ON

Constituting the second stage of the experience design, the “Hands On” mode was conceived as a tier of engagement that empowered participants to translate the knowledge gained through listening into production, dialogue, and debate. It represented a distinct deepening phase within the scale of participation at MARUF. In this mode, participants transitioned from the role of passive listeners to become active producers and intellectual partners shaping the forum's ecosystem of knowledge and experience. Information evolved from abstract thought into practice; conceptual awareness transformed into productive action. This mode ensured that the learning process, which began with mental exploration, did not remain solely on a conceptual plane; instead, it enabled participants to reshape knowledge by integrating it with the body, tools, and collective production processes.

Through the diverse formats offered in “Hands On,” participants experienced various forms of co-creation: they drew, wrote, debated, dismantled, and rebuilt together. Embodying the productive and interactive nature of the forum, this mode provided a robust foundation supporting collective creation, dialogue, and experimental modes of thinking.

In the holistic experience architecture of MARUF25, “Hands On” was not merely a production-oriented stopover; it served as a creative threshold where urban ideas materialized into concrete forms, where personal knowledge was woven with that of others, and where collective creation became visible. Through this mode, participants became not just spectators, but the subjects who directed, transformed, debated, and reconstructed the forum. Within the experiential integrity of MARUF25, “Hands On” assumed a central role as a productive space where urban thoughts made tactile contact, interacted with the body, and transmuted into collective memory.

This productive structure did more than just embody the forum's interactive nature; it provided a fertile ground nurturing strategic thinking, the development of common sense, and experimental forms of production. The events within the “Hands On” mode were structured around diverse methodological approaches designed to amplify interaction, production, and shared learning. In this context, events such as Discovery Meeting, Circle of Possibilities, Networking, Urban Atelier, and Play Marmara were organized, creating a forum space that simultaneously activated the participant's hands, intellect, intuition, and courage to experiment.





# NETWORKING

Bringing experts and interested parties from diverse fields to the same table, Networking events offered opportunities for connection, collaboration, and shared learning. While reinforcing MARUF's dialogue-oriented structure, these events constituted the most visible form of interdisciplinary exchange. Planned both sectorally and thematically this year, the sessions united stakeholders working in similar fields. In addition to sectoral networking sessions—which covered funds and project calls available to local governments, international urban networks open for membership, and global urban events for practitioners—thematic networking sessions were held across a wide range of topics. These included disaster management, resilience, culture and creative industries, smart cities, innovation, climate, transportation, and energy poverty.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Local Governments Meet International City Networks

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | D6

**Tags:** Networks, Local Diplomacy, Governance, Policy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Burcuhan Şener**, Director of International Affairs, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** **Antonella Valmorbida**, Secretary General, ALDA

**Blandine Pidoux**, Senior Project Manager, Energy Cities

**Carlotta Inserra**, Membership & Communications Manager, POLIS

**Duygu Kayaalp An**, Project Coordinator, EIT Urban Mobility

**Edanur Dursun**, Project Assistant, Foodback

**Jacqueline Leduc Estrada**, Program Officer, Global Alliance for Care

**Lokman Atasoy**, Technical Coordinator, Cittaslow Turkiye & Advisor to the Mayor, Antalya Metropolitan Municipality

**Marc Martorell Escofet**, Policy Officer, Time Use Initiative

**Marine Francois**, Membership Expert, ICLEI Europe

**Summary:** This networking event sought to introduce international city networks to municipalities, streamline participation processes, and foster mutually beneficial collaborations. The event featured presentations from international city networks, followed by one-on-one meetings where participants could connect with representatives and build strategic relationships on a global scale.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Coding Tomorrow's Cities: Robotics and VR for Children

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📺 V2

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Child, Technology, Nature, Data  
~~~~~

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
~~~~~

**Partner:** Habitat Association  
~~~~~

**Moderators:** **Büşra Arslan**, Project Assistant, Social Resilience Program, Habitat Association

**Fatih Mehmet Güneş**, Project Assistant, Habitat Association

**Sema Kayhan**, Project Assistant, Social Resilience Program, Habitat Association  
~~~~~

**Summary:** In this workshop designed for children aged 11–14, participants explored the technologies that shape the cities of the future. They developed algorithmic thinking and teamwork skills using Sphero Bolt robots, while also experiencing the transformations of nature from past to present through VR headsets. Combining fun and learning, this workshop brought together children's dreams of tomorrow's cities with the power of technology.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Next Station: Sustainable Transportation

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | V3

**Tags:** Mobility, Climate, Local Development, Policy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** Ela Babalık, Prof., Department of City and Regional Planning, Middle East Technical University

**Speakers:** Aişe İçli, Urban and Transportation Planner, Konya Metropolitan Municipality

Alara Ürey, EEN Project Specialist, EIT Urban Mobility Ris Hub Türkiye

Cüneyt Çetintaş, Transportation Planning Manager, Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality

Dilara Öztaşkın, Urban Planner MSc, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

Egehan İmamoğlu, Head of Electronics, Munulus Technologies

Serhat Altunoğlu, Chief Operation Officer, Invamar Corp.

Tuğçe Işık, Marketing Director, Parabol

**Summary:** This networking event brought together experts from shared disciplines to exchange experiences regarding the implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) in Türkiye.

# Projects Meet Funds

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 V3

**Tags:** Economy, Networks, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** **Özge Sivrikaya**, Sustainability and Climate Change Center Director & Senior Project Expert, MMU

**Speakers:** **Alara Ürey**, EEN Project Specialist, EIT Urban Mobility Ris Hub Türkiye

**Ayşe Deniz Arıcan**, EU Affairs Expert, Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs Directorate for EU Affairs

**Çağrı Yıldırım**, Head of EU Framework Programs Department, TÜBİTAK

**Elif Ergin**, Specialist, Culture and Creativity Unit, Istanbul Development Agency

**İlknur Şahin**, Project Manager, Foodback (EIT Food RIS Hub Türkiye)

**Leyla Barlas Aslan**, Senior Policy Officer MATRA Program, Consulate General of the Netherlands in Istanbul

**Merve Demirtaş**, Senior Researcher, TÜBİTAK ULAKBİM

**Selen Akçalı**, PhD, Project Coordinator, Cultural Policy Studies, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSÜ)

**Sinem Bölükbaşı**, EU Affairs Expert, Directorate for EU Affairs, Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Tansu Toprak**, Program Expert, Center for Spatial Justice

**Summary:** This networking event connected project developers with grant-making organizations to tackle a common challenge: securing funding. Attendees learned about various grant programs and their application processes, and used one-on-one meetings to identify suitable opportunities and build relationships with key stakeholders. The event successfully created new pathways for project financing and collaboration.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Resilience and Beyond: Gathering for Disaster Management

1 October 2025 | 15.30 -17.00 | V2

**Tags:** Disaster, Governance, Local Diplomacy, Networks

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Disaster and Emergency Management

Authority of the Republic of Türkiye (AFAD)

**Moderator:** Gökhan Yılmaz, Head of Marmara Disaster Risk Reduction Department, AFAD

**Summary:** This networking event brought together representatives from AFAD, local governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector—all active in disaster management and resilience—to exchange experiences. Participants also explored new collaborations for building more resilient cities.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Launch of Climate-Neutral Cities Network

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | V3

**Tags:** Climate, Networks, Local Diplomacy, Policy, Roles

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Moderator:** Hazan Sertkaya, Jr. Expert of Training and Projects, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** Ali Cem Deniz, Project Manager, UNDP  
Deniz Çelik Bulgurlu, Climate-Neutral Cities Advisor, Climate KIC

Görsev Argın Uz, PhD, Director of Training and Projects, Marmara Municipalities Union

Laura Hetel, Policy Officer, Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission, European Commission

**Neslihan Ağartan,** Climate Change Expert, Directorate of Climate Change

**Summary:** This event marked the launch of the Climate Neutral Cities Network (İNŞA) led by the Marmara Municipalities Union under NetZeroCities' City Expert Support Mechanism in Türkiye. It brought together representatives from the network's Accelerator and Follower Cities, along with officials from relevant ministries and international organizations, to introduce the network and foster a climate-focused dialogue.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# MARUF x CIVICSHIP FORUM | Peer Learning & Twinning Programs for Local Governments

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C3

**Tags:** Governance, Local Diplomacy, Community, Networks

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Urban.koop, Stiftung Mercator

**Moderator:** Nihal Eminoğlu, Assist. Prof., Department of Politics and Economics, Ankara University

**Speakers:** Burcuhan Şener, Director of International Affairs, Marmara Municipalities Union

Durmish Guri, Director of Projects & Programs, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)

Esin Köymen, Mayor, Maltepe Municipality

Jannes Tessmann, Head of Istanbul Office, Stiftung Mercator

Nilüfer Çınarlı Mutlu, Mayor, Konak Municipality

**Summary:** This networking event addressed the growing role of intercity cooperation in today's urban governance and diplomacy. With the participation of mayors and representatives of the organizations that provide peer learning tools, the panel explored the potential of cities to share knowledge, pool resources, and develop joint solutions to global challenges through their experiences. The twin cities approach was presented with examples demonstrating how it offers concrete models of collaboration in the fields of cultural exchange, sustainability, social inclusion, and resilience, emphasizing how such partnerships can serve as innovative and scalable models for local governments.

# International Urban Events in Dialogue

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** Networks, Roles, Community, Local Diplomacy, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderator:** Ezgi Küçük Çalışkan, PhD, Urban Planning & Urban Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** Carlotta Inserra, Membership & Communications Manager, POLIS

Gerald Babel-Sutter, CEO & Founder, Urban Future (UFGC)

Marine Francois, Expert, ICLEI

Norliza Hashim, Chief Executive Officer, Urbanice Malaysia

Olga Krajewska, Expert for Climate Neutral Cities, NetZeroCities Program

Tanja Obradovic, Founder of the ICUP Conference & Member of the Organizing Committee, National Urban Forum Serbia

Tara Solesbury, Director, BEYOND Studio

Zeynep Enlil, Prof., Department of City and Regional Planning, Yıldız Technical University

**Summary:** This networking event brought together the organizations behind major urban events—those that develop joint solutions for cities, promote knowledge sharing, and foster cross-sectoral collaboration. Participants could access detailed information about various events and meet their representatives directly. The event sought to enhance the collective impact of these urban forums, empower them to generate more effective local and global solutions, and create a shared platform that unites initiatives working toward a common purpose.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

## Street Reclaimers Meetup

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 Shore-1

**Tags:** Mobility, Networks, Space, People, Climate

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Moderators:** **Dila Toprak**, Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Hatice Kübra Baştuğ**, Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** Who do the streets belong to? In response to this question, those who reject car dominance and take action to reclaim the streets came together. This event brought Reclaiming Streets alumni together with street transformers from Türkiye and around the world, calling on all who care about change to ask bold questions and find new solutions: How can we scale these transformations, and how can we make them permanent?

HANDS ON NETWORKING

## Smart Cities and Innovation: University–Local Government Gathering

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 V3

**Tags:** Technology, AI, Data, Governance

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** NeurotechEU

**Moderators:** **Begüm Özkaynak**, Prof., Department of Economics, Boğaziçi University

**Can Yücesoy**, Institute of Biomedical Engineering, Prof., Boğaziçi University

**Speakers:** **Birce Demiryontar**, PhD, Scientific Coordinator, Koç University

**Çağatay Edemen**, Communication and Information Theory, Assist. Prof., Özyeğin University

**Eda Yücesoy**, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

**Mehmet Erdem Samut**, General Manager, ISBAK INC.  
**Ozan Erözden**, Prof., Law Faculty, Kadir Has University  
**Sinan Öztimur**, General Manager (Acting), Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) İSTTELKOM INC.

**Summary:** This gathering brought together universities and local governments to strengthen knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and innovation in the field of smart cities. Participants had the opportunity to discuss innovative solutions to today's urban challenges, connect academic expertise with practical applications, and explore new avenues for joint projects. The event aimed to build a shared vision for making future cities more sustainable, inclusive, and smart.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Dialogue for Energy Poverty

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | V3

**Tags:** Community, Energy, Quality of Life, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Center for Spatial Justice

**Moderators:** Hülya Çeşmeci Cengiz, Program Expert,  
Center for Spatial Justice

Yağız Eren Abanus, Program Expert, Center for Spatial  
Justice

**Summary:** Energy poverty is a pressing urban challenge that profoundly affects diverse social groups. This session brought together urban practitioners and stakeholders from various fields and levels of governance to explore solutions through dialogue. More than just addressing the problem, the event aimed to promote knowledge-sharing and establish ongoing forums for constructive exchange on combating energy poverty.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Between Two Lagoons

2 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | V2

**Tags:** Nature, Networks, Water, Climate, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Gebze Technical University

**Moderator:** Nüket İpek Çetin, PhD, Lecturer,  
Department of City and Regional Planning, Gebze  
Technical University

**Summary:** This networking session focused on the critical water basin between Küçükçekmece and Terkos Lakes. Participants explored potential future scenarios for water resource protection, addressing urban pressures and ecological resilience. The discussion allowed them to exchange ideas based on the region's ecological and urban dynamics.

# Perspectives on Planning: Strategic, Participatory, and Innovative Horizons in Bursa

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 V3

**Tags:** Region, Participation, Space, Policy, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Bursa Planning Agency

**Moderator:** Nur İşcan Pekçalışır, Urban Planner, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Speakers:** Fatih Terzi, Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Technical University

Nazlı Yazgan, Head of Bursa Planning Agency & Deputy Secretary General, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Summary:** In this networking session, the Bursa Planning Agency presented the participatory journey of the 2050 Bursa Environmental Plan, which brought together diverse stakeholder voices. The session highlighted the plan's strategic horizons, innovative ideas, and its approach that harmonizes the city's spirit. By adopting a perspective that views Bursa not merely through lines but through the fabric of life and envisions the future collectively, the session provided a collaborative space for potential partnerships.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# At the Heart of Creativity: City and Culture Network Gathering

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📺 V2

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Economy, Networks, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Culture Unleashed

**Moderators:** Burcu Yılmaz Deniz, Associate, Culture Unleashed

**Emre Erbirer**, Co-founder, Culture Unleashed

**Gökçe Okandan**, Associate, Culture Unleashed

**Mustafa Gül**, Co-founder, Culture Unleashed

**Speaker:** Samet Keskin, Data and Technology Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** At the Heart of Creativity: City and Culture Network Gathering was an invitation to meet at the very center of creativity on the shore of all possibilities — to get to know each other more closely and from different perspectives, and to discover new possibilities. It was a space where those standing on the edge and those coming from the center met in the same room, where different experiences intersected, and similar ideas crossed paths. In this unique setting, participants explored how boundary-pushing ideas about cities, culture, and creativity can collide to enable co-creation and spark entirely new collaborations.

Facilitated by Culture Unleashed, the event followed a structured format designed to help participants meet, network, explore collaboration opportunities, and build connections between cities, culture, and creativity. Through Introduction, Dialogue, and Collaboration sessions, participants first got to know each other from different perspectives, then engaged in meaningful conversations, and finally discovered areas to continue and expand these dialogues after the event.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Sharing Innovative Ways of Construction

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📺 V3

**Tags:** Space, Resources, Nature, Quality of Life

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Building Biology and Ecology Institute

**Moderator:** Nurgül Yardım Meriçliler, PhD, Researcher & Architectural Designer, Oxford Brookes University

**Speakers:** Adil Orçun Kaya, Quality and R&D Manager, İSTON

**Ahmet Cemil Tepe,** Landscape Architect, Chamber of Landscape Architects of Türkiye

**And Akman,** Building biologist, Sustainable Building Consultant, Co-founder of Building Biology and Ecology Institute

**Burcu Arıkan,** Co-founder, Myconom

**Farnaz Fattahi,** Education Lead, ARC Centre for Next-Gen Architectural Manufacturing

**Nilüfer Kart Aktaş,** Assoc. Prof., Department of Landscape Architecture, Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, Faculty of Forestry

**Nilüfer Kozikoğlu,** Architect, Urban Atölye & Tuşpa

**Servet Maydar,** Co-founder, Kerpeech

**Tolga Kalcıoğlu,** Architect, Co-founder, Studio Blai

**Tuba Şehitoğlu,** Architect, Yuva Project

**Ziya Tuncay Doruk,** Co-founder, Strade Sustainable Solutions and Consulting

**Summary:** This networking event brought together construction and design professionals to explore innovative methods and materials for the sector. They shared specific project case studies and material solutions for building sustainable and resilient cities, using the space to seed future collaborations and spark new ideas.

HANDS ON NETWORKING

# Knowledge and History: How Water Shaped Our Cities?

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | V3

**Tags:** Space, Water, Technology, Art, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Uban.koop

**Speakers:** Onur Atay, Co-founder, Urban.koop  
Suk-Jun Kim, Composer, Sound Artist, Author, Prof.,  
University of Aberdeen

**Summary:** Water is a prominent topic in urbanism, serving not only as a vital resource but also as a powerful force that shapes both nature and the built environment. During the session, project representatives presented and evaluated a number of recent initiatives exploring water's evolving role in the cityscape. The selected projects covered a broad spectrum in terms of context and content, thereby highlighting the connections between development, urbanism, technology, art, and culture.





# URBAN ATELIERS

By bringing together experience design, spatial arrangements, the interplay between open and enclosed spaces, and interaction zones transformed by the touch of participants, MARUF25 treated the city not merely as a subject of debate, but as a collective realm that thinks, produces, and transforms together. One of the most vivid reflections of this approach was the Urban Ateliers held under the “Hands On” mode, representing the forum’s production and application axis.

The Urban Ateliers program was shaped by a harmonious blend of workshops crafted through the collaborative efforts of the MARUF team and numerous national and international partners, alongside proposals received through an open call process. This participatory and pluralistic production process resulted in a rich series of content. The spatial dimension of the MARUF25 Urban Ateliers was also tailored to the specific content, requirements, and configuration of each session. Running simultaneously in indoor, semi-open, and outdoor spaces, these workshops allowed participants to experience interaction with the venue at varying levels. The changing character of the space strengthened the production and experience processes, deepening both mental and sensory engagement.

Over the course of three days, atelier participants navigated a thematic spectrum ranging from reading Istanbul’s past and future through cinema and literature to observing and redesigning good public spaces; from configuring natural playgrounds with child-focused solutions to addressing social justice, accessibility, climate, and intersectionality through interdisciplinary approaches. Each atelier offered an opportunity to touch the city through different perspectives and methods, translating thought into concrete production and making collective intelligence visible.

Tools such as design, drawing, play, modeling, and collective problem-solving enabled ideas to evolve into concrete outputs while building bridges between participants and creating space for a pluralistic experience. Ultimately, with its diversity covering numerous fields of expertise and urban themes, the MARUF25 Urban Ateliers became a space to rethink, debate, and produce the city. As a dynamic center where knowledge, experience, and collaboration intersected, this productive and inspiring component of the forum invited participants into the city not just as observers, but as co-creators—crafting an experiential space resonating with the rhythm of the city.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Urban Encounters: Youth Meet-Up

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** People, Quality of Life, Community, Migration

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** International Centre for Migration Development (ICMPD)

**Moderator:** Nurşah Özdemir, General Coordinator & Child Development Specialist, Learning Designs

**Speaker:** Meltem Hamit, Portfolio Manager  
International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Summary:** Istanbul, with its cultural diversity, dynamism, and abundance of opportunities, has long been home to millions of students. As part of MARUF25, this workshop set out to explore a central question: To what extent can Istanbul truly be considered a student city? Gathering the grantees of the EU Scholarship Project, the session created a space for participants to reflect on the meaning of being a student in Istanbul. Through dialogues shaped by lived experiences, they discussed the challenges of student life, current practices, and the everyday realities of navigating the city. Participants examined the balance between Istanbul's vast opportunities and the barriers that still persist, from housing and accessibility to cultural life and social inclusion. The discussion highlighted that while Istanbul holds immense potential as a student city, realizing this potential requires more inclusive policies, affordable living conditions, and stronger youth participation in urban decision-making. The workshop provided an open, participatory setting where students shared insights, exchanged experiences, and collectively reimagined what a more student-friendly Istanbul could look like.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# "Meme-tivism" for Urban Justice

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Data, Culture, Art, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Feminist Design

**Facilitators:** Efe Kağan Yurt, Facilitator, Feminist Design

Mustafa Gökberk Tektok, Creative Strategist & Researcher, Feminist Design

Sıla Kartal Al, Facilitator & Architect, Feminist Design

Sinem Görücü, Facilitator - Founder, Researcher & Designer, Feminist Design & King's College London

**Summary:** Memes, often characterized by their humorous and viral nature, had become a ubiquitous form of online expression, shaping the way people engaged with and interpreted contemporary issues. Their potential as a tool for political expression and advocacy had been increasingly recognized, transforming humor into a medium for raising awareness, critiquing power, and imagining alternatives. At MARUF, Meme-tivism turned its focus to urban justice, inviting participants into a reflective and co-creative process grounded in their own experiences and in the discussions held throughout the program. Participants produced playful yet incisive memes that acted as tools for dialogue, critical reflection, and collective imagining. By bringing together individual creativity and shared analysis, the session opened up new ways of rethinking justice and equality within the urban realm.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Urban Sketching 101

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 C9

**Tags:** Space, Art, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Urban Sketchers Istanbul

**Facilitators:** Aysun Altındağ, Illustrator & Childrens

Book Author, İstanbul Bilgi University

Burcu Aslan Okat, PhD, Research Assistant, Kocaeli University

**Summary:** As part of MARUF25, Urbansketchers Istanbul, a collective devoted to documenting the city's memory through on-site drawings, invited participants to explore the power of drawing as a way of seeing, sensing, and narrating the city. The workshop opened with a brief presentation in which members of the team shared the philosophy, history, and approach behind urban sketching as a form of visual storytelling rooted in direct observation. Afterwards, participants joined a hands-on sketching session at the Haliç Congress Center, interpreting the venue's architecture, atmosphere, and details through their own artistic lens. Open to all levels, the session encouraged participants to connect with the city through drawing; observing, capturing, and expressing their impressions with the materials they brought along. By the end of the workshop, individual sketches came together to form a collective visual memory of both MARUF25's setting and the experience of seeing the city through many eyes.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Creative Reading Workshop with Çiğdem Odabaşı: On Yaşar Kemal's Novel "The Sea-Crossed Fisherman"

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C7

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Care, Nature

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Facilitator:** Çiğdem Odabaşı, Author and Creative Reading and Drama Educator, Çiğdem Odabaşı Education & Consultancy & Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts & Publishing

**Summary:** In the creative reading workshop organized in collaboration with Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing, the main supporter of the Urban Library, participants explored texts through creative reading methods. Does the sea really get offended? The workshop approached Yaşar Kemal's *The Sea-Crossed Fisherman* (Deniz Küstü) not merely as a literary work but as a mirror reflecting our relationship with the sea. Participants engaged with the text from new perspectives, opening up discussions on the connection between cities and nature. The creative reading process bridged literature with other fields - including ecology, sociology, philosophy, and art - to explore fundamental themes such as the right to life, justice, care, and the future of our cities.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# How Can Tech & AI Shape Cities?

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Democracy, Governance, AI, Technology, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Friedrich Naumann Foundation,  
Human Rights Academy, Things We Need to Talk About  
(Konuşmamız Gereken Şeyler)

**Facilitators:** Elif Menderes, Founder, Human Rights  
Academy

Gülçin Sınay, Founder, Things We Need to Talk About

**Speaker:** Samet Keskin, Data and Technology Center  
Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** This gathering explored the impact of technological transformation on cities from multiple angles. Participants examined how tools like artificial intelligence and open data are re-shaping urban life, influencing everything from decision-making and disaster preparedness to privacy and participatory governance. Inspired by the My City Talks model, the event used one-on-one dialogues between people with differing viewpoints to facilitate in-depth conversations about digital transformation. The goal was to bridge divides around technology's role, foster a stronger sense of shared urban life, and advance digital democracy.

# Street Fighters: A Game of Street Transformation via Negotiation

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C9

**Tags:** Mobility, Care, Space, Roles, Children

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Superpool

**Facilitators:** Beyza Gürdoğan, Architect & Urban Designer, Superpool

Görsev Argın Uz, PhD, Director of Training and Projects, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** Reclaiming Streets is a process about people, beyond plans and policies. In this interactive workshop, participants assumed different roles—such as municipal officer, shopkeeper, caregiver, or child—and engaged in a game shaped by unforeseen events. Through the Reclaiming Streets Program, implemented by the Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU) in collaboration with Türkiye- and Denmark-based Superpool and Global Designing Cities Initiative (GDCI), approximately 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of street space had been transformed up to that point. The workshop built upon these experiences, enabling participants to navigate gamified scenarios, confront the practical and social challenges of street transformation, appreciate the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, and formulate creative solutions. By inhabiting different roles and responding to unexpected developments, participants experienced firsthand the complex interplay of social, spatial, and governance dimensions inherent to urban street transformation.

# Let's Talk Accessibility

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Space, People, Services, Quality of Life, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Human Rights Academy, Things We Need to Talk About (Konuşmamız Gereken Şeyler)

**Moderators:** Çiğdem Üstün, Prof., Secretary-General, Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies & Istanbul Nişantaşı University

**Halenur Dönmez,** Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Speakers:** Elif Menderes, Founder, Human Rights Academy

**Gamze Sofuoğlu,** Head of Marketing & User Experience, WeWALK

**Serim Berke Yarar,** Co-Founder & Mechanical Engineer, Accessible Everything

**Summary:** This workshop brought together individuals with diverse accessibility needs and local government representatives to create a multi-voiced dialogue space where all participants could exercise an equal voice. The session provided a platform for people with disabilities and experts in the field to share their lived experiences, examine the invisible barriers of daily life, and collaboratively develop solutions. Participants engaged in a collective learning process that foregrounded intersecting perspectives, the exchange of personal stories, and collaborative problem-solving.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Play in the City | Introduction to Playmaking

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | C9

**Tags:** Quality of Life, Care, Children

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitators:** Ece Sözer, Playworker & Playground Inspector, Superpool

Ege Sevinçli Çubukcu, Sociologist, Nordic Playground Institute Türkiye

**Summary:** Close your eyes for a moment and recall a memory of play from your childhood. Where are you playing? What are you playing? And who is with you? Beginning with questions that invited participants to revisit their own childhood play memories, the workshop focused on the importance of child-led play with open-ended materials and inspired new ideas on how play without adult intervention could be fostered. Participants reflected on their personal experiences and discussed whether today's children are offered the same freedom to play that they once enjoyed. Addressing the impact of urban life on children's right to play, the session led to the development of new approaches to ensure creative and accessible play spaces for all children in cities.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER, URBAN CINEMA

# Istanbul on Film: Imagining the City, Envisioning Its Future

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | C7

**Tags:** Culture, Heritage, Art, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association

**Facilitator:** Ayça Çiftçi, PhD, Department of Film, Istanbul Bilgi University

**Summary:** The workshop invited participants to see Istanbul anew and to imagine it collectively, presenting cinema as a tool for reflecting on the city, examining relationships with it, and generating alternative scenarios for the future. It examined cinematic portrayals of Istanbul from past to present and discussed the significance of revisiting this visual archive today. Through structured games and creative questions, participants produced their own images of Istanbul's future.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Animal Cruelty: Rethinking Intersectionality Together

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** Care, Roles, Community

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Four-Legged City

**Facilitator:** Selinay Duman, Communications Coordinator, Four-Legged City: Association for Urban, Nature, and Animal Studies

**Summary:** This workshop invited participants to collectively examine different forms of violence through an intersectional perspective. The discussions focused on the structural parallels between violence against women and animals, the concept of vulnerability, and the possibilities of solidarity. Drawing on academic findings and case studies, participants shared their reflections and collaboratively created conceptual maps that illuminated how power and domination manifest in everyday life.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# En-ROADS Climate Action Workshop – A Collaborative Climate Scenario Experience for the 1.5°C Goal

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Climate, Disaster, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Facilitator:** Pinar Öncel, Co-founder, ClaimCarbon

**Summary:** In this workshop, participants co-created an interactive climate scenario using the En-ROADS Climate Model developed by MIT Sloan and Climate Interactive. They had the opportunity to observe in real time the global impacts of proposed climate actions. The session explored potential pathways toward achieving the 1.5°C goal set under the Paris Climate Agreement. Following the scenario exercise, the discussion focused on the implications of the resulting global trends for local governments, sharing insights into strategic climate actions that can generate meaningful impact at the local level.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Cities that Shed Light on Children's Imaginaires

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C9

**Tags:** Care, Community, Culture, Children

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Facilitators:** **Hande Pasin**, Psychologist, BEBEK95  
**Nihal Yeniad**, Assist. Prof., Department of Educational Sciences, Bogazici University

**Summary:** The workshop addressed the question: “What would be needed to open portals to children’s imagination amidst the chaos of the city and the rush of daily life?” The Bebek95 team, based at Boğaziçi University, drew on its training and research in interactive reading to explore this question through picture books. Also known as silent books, these wordless works served as cost-effective and impactful tools to understand children’s curiosity and interests, to connect and engage with them, and to support their creativity, empathy, and emotional literacy. The session emphasized the importance of collective reasoning and collaboration to ensure that as many children and families as possible could experience the relational power of these books and gain access to this resource. Professionals working with children and families within local governments were especially encouraged to participate.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# The Bench on the Shore: Sparking Social Interaction through Micro-Interventions

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 11.30-13.00 | 📍 C3

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**Tags:** Participation, Space, Community  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
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**Facilitator:** Pelin Günay, Doctoral Researcher, Özyeğin University  
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**Summary:** How can a bench in a public space transform into a hub for social interaction that brings strangers together? This question guided the workshop, where the Design Cards for Social Interaction, an original tool developed from the facilitator's doctoral research, was placed at the center of a collective creation process with professional designers. Participants worked in small groups to analyze existing urban furniture in public spaces that reflected Istanbul's "being on the shore" experience and developed creative micro-intervention concepts to strengthen the social fabric. The workshop aimed to enhance the social infrastructure of sustainable cities by producing tangible design solutions that fostered a culture of "co-living," transforming the act of sharing an object into the shared experience of connection and interaction.

HANDS ON SIDE EVENT, URBAN ATELIER

# Personas on the Shore of Transformation

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | Shore-1

**Tags:** Nature, Roles, Space, Community, Water

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Workshop Participants:** **Ayşe Naz Almeman**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Rabia Ceren Ulanmış**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 4th Year

**Fatma Berfin Arabulan**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Samet Bayram**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Melek Dilman**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Kader İrem Kavak**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Sanem Özçelik**, ITU, Architecture Student, 3rd Year

**Çağla Pırrıt**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Mert Sarı**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 4th Year

**Mehmet Anıl Yıldırım**, ITU, Urban and Regional Planning Student, 3rd Year

**Summary:** In this workshop, participants addressed urban issues through the lens of different personas, using unconventional methods to generate creative outputs. Discussions focused on each persona's interaction with the Sea of Marmara. This process brought the "Personas on the Shore of Transformation" to life and raised awareness about the unexpected implications of urban decisions.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Nature-Based Solutions for Climate-Resilient Policies

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | C7

**Tags:** Nature, Climate, Disaster, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** WRI Türkiye

**Facilitators:** Ece Ömür, Urban Resilience Manager, WRI Türkiye

Cemil Oğuz, Urban Mobility Manager, WRI Türkiye

Tuğçe Üzümoğlu, Integrated Climate Action Manager, WRI Türkiye

**Summary:** This year, the annual Livable Cities Symposium organized by WRI Türkiye featured a special workshop under the umbrella of the Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF). Titled “Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Resilience,” the workshop explored the integration of NbS into urban policies, addressing the diverse resilience needs of cities, as well as barriers, opportunities, and practical solutions. The workshop was organized within the framework of the EU-supported NBS-CORES Project, in partnership with GIPA, Ecolution Georgia, WRI Türkiye, and FRI. The project focused on Georgia’s Adjara Region and seven provinces in Türkiye’s Marmara Region.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Istanbul, How Do You Move?

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | C8

**Tags:** Mobility, Human, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Facilitator:** Viviana Fernandez Prajoux, PhD, Researcher, University of Chile

**Summary:** This workshop invited participants to share their personal experiences and perspectives on moving through Istanbul. While focused on Istanbul, the session welcomed non-residents, recognizing that everyone navigates their own urban environment. This exchange of diverse mobility stories enriched the discussion for all. The workshop aimed to identify ways to make urban mobility more accessible, inclusive, and practical for everyone. Participants reflected on this goal through the lens of their own social status, occupation, and daily routines.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Co-creating Sustainable Urban Environments: An AR / VR Experience

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | C9

**Tags:** Technology, Climate, Space, Data, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Oxford Brookes University

**Facilitators:** Avar Almukhtar, Assoc. Prof., Oxford Brookes University

Nurgül Yardım Meriçliler, PhD, Researcher & Architectural Designer, Oxford Brookes University

**Summary:** The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to experience potential future scenarios for liveable and climate-resilient neighbourhoods through immersive technologies. Participants took part in a participatory co-design process involving diverse stakeholders, enabling them to contribute ideas, collaboratively develop solutions, and explore alternative perspectives on the future. This experience was carried out as part of the Oxford Urban Living Lab within the ENACT15mC (Envisioning Neighbourhoods and Co-creating Thriving Communities in the 15-Minute City) project.

HANDS ON SIDE EVENT, URBAN ATELIER

# Taste the Sound! – Experience of Sound, Taste, and the City

2 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C3

**Tags:** Space, Food, Culture

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Facilitator:** Seda Kulak Dalkılıç, Research Assistant, Istanbul University

**Summary:** This workshop aimed to explore the interaction between taste and hearing through an experiential approach. Participants observed how their sensory perceptions changed as they experienced the same flavors in different soundscapes. By opening a discussion on the auditory dimension of dining experiences in public spaces, the workshop sought to generate creative ideas for making cities more inclusive and livable.

HANDS ON SIDE EVENT, URBAN ATELIER

# Social Policy Simulation: Limited Means, Unlimited Demands

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C3

**Tags:** Participation, Resources, Policy, Services

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Facilitators:** İrem Durdu, Project Manager & Dietitian, Department of Social Services, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

Burcu Keleş, Project Manager, Department of Social Services, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Summary:** This session featured a tabletop simulation in which participants assumed the role of a Social Services Budget Commission. The social impacts of decisions made under limited resources were explored through scenarios derived from real-life cases, discussing which services should be prioritized and the potential outcomes of these choices. At the conclusion of the session, decisions were evaluated, and possible impacts and recommendations for improvement were shared.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# The Possibility of Co-Living through Commons and the Right to the City

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-14.30 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** Community, Nature, Space, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Healthy Cities National Network of Türkiye

**Facilitator:** Dalya Hazar, Assoc. Prof., Deputy Secretary General, Healthy Cities National Network of Türkiye

**Summary:** This workshop explored the connections between the right to the city, urban green spaces, and community-led practices for creating healthy urban environments. Participants examined key concepts including spatial justice, One Health, tree equity, urban acupuncture, and tactical urbanism. They then applied these frameworks to evaluate the quality and distribution of green spaces in their own cities, sharing insights from their local contexts and community experiences.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Play in the City: Designing Natural Play Areas and Playground Safety

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Space, Care, Quality of Life, Children

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Superpool, Nordic Playground Institute Türkiye

**Facilitators:** Derya İyikül, Architect, Superpool

Ege Sevinçli Çubukcu, Sociologist, Nordic Playground Institute Türkiye

**Summary:** Playgrounds are among the primary spaces designed for children in cities. Yet, even these spaces are often planned without taking the youngest children into account. In this workshop, participants examined the city from the perspective of a three-year-old, approximately 95 cm in height, discussing potential changes in design. They explored details and potential design solutions that emerged when playgrounds were considered with the needs of young children and their caregivers in mind, while also adhering to playground safety standards (TS/EN 1176).

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Citizen Science Methods for Tackling Urban Heat

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C9

**Tags:** Climate, Disaster, Participation, Technology, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Center for Spatial Justice (MAD)

**Facilitators:** Duygu Dağ, Environmental Justice Program Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

İlteber Uçar, Program Assistant, Center for Spatial Justice

Yağız Eren Abanus, Program Expert, Center for Spatial Justice

**Summary:** Heat waves are among the deadliest disasters worldwide. The deepening climate crisis and profit-driven urbanization are further intensifying this challenge in cities. On the other hand, grassroots initiatives that contribute to climate adaptation policies are emerging across the globe. The workshop addressed citizen science as a practical and inclusive method to tackle extreme heat in urban areas. Participants engaged with the data and insights generated during the “Reading the City’s Heat: Thermal Walk,” held on 11 September within MARUF on the Go, directly observing and discussing the potential of citizen science approaches.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# How Scientific Knowledge is Applied on the City

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.30-15.00 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** Quality of Life, Disaster, Mobility, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Healthy Cities National Network of Türkiye

**Facilitator:** Cem Türkay, PhD, Director, Healthy Cities National Network of Türkiye

**Summary:** The workshop provided a comprehensive exploration of evidence-based policy development processes and urban lab experiences. Following a brief presentation, participants developed proposals in the areas of transportation, disaster resilience, and data management through scenario-based mini exercises and Mentimeter-facilitated discussions. The outcomes were compiled and shared with participants under the titles “5-Minute Manifesto: Science & the City” and “3 Ways to Integrate Science into the City.”

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# MARUF x CIVICSHIP FORUM | Re-Building Collaborations in Urban Space

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** Governance, Participation, Resources

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Urban.koop, Stiftung Mercator

**Facilitators:** Alp Arısoy, PhD, Project Coordinator, Urban.koop

Onur Atay, Co-founder, Urban.koop

**Summary:** This workshop used a role-playing exercise, set in a fictional scenario of limited resources, to spark new models of collaboration between civil society organizations (CSOs) and local authorities. Using character and resource cards, participants explored diverse viewpoints and developed ideas for sustainable, impact-driven outcomes. The exercise was designed to build the foundation for more effective and collaborative partnerships aimed at creating better cities.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# LEGO® x Serious Play® | The Creativity Yard

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C8

**Tags:** Art, Participation, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** PlayStrategy

**Facilitator:** Abdullah Aydın, General Manager,  
PlayStrategy

**Summary:** Using the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® methodology, this workshop brought together professionals from diverse fields to collectively build a shared vision for the future. Participants used the method's unique tools to make their thinking visible through their hands, navigating a dynamic process of tangible prototyping, deep dialogue, and collective imagination.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Good Public Space in Istanbul

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C9

**Tags:** People, Space, Quality of Life, Participation, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Humankind

**Facilitators:** Lior Steinberg, Urban Planner & Co-founder, Humankind

Mario Raimondi Pruss, Partner, Humankind

Nihan Oya Memlük Çobanoğlu, PhD, Urban Planner,  
Gazi University

**Summary:** How can we observe public spaces while keeping humans at the center? The workshop applied the human-centered Good Public Space methodology to evaluate public spaces from a holistic, user-centered perspective. Participants explored a selected site in Istanbul through walking tours and interactive observations, analyzing aspects such as accessibility, safety, experience, sociability, activity, and nature in detail. The workshop was structured around the themes of Space Analysis and Citizen Engagement, providing participants with the opportunity to experience and understand firsthand the quality and social significance of public spaces.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Just My Two Cents on my City: Through the Lens of Jane Jacobs

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C3

**Tags:** Mobility, Community, Space, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitators:** Devran Bengü, PhD, Istanbul Kent University  
Refika Boz, Urban Planner, Nofa Planning and  
Construction

**Summary:** The workshop had participants examine Jane Jacobs' urbanism principles and the approach behind Jane's Walks, providing them with the opportunity to observe their neighborhoods through Jacobs' perspective. Working in small groups, they engaged in designing walking routes across different districts of Istanbul and subsequently developed recommendations to contribute to the Jane's Walk held in Kadıköy. The workshop enabled participants to assess everyday spaces from a new perspective, engage in collective thinking, and contribute their insights to the city's narrative.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Listening to Urban Space, Designing Sonic Refuge

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C7

**Tags:** Space, Culture, Art

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Urban.koop

**Facilitators:** Gascia Ouzounian, Assoc. Prof.,  
Department of Music, University of Oxford  
Sena Karahan, Architect & Researcher, Mimar Sinan  
Fine Arts University

**Summary:** In the workshop, Gascia Ouzounian examined how cities are transformed by sound, vibration, and atmosphere in contexts of conflict and upheaval. Drawing on her forthcoming book *The Trembling City* (MIT Press, Fall 2026), she introduced the concepts of vibrational warfare and atmospheric occupation, demonstrating how urban environments can function as instruments of violence: amplifying sonic shock, transmitting harmful waves through bodies, air, and buildings, and saturating everyday life with tension. Following the talk, participants engaged in a counterlistening exercise in the streets surrounding the venue. They attuned to sonic residues, pressure fluctuations, and everyday turbulences, experimenting with techniques to detect the inaudible, the residual, and infrastructural elements. The workshop concluded with a facilitated discussion reflecting on the findings and considering how counterlistening can offer new perspectives for urban studies.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Creative Reading Workshop with Çiğdem Odabaşı: On Marianne Brooker's "Intervals"

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C8

**Tags:** Human, Climate, Culture, Art, Nature

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Facilitator:** Çiğdem Odabaşı, Author and Creative Reading and Drama Educator, Çiğdem Odabaşı Education & Consultancy & Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts & Publishing

**Summary:** In the creative reading workshop organized in collaboration with Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing, the main supporter of the Urban Library, participants engaged with texts through the lens of various disciplines. Marianne Brooker's Intervals was explored as a collective space for reflecting on care, justice, and solidarity. Inspired by the cues in the text, participants discussed their own experiences as well as urban social policies in relation to climate, environment, responsibility, and the future of cities.

HANDS ON URBAN ATELIER

# Kreşendo x Roof Coliving | "The Image of the City"

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C9

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Kreşendo, Roof Coliving

**Facilitator:** Emre Güzel, Founding Director, Roof Coliving

**Summary:** In this workshop, participants explored the traces that cities leave in memory, drawing on Kevin Lynch's The Image of the City. They discussed their personal urban images shaped by individual experiences and created personal city maps using drawing, brief notes, and visual storytelling techniques. Through these maps, the workshop examined how changing urban images and relationships with urban space shaped evolving urban experiences and intersected with urban policies. The workshop enabled participants to creatively document shifts in their perception of the city and collectively reflect on the symbolic ties and dialogues established with urban space, uncovering shared images embedded in urban memory.







# DISCOVERY MEETING

The Discovery Meeting events were conducted as sessions where topics were opened to debate from diverse perspectives, and where both speakers and participants became integral parts of a collaborative evaluation process. This format facilitated a polyphonic examination of ideas, allowing discussions to be collectively shaped. Within this scope, a variety of subjects were addressed, including democracy and participation, disaster management and climate change, and data-driven policy making and planning processes.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# Democracy Re-Discovered: Deliberate, Don't Degenerate

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | D1

**Tags:** Governance, Participation, Community, Democracy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** We Do Democracy

**Speakers:** Johan Galster, Director & Founding Partner, We Do Democracy

Zakia Elvang, Executive Director, We Do Democracy

**Evaluators:** Savaş Zafer Şahin, Head of Department of School of Land Registry and Cadastre, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

Tülin Hadi, President, Istanbul Citizens' Assembly

**Summary:** This session explored how democracy can function more effectively at the local level and examined the opportunities offered by deliberative democracy. Participants gained a comprehensive understanding of what this approach entails, in which situations it can be applied, and how it contributes to decision-making processes in cities through global examples. The session also addressed the possibilities of strengthening democracy at the local level in Türkiye. With the insights of local experts, discussions covered the main challenges in urban development, the potential relevance of citizens' assemblies, and ways to bridge everyday knowledge with professional expertise. An interactive discussion environment was created where all participants could take part in the process, sharing new ideas on how deliberative democracy can be applied in different contexts.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# About Trust, Conversation, Solidarity in the City

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | Shore-1

**Tags:** People, Participation, Community, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Hazal Acar, Program Coordinator, European School of Politics

**Speakers:** Elif Avci, Local Strategist, Local Monitoring Research and Implementation Association (YERELIZ)

Liana Kuyumcuyan, Researcher, National Technical University of Athens

Zeynep Kaçar, Landscape Architect, İnegöl Municipality

**Summary:** This session fostered a collective discussion centered on key questions of urban social life: Where do we come together in the city? Where do we encounter those different from ourselves? What is needed to strengthen trust, connection, and solidarity in urban life?

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# Barometer: Data-Driven Urban Governance

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | V1

**Tags:** Democracy, Governance, Participation, Policy, Data

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Istanbul Planning Agency (İPA)

**Moderator:** Beyza Polat, Founder, SEAL Consulting

**Speakers:** Abdulrahman Ibrahim, Chief Data and Innovation Officer, Al-Madinah Region Development Authority

Murat Güvenç, Prof., İlhan Tekeli Foundation for Urbanism Culture

Özge Acar, Deputy General Manager of Technology Development, Needsmap Social Cooperative

**Summary:** In this session participants explored how data gathered through the Istanbul Barometer could be interpreted and the role it could play in shaping urban policies and decision making processes. The discussions focused on how data can move beyond being a purely technical indicator to become a participatory tool that nourishes democratic urban governance. By overlapping different datasets, participants examined how new syntheses could emerge and how data-driven dialogue could be fostered. Throughout the session, an interactive environment was created where participants actively engaged with the data, experiencing it not merely as an output to observe, but as a shared process of reflection, interpretation and collaboration.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# Climate101.5°: Tipping Point of the Future

📅 2 October 2025 | ⌚ 10.00-11.00 | 📺 D1

**Tags:** Climate, Governance, Policy, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Directorate of Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, NetZeroCities

**Moderator:** Thomas Osdoba, NetZeroCities Program Director, Climate KIC

**Speakers:** Ayşen Erdinçler, Head of Environmental Protection and Control Department, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

Koray Velibeyoğlu, Prof., Chair, Izmir Planning Agency

Jakub Kuřach, Head of Division, Warsaw City Hall

**Summary:** This session addressed the climate crisis and its implications for cities. Participants examined various climate scenarios and discussed how cities are currently experiencing the impacts of the crisis. The discussions also explored how national-local collaboration could be structured to accelerate climate action and resilience. In addition, the Mission Cities shared their innovative practices and transformation processes towards achieving climate neutrality. The session assessed climate-related tipping points for cities in areas like energy, mobility, and social inclusion. Participants presented their most critical transformation areas and discussed innovative approaches and multi-stakeholder collaboration models. They also evaluated how local experiences could be integrated with national policies and how this process could create momentum in the transition to climate neutrality.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# Disaster Amnesia: Why We Never Learn?

2 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | V1

**Tags:** Disaster, Governance, Quality of Life, Climate, Community

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of the Republic of Türkiye (AFAD)

**Moderator:** Osman Balaban, Prof., Department Of City And Regional Planning, Middle East Technical University

**Speakers:** Cassidy Johnson, Prof., Urbanism and Disaster Risk Reduction, University College London (UCL)

Gökhan Yılmaz, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of the Republic of Türkiye (AFAD)

Güven Fidan, CEO, Alkazar

Stefan Greiving, Prof., TU Dortmund University

**Summary:** This session explored why individuals, institutions, and cities are often unprepared for multiple disaster risks. It examined disasters like earthquakes, floods, and droughts alongside contributing factors such as collective memory loss, weak risk perception, and failures in planning and governance. Participants discussed strategies to strengthen public awareness, institutional capacity, and urban resilience. Through interactive discussions, they exchanged ideas on how to foster a stronger sense of collective responsibility in disaster preparedness.

HANDS ON LOCAL IN ACTION, SIDE EVENT

# Animal Rights as a Public Right

2 October 2025 | 11.30-12.30 | C6

**Tags:** Nature, Roles, Services

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Speakers:** Hülya Yalçın, Lawyer, Istanbul Bar Association & Justice for Animals Platform (Hayvanlara Adalet Platformu-HAD)

Nazım Çapkın, PhD, Department of English Language and Literature, İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University

Taci Karan, Member of the Animal Rights Working Group, Beyoğlu Citizens' Assembly

**Summary:** This session explored animal rights as a public right, with the goal of creating an index and actionable solutions to help local governments strengthen their policies and services in this area.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# MARUF x CIVICSHIP FORUM | Re-thinking Civil Society for Urban Partnerships

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C4

**Tags:** Roles, Participation, Governance, Community, Democracy

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partners:** Urban.koop, Stiftung Mercator

**Facilitator:** Jan Schierkolk, Facilitator

**Speakers:** Antonella Valmorbida, Genel Sekreter, ALDA

Beril Sönmez, Program Coordinator, Anadolu Kultur

Neslihan Cankara, Project Manager & Chief Technical Advisor, The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

Ulaş Bayraktar, Assoc. Prof., Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Mersin University

**Summary:** This discovery meeting focused on the role of civil society in shaping future cities and the emerging forms of collaboration that make it possible. With the participation of national and international experts, the session examined how civil society organizations could be more effectively engaged in urban governance processes and explored ways to strengthen their capacity to co-create solutions with municipalities. By highlighting innovative and sustainable models of collaboration that reinforce democratic participation, the session offered a forward-looking vision for urban partnerships. Through interactive exchanges, participants explored new possibilities for civil society's role in city governance.

# Planning First, What is Next?

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C6

**Tags:** Roles, Mobility, Climate, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)

**Moderator:** Itir Akdoğan, PhD, Research Director, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)

**Speakers:** Canan Pala Giliğ, Director of International Relations, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

Emre Oğuzöncül, Principal, Sustainable Business and Infrastructure, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Lea Busch, Senior Customer Success Account Manager for Cities, States and Regions Requesters, CDP

Osman Balaban, Prof., Middle East Technical University

**Summary:** This session aimed to explore the practical reflections of city-level plans, particularly those addressing climate change, sustainable mobility, and gender equality. It discussed the outcomes of these plans, the extent to which they had been implemented, and the changes they had enabled in the city. The session also provided an opportunity for participants to share and compare experiences from different local contexts, encouraging an interactive dialogue around challenges and innovative practices. In addition, the reporting and monitoring processes that shaped the evaluation of these plans were examined in more specific focus.

HANDS ON DISCOVERY MEETING

# The Shores are Ours! Yet Who are We?

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** Space, Participation, Community, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Hayrettin Günç, Senior Program Manager, Global Designing Cities Initiative

**Speakers:** Büşra Al, Founder & Architect, PLUGOFIS

Yasin Çağatay Seçkin, Prof., Istanbul Technical University

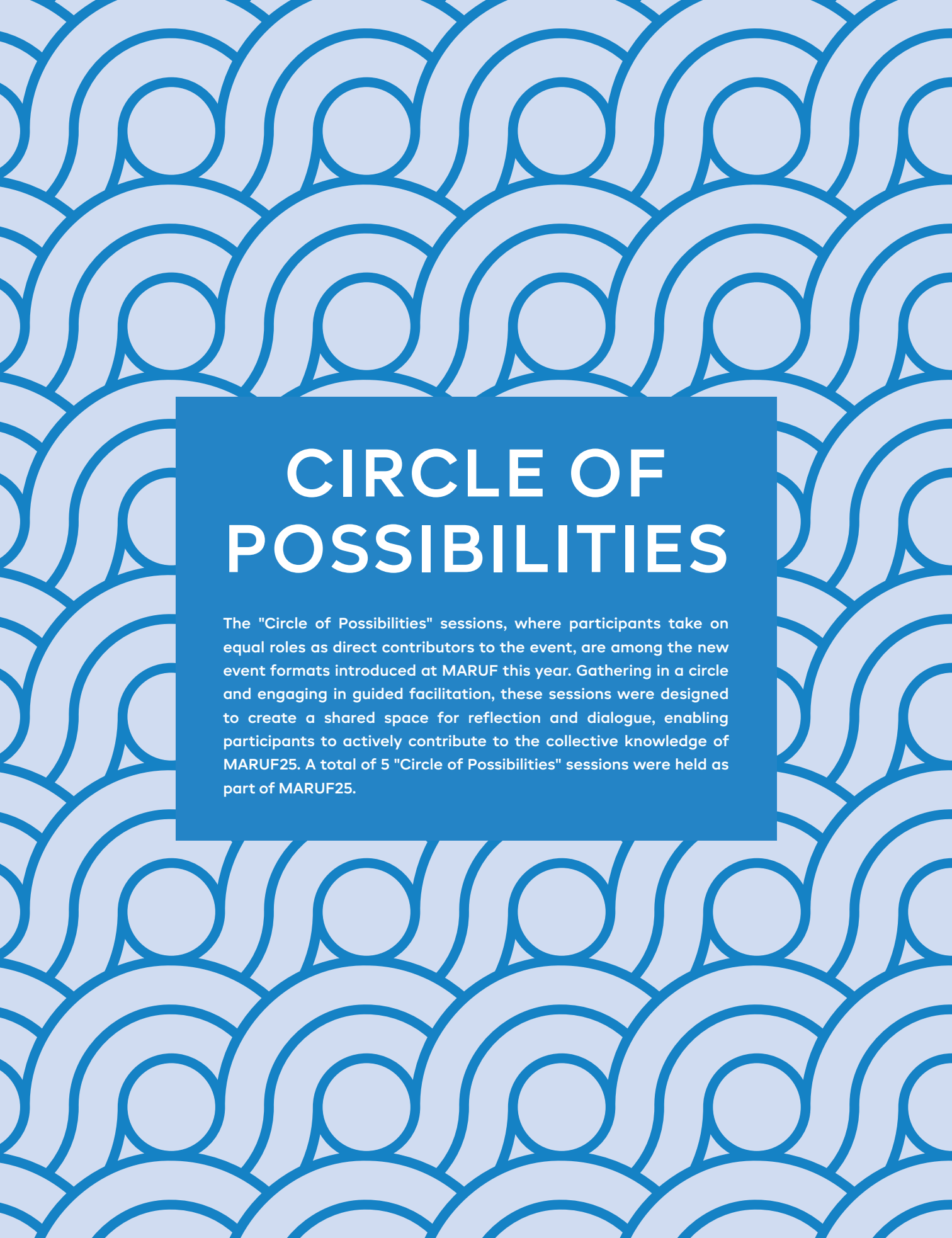
Paul Lecroart, Senior Urbanist, Institut Paris Region (Paris Metropolitan Planning & Environmental Agency)

Sinem Dedetaş, Mayor, Üsküdar Municipality

**Summary:** This session explored how waterfronts have been shaped and governed as public spaces, questioning who truly has access to them and how this access has evolved over time. Speakers from diverse cities and professional backgrounds reflected on their experiences with coastal transformation, addressing the social, spatial, and ecological dimensions of public waterfronts. Through a series of presentations and moderated exchanges, the discussion delved into themes of accessibility and justice, design and user experience, governance and sustainability, as well as future and resilience. Participants collectively examined the tensions between recreational, ecological, cultural, and commercial priorities, while also highlighting examples of successful collaboration between public authorities, civil society, and local communities. Under the moderator's guidance, the session fostered an interactive dialogue, encouraging participants to reimagine waterfronts as more inclusive, inviting, and resilient spaces for the future.





The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of stylized human figures. Each figure is represented by a light blue outline of a head and shoulders, with the head being a circle. The figures are arranged in a circular pattern, with their heads facing outwards, creating a sense of a community or a circle of people. The pattern is consistent across the entire page, including behind the central text box.

# CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

The "Circle of Possibilities" sessions, where participants take on equal roles as direct contributors to the event, are among the new event formats introduced at MARUF this year. Gathering in a circle and engaging in guided facilitation, these sessions were designed to create a shared space for reflection and dialogue, enabling participants to actively contribute to the collective knowledge of MARUF25. A total of 5 "Circle of Possibilities" sessions were held as part of MARUF25.

HANDS ON CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

# Circle of Possibilities for Facilitators

1 October 2025 | 14.30-15.00 | D6

**Tags:** People, Community, Roles, Participation, Governance

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Szilvia Zsargo, Facilitator, Demnet

**Summary:** Addressing complex urban challenges requires participatory processes that engage multiple stakeholders. However, these diverse environments can only become constructive through effective facilitation. This workshop explored facilitation tools to transform disagreements and tensions into restorative outcomes. After an inspiring framing presentation that offered new perspectives, participants joined a circle session to share experiences and explore the potential of facilitation.

HANDS ON CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

# Circle of Possibilities for Balance

1 October 2025 | 16.10-17.00 | D6

**Tags:** People, Community, Care, Participation, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Miray Özkan, PhD, Urban Planning

**Summary:** Following inspiring presentations on balancing stakeholder interests and maintaining personal well-being, the Circle of Possibilities provided a space for dialogue. Participants shared insights and explored strategies to stay balanced while navigating complex urban challenges.

HANDS ON CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

# Circle of Possibilities for Change

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 12.10-13.00 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** Roles, Networks, People, Community, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Elif Avcı, Local Strategist, Local Monitoring Research and Implementation Association (YERELİZ)

**Summary:** Every process of change requires seeing beyond existing boundaries and imagining new horizons. Following inspiring presentations on becoming urban change-makers and scaling impact from the ground up, this Circle of Possibilities invited participants to collectively explore emerging urban opportunities. By combining their imagination and experiences, participants embarked on a shared journey of transformation.

HANDS ON CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

# Circle of Possibilities for Opportunities

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.20-15.00 | 📍 D6

**Tags:** People, Community, Roles, Governance, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Sila Akalp, Strategic Design Manager, Anadolu.ma & Urban Strategy

**Summary:** People-centered urban change does not emerge solely from plans; it is brought to life through imagination, practical research, and the collective will of diverse actors. This circle explored how to enact change in the city, examining the necessary strategies, support tools, and obstacles to overcome. Participants drew from their own experiences to co-create a “guide to urban change.”

HANDS ON CIRCLE OF POSSIBILITIES

# Circle of Possibilities for Urbanists

3 October 2025 | 10.20-11.00 | D6

**Tags:** Community, Roles, Networks, Resources, Participation

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** All Things Urban

**Facilitators:** Anastasia Sukhoroslova, CEO & Founder,  
All Things Urban

Ervin Sezgin, PhD, Urban Planner

**Summary:** Global crises, climate change, and rapidly shifting social dynamics compel urbanists to redefine their roles. Navigating this changing world demands a new set of skills: managing uncertainty, embracing multidisciplinary approaches, collaborating with diverse stakeholders, and thinking adaptively. Following an inspiring presentation, participants gathered in a circle to share experiences and co-create a vision enriched by multiple perspectives.





# PLAY MARMARA

Designed specifically for the Marmara Region, Play Marmara is a serious game that enables participants to engage in strategic thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving through a gamified process. Covering a broad range of topics from regional dynamics to food systems, this year's edition, like the 2021 iteration, once again centered on the Marmara Sea. The play focused on the sustainable management of wastewater entering the sea via point and diffuse sources, shifts in seawater quality parameters, and their subsequent impacts on the marine ecosystem. It addressed critical issues such as biodiversity, pollution, urbanization pressures, and fishing activities in the Marmara Sea. Through collective decision-making processes, the game explored pathways to marine sustainability and their potential outcomes, drawing on contributions from regional policymakers, experts, and stakeholders. Held in three separate sessions during MARUF25, Play Marmara "Sea" brought together mayors, subject-matter experts, and MARUF25 participants.

HANDS ON PLAY MARMARA

## Play Marmara “Sea” | Mayors

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | S3

**Tags:** Nature, Water, Governance, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Play the City, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Moderator:** Merve Ağca, Environmental Management Coordinator & Migration and Social Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Facilitator:** İrem Özdarendeli, Urban Designer, Play the City

**Speakers:** Mustafa Bozbey, President, Marmara Municipalities Union & Mayor, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

Gökhan Yüksel, Mayor, Kartal Municipality & Executive Board Member, Marmara Municipalities Union

Zinnur Büyükgöz, Mayor, Gebze Municipality & Executive Board Member, Marmara Municipalities Union

HANDS ON PLAY MARMARA

## Play Marmara “Sea” | Experts

2 October 2025 | 11.30-13.00 | S3

**Tags:** Nature, Water, Governance, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Play the City, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Moderator:** Merve Ağca, Environmental Management Coordinator & Migration and Social Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Facilitator:** İrem Özdarendeli, Urban Designer, Play the City

**Speaker:** Ahmet Cihat Kahraman, PhD, Head of Environmental Protection and Control Department, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

# Play Marmara “Sea” | Participants

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 S3

**Tags:** Nature, Water, Governance, Region

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Play the City, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality

**Moderator:** Merve Ağca, Environmental Management Coordinator & Migration and Social Policy Center Director, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Facilitator:** İrem Özdarendeli, Urban Designer, Play the City

## Play Marmara “The Sea” Game Processes

### Preparation

Each participant joins a sub-region team (Çanakkale, North Marmara, Istanbul, Izmit Bay, South Marmara). Teams locate their specific regions on the game board and open the region form and MARMOD interface on their tablets.

#### **Round 1: MARMOD Project Modeling**

Teams discuss which methods to utilize and record them on the sub-region form. Percentage reduction rates are selected for both point sources and diffuse sources. The determined rates are entered into the MARMOD interface, and results are projected onto the screen. Each team explains their methods and reduction rates. Pollution reduction rates are recorded into the MARMOD interface by the facilitator. The simulation checks via MARMOD whether the Sea of Marmara has been cleaned on a regional basis.

#### **Round 2: Prioritizing the Action Plan**

Action Plan Cards are reviewed under the following headers: Control, Environmental Protection, Innovative Legislation, Innovative Practices.

Teams select and prioritize 4 cards aligned with the methods chosen in the first round. These cards are placed on the relevant region on the game board. At the end of the round, each team explains the rationale behind their prioritization.

#### **Round 3: Reality Check**

The methods from the first round and the actions from the second round are evaluated by experts, who then provide feedback.

#### **Round 4: Partnership**

Each sub-region examines the projects of other regions. Each team attempts to establish a partnership with a region other than their own. They discuss which partnerships can facilitate the implementation of their prioritized actions. A joint prioritized action plan for the Sea of Marmara emerges.

## Game Summary: Regional Strategies

### 1. Izmit Bay Region (East Marmara Strategy)

#### Point Source Pollution Reduction Target: 99%

Strategies for Point Source Reduction:

1. Capacity increase for all treatment plants in the region; completion of the advanced biological treatment plant (1000–5000 m<sup>3</sup>/day capacity), which is currently 60% complete, and the dissemination of such facilities.
2. Projects for the reuse of industrial water.
3. Increasing the recovery rate of domestic wastewater (currently at 30%) and enabling its use in industrial activities.
4. Prioritizing the transition to a “separate sewer system” in urban infrastructure to reduce point loads.

#### Diffuse Source Pollution Reduction Target: 60%

Strategies for Diffuse Source Reduction:

1. Sustaining ongoing stream cleaning, pesticide inspections, and bay bottom sludge cleaning efforts.
2. Implementation of “Action 22” to prevent wastewater discharge from ships.
3. Designating wetland protection and bottom sludge cleaning as priority ecological actions.
4. Prioritizing the reduction of water usage and prevention of pollution in dams and Lake Sapanca.
5. Timely inspection of feedlots and increasing inspection frequency.
6. On-site inspection of pesticide use.

### 2. Çanakkale Region

#### Point Source Pollution Reduction Target: 50%

Strategies for Point Source Reduction:

1. Measuring the environmental impact of port operations and sharing these measurements as open data.
2. Measuring the potential impact of the port project planned for Saros Bay.

#### Diffuse Source Pollution Reduction Target: 50%

Strategies for Diffuse Source Reduction:

1. Inspection of conscious water use in agricultural areas in the Susurluk region.
2. Propagation of species such as seagrass and *Pinna nobilis* (Pina) at specific points.

### 3. North Marmara Region

#### Point Source Pollution Reduction Target: 50%

Strategies for Point Source Reduction:

1. Preparation of joint “green transformation” plans with universities.
2. Increasing zero waste and recycling projects for point sources, along with related funding.
3. Revising legislation concerning industrial waste programs and loads coming from river sources.
4. Proposing advanced treatment plants and separate sewer systems.

#### Diffuse Source Pollution Reduction Target: 10%

Strategies for Diffuse Source Reduction:

1. Increasing inspections and strengthening environmental policies through state-local government cooperation.
2. Aiming for pollution reduction through agricultural education and awareness activities.
3. Increasing the number of regional action plans.
4. Protecting clean water sources, strengthening incentive mechanisms, and bringing uncultivated agricultural land back into production.
5. Emphasizing the necessity of incentivizing sustainable agriculture practices.
6. Cultivating uncultivated agricultural lands under state control using innovative agricultural methods.

#### 4. South Marmara Region

##### **Point Source Pollution Reduction Target: 85%**

Strategies for Point Source Reduction:

1. Prioritizing the capacity increase of advanced biological treatment and the modernization of existing systems.
2. Increasing the frequency of industrial inspections and detecting/preventing illegal discharges.
3. Increasing the recovery rate in Organized Industrial Zones (OIZs) and strengthening facility capacities.
4. Establishing digital surveillance systems.

##### **Diffuse Source Pollution Reduction Target: 85%**

Strategies for Diffuse Source Reduction:

1. Determining buffer zones, increasing green areas, and conducting rainwater management activities.
2. Emphasizing Blue Flag applications and activities to raise environmental awareness.
3. Proposing ghost net cleaning (Actions 14–16) to prevent pollution caused by fisheries.
4. Planning to reduce environmental impacts by preventing pesticide use in the Susurluk agricultural basin.
5. Conducting awareness campaigns to reduce detergent usage.
6. Expanding habitats for species such as seagrass and *Pinna nobilis*.

#### 5. Istanbul Region

##### **Point Source Pollution Reduction Target: 20%**

Strategies for Point Source Reduction:

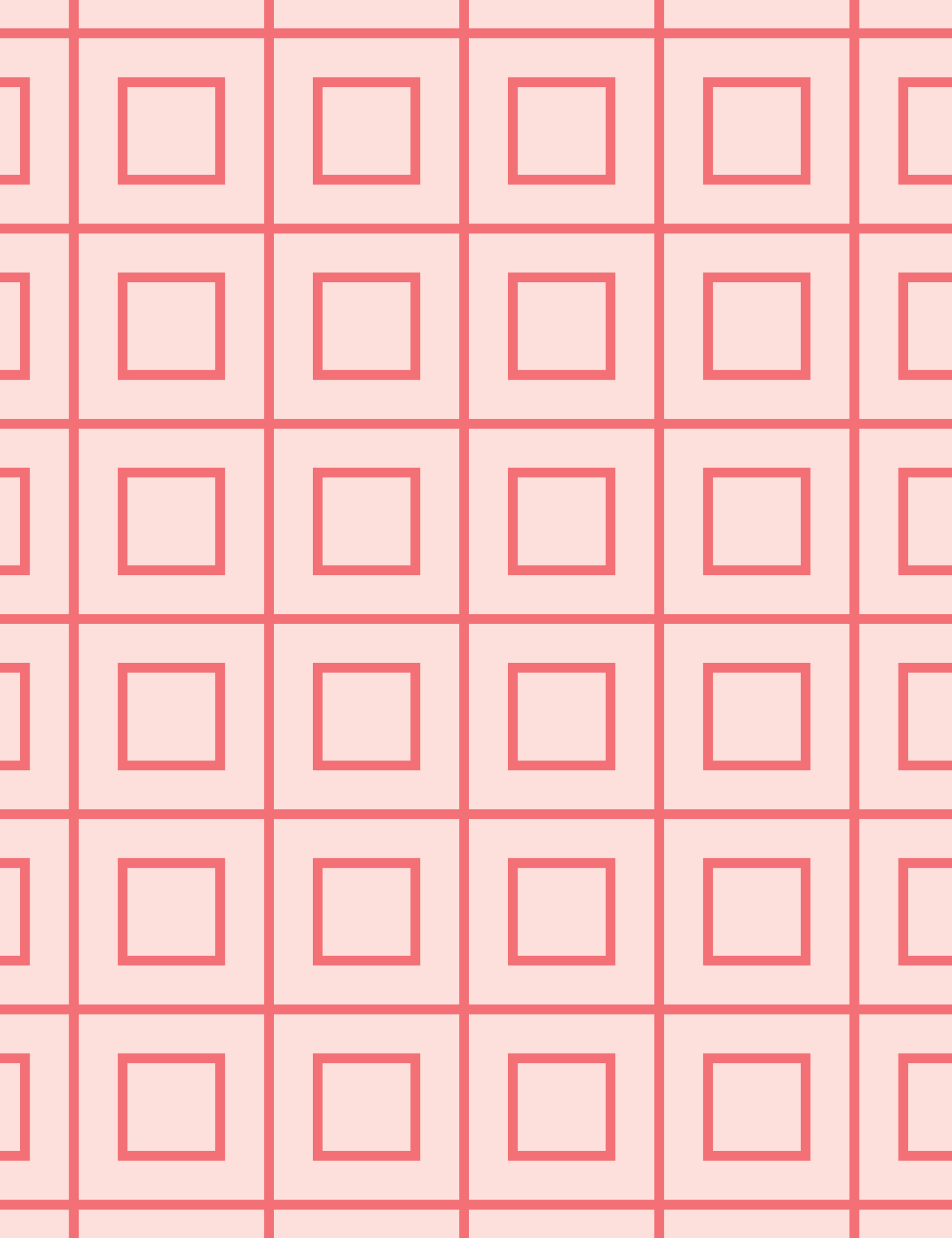
1. Reducing population density and relocating industrial activities outside the city.
2. Planning awareness campaigns to reduce detergent use within the basin.
3. Emphasizing the active role of technical experts in decision-making teams.
4. Strengthening penal sanctions.
5. Increasing wastewater monitoring points and raising reuse rates.
6. Ensuring basin-scale cooperation and action plan alignment with neighboring provinces.

##### **Diffuse Source Pollution Reduction Target: 20%**

Strategies for Diffuse Source Reduction:

1. Adding changes in agricultural irrigation and the promotion of organic farming to the strategy.
2. Planning activities for wastewater reduction, public awareness, and the development of agricultural activities within the scope of Marmara Sea Protection Action Plan items 15 and 17.







**SENSES ON**

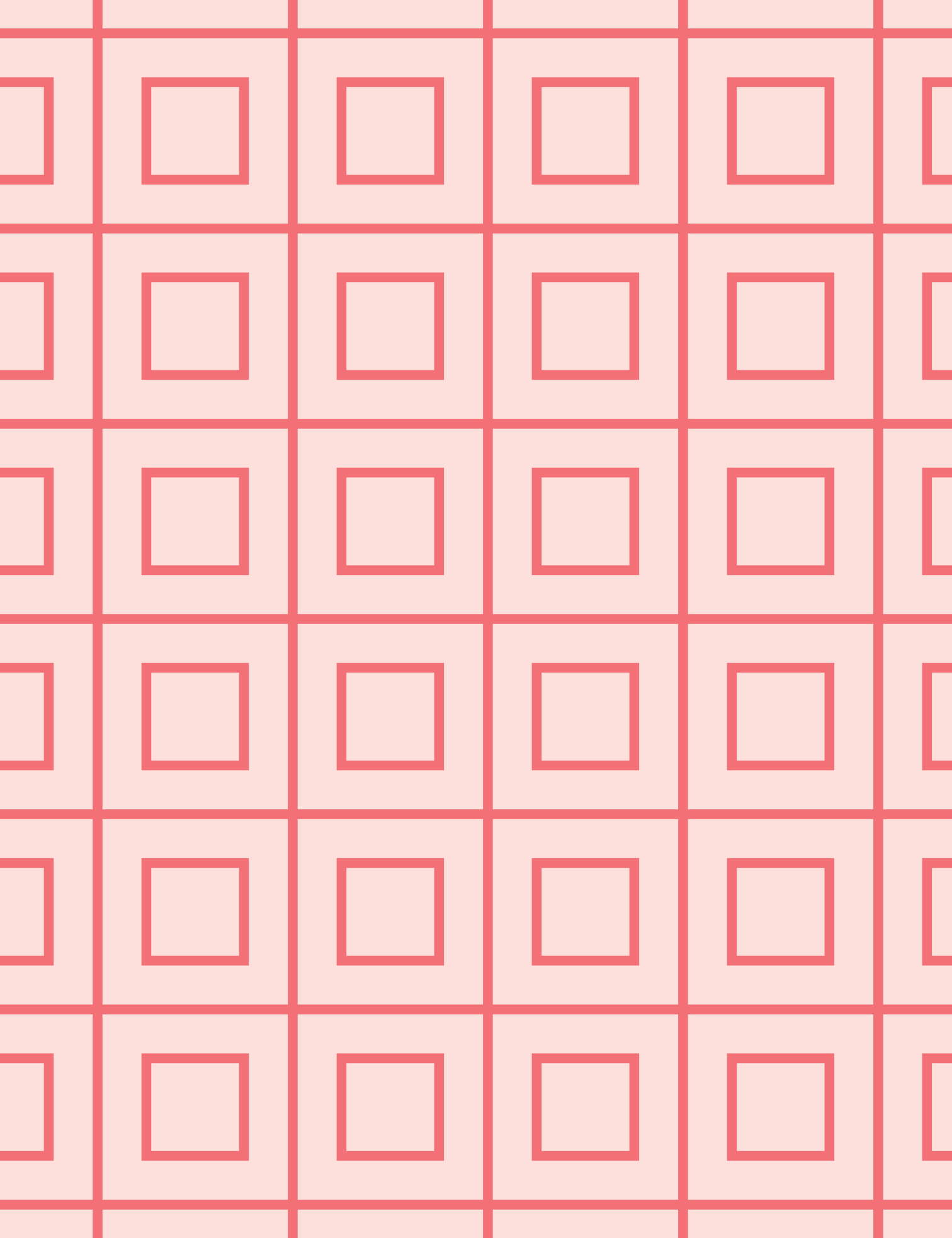
# SENSES ON

Over the years, MARUF's experiential journey has evolved from merely sharing information into a holistic participation philosophy rooted in sensing the city through multiple dimensions. The collaborative efforts conducted throughout the preparation process of MARUF25 focused on adding a new layer to the forum's experience design—exploring how to create a space where participants could engage with the city not only intellectually, but with all their senses. This served as the inspiration for the “Senses On” mode, a third approach designed to transcend the conceptual explorations of “Minds On” and the concrete production processes of “Hands On.”

The “Senses On” mode represented the most physical, body-oriented, and sensory phase of MARUF25's experiential narrative. It was conceived as a level of engagement that merged the rhythm of the forum with the rhythm of the body, and the flow of information with the flow of the senses. Participants transformed from mere discussants of a topic into the subjects of an experience, feeling urban issues firsthand through their relationship with space, sound, images, tex-

tures, and movement. Just as the city in our daily lives is a multi-dimensional environment we navigate, touch, listen to, smell, and see—beyond any intellectual framework—this mode expanded the forum's sphere of learning and discovery through the senses, producing a counterpart to the multi-sensory nature of the city.

In this context, the “Senses On” mode encompassed a series of events allowing participants to make direct contact with the city. The lineup included Urban Library, Urban Cinema, Exhibition, Collective Work, Urban Rhythm, and Urban Route. In these events, information transcended its conceptual framework to become part of a sensory experience; discussions integrated with the spatial atmosphere, while learning deepened through bodily movement and sensory stimulation. Whether encountering the light, sound, or texture of the space to rethink their own perceptions of the city, or discovering new ways to view the urban landscape through an exhibition, walk, performance, or collective work, participants found themselves immersed in a deep sensory dialogue.



# URBAN LIBRARY

The Urban Library was designed as a shared space for collective thinking, bringing together knowledge, research, and experiences related to the city. Hosting periodicals and non-periodicals from different disciplines, as well as visual and digital content, this space offered participants the opportunity to explore the multi-layered structure of the city, deepen their readings, and forge new connections. Ultimately, the Urban Library served as a vital resource nourishing the intellectual universe of the forum.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: What Does It Take to Create a Building, a Neighborhood, a City...

1 October 2025 | 12.00-13.00 | C11

**Tags:** Space, Culture, Art

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Speakers:** Tansel Korkmaz, Prof., Department of Architecture, Beykoz University  
Nevzat Sayın, Architect, NSMH

**Summary:** This event organized in collaboration with Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing featured an inspiring conversation with architect Nevzat Sayın on the themes of city and architecture. Centered around Sayın's books published by Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing, the discussion explored the intersections of urban life, architectural practice, and cultural production in relation to this year's MARUF framework.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Speak Up: Voices of Urban Publishers

1 October 2025 | 14.00-15.00 | C11

**Tags:** Culture, Space, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** MMU Publications

**Moderator:** Melis Oğuz Çevik, Assoc. Prof., Gebze Technical University

**Speakers:** Ceren Yartan, General Coordinator, Center for Spatial Justice

**E. Furkan Düzgiden**, Corporate Communications Coordinator, Marmara Municipalities Union  
**Emir Osmanoğlu**, General Director, Institute of Urban Studies and Idealkent Publications  
**M. Mesut Kaya**, Manager, YEM Publishing & Bookstore

**Summary:** In this panel, publishers focusing on urban studies came together to share their relationship with the city and the transformative power of publishing in this field. The session highlighted how books not only reflect urban life but also shape it, influence public debates, and contribute to collective memory.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: RIBA Climate Guide

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-16.10 | 📍 C11

~~~~~  
**Tags:** Climate, Culture, Space, Nature

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**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

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**Partner:** YEM Publishing

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**Moderator:** Görkem Volkan, General Manager, GVDS  
Architecture

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**Speaker:** Mina Hasman, PhD, Sustainability Director,  
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

**Summary:** In this session, the “RIBA Climate Guide”—a resource providing essential knowledge for built environment professionals in tackling climate change—was introduced. Participants had the opportunity to discuss how the guide strengthens sustainable design approaches and informs professional practice in architecture and the construction sector. The session highlighted the transformative role of architecture in the face of the climate crisis.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: “On the Field”

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 16.20-17.00 | 📍 C11

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**Tags:** Culture, Heritage, Roles

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**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

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**Partner:** Science Academy

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**Moderator:** Cengiz Özdemir, Content Creator

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**Speaker:** Müsemma Sabancıoğlu, Editor-in-chief,  
Science Academy

**Summary:** In this session, the book “Sahada” (In the Field), which tells the stories of twelve women scientists who conducted fieldwork in the early years of the Republic, was introduced. Participants explored the contributions of these pioneering women to both science and the largely uncharted geography of Türkiye.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: “Legends of the Fish” with Faruk Duman

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 10.00-11.00 | 📍 C11

**Tags:** Nature, Space, Art, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Moderator:** Ahsen Erdoğan Demirtaş, Cultural Events Manager, Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Speaker:** Faruk Nazif Duman, Author, Alakarga Art Publications

**Summary:** In this special talk presented by Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing, acclaimed author Faruk Duman introduced his upcoming Istanbul-centered book, “Legends of the Fish”. The session explored the hidden stories within the city, weaving them together with MARUF’s overarching theme.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Marmarathon: “Two Little Urbanites” Grand Finale

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 12.00-13.00 | 📍 C11

**Tags:** Art, Culture, Care, Community, Child

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Büşra İnce, Urban Policy Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Jury:** Tan Oral, Cartoonist

**Bahar Aksel,** Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

**Burcuhan Şener,** Director of International Affairs, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Lior Steinberg,** Urban Planner & Co-founder, Humankind

**Nazlı Berivan Ak,** Editor-in-Chief, April Publishing, Turkish Publishers Association

**Selva Gürdoğan,** Founding Partner, Superpool

**Summary:** Inspired by Tan Oral’s 1979 book “Two Little Urbanites”, which holds a special place in the cultural memory of the Marmara Municipalities Union, Marmarathon concluded with its final event at MARUF. Participants from diverse disciplines reimagined the city through the eyes of children, creating new stories and illustrations over three days as part of the “MARUF on the Go” program. During the final session, the jury awarded the first prize to the book titled “Bu Şehir Kaç Adım?” (How Many Steps Is This City?).

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Writing the City While Drawing / Drawing the City While Writing

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📍 C11

**Tags:** Space, Human, Culture, Art, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Moderator:** Banu Uçak Güneş, Founder, Banu Ucak Studio

**Speakers:** Aysun Altındağ, Illustrator & Childrens Book Author, Istanbul Bilgi University

Ertuğ Uçar, Architect & Partner, Teğet Architecture

**Oğul Can Öztunç,** Architect & Founding Partner, Piknik Works Architecture and Design

**Summary:** Many books have been written about cities in fields such as history, architecture, and geography. Yet, only a few capture the city through drawing, writing, and personal memory. This session discussed why this is the case. Participants explored different ways of representing the city through words and sketches. The panel shed light on alternative ways of sensing and expressing urban life.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Libraries as Public Space

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-17.00 | 📍 C11

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Community, Space, Participation, Democracy

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Turkish Librarians Association

**Moderator:** Bahar Biçen Aras, Head of Information Sources and Library & President of the Istanbul Branch, İstinye University & Turkish Librarians Association

**Speakers:** Ali Şafak Özdemir, Director of Libraries and Museums, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Ertuğrul Çimen,** Library Director & Chair Regional Council and Governing Board Member, MEF University & IFLA

**Jasmina Ninkov,** Acting Director, National Library of Serbia

**Summary:** Libraries today are more than places of access to information; they are spaces of social interaction, shared learning, and cultural exchange. In modern cities, libraries stand out as public spaces where people connect, democratic participation is strengthened, and collective memory is preserved. This session examined the role of libraries as public spaces through national and international examples and discussed their significance in urban life.

SENSES ON URBAN LIBRARY

# Library Talks: “The Quotidian, Quality of Life, and Locality” with İlhan Tekeli

3 October 2025 | 10.00-11.00 | C11

**Tags:** Quality of Life, Culture, Art, Local Development

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** İlhan Tekeli Urban Culture Foundation

**Moderator:** Zeynep Aslı Gürel, Assoc. Prof., Urban Planner, Gazi University

**Speaker:** İlhan Tekeli, City and Regional Planning Professor & Social Scientist

**Summary:** Centered on İlhan Tekeli’s book “Everyday Life, Quality of Life, and Locality”, the talk moved beyond nation-state-focused approaches to explore how everyday life, locality, and quality of life shape our cities. The session examined whether a fulfilling, sustainable life away from consumption is possible and invited participants to embrace a new perspective.





# URBAN CINEMA

The fundamental aim in both the content and experience design of MARUF was to create a public forum that extended beyond mere panels—one capable of establishing a direct relationship with the city, urban memory, and culture and arts. Accordingly, with its venue, library, interaction areas, and Urban Cinema, MARUF25 was curated as a prototype of the city envisioned throughout the forum. Enabling participants to engage in a free, accessible, inclusive, and high-quality cultural dialogue was identified as one of the forum's primary objectives.

By approaching cities as cinematic spaces, the MARUF25 Urban Cinema program examined how festivals are etched into the memory of the cities into which they are born, how they integrate with the city's identity, and how they transform into an inseparable part of the culture of living. Conversely, it turned its gaze toward festivals rendered impossible by wars, crises, and restricted freedoms, highlighting the solidarity practices that enable these festivals to meet audiences in different cities.

Realized in partnership with the Altyazı Cinema Association, just as in MARUF23, this year's Urban Cinema program addressed cities through the lens of festivals, cinema venues, and forms of spectatorship. It opened the past and present relationships between film culture and cities—both in Türkiye and on an international scale—to debate. While looking at the recent history of going to the cinema, thinking with cinema, growing up, and resisting through cinema via diverse examples, the program centered on stories that amplify the voices of different communities and foster solidarity. Screenings and panels focused on the cinematic experiences of Sarajevo, Beirut, Istanbul, Berlin, Mumbai, Belfast, Adana, Diyarbakır, and Ankara, while also placing the accumulated wisdom of the Palestine Cinema Days—which carries the voice of Palestine to the world—at the focal point. Within the scope of the program, a creative film workshop was also held with young people, blending the cinematic images of the city's past with designs for the future.

Driven by the excitement of empowering stories and discussions from Türkiye and the world over two days, this journey explored cinema's power to build solidarity and its healing and transformative potential “on the shore of all possibilities”.

SENSES ON URBAN CINEMA

# Imagining & Resisting Through Cinema: A Selection of Films

- Sarajevo Film Festival Film, Johan van der Keuken, 1993, 14'
- Letter from Beirut, Jocelyn Saab, 1978, 52'

📅 1 October 2025 | ⌚ 12.00-13.00 | 📺 D2

**Tags:** Community, Space, Culture, Art, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazi Cinema Association

**Summary:** Curated as a prologue to the MARUF25 Urban Cinema program, this selection paired two documentaries from distinct eras and regions. United by their urgent subject matter, both films underscore the crucial act of filming amidst conflict, while offering a potent reminder of cinema's role in turbulent times. The first film transports us to a moment just before the

founding of the Sarajevo Film Festival. It follows a young artist and a young architecture student - one of thousands in the audience - as they organize screenings for a city under siege. Against the relentless soundtrack of gunfire in early-1990s Sarajevo, the film lays bare a powerful instinct for survival and a deep-seated belief in art's enduring power. From there, the program shifted to late-1970s Beirut through the lens of Lebanese documentary filmmaker Jocelyn Saab. Her work provides essential historical context for the city's protracted conflicts, presenting a nuanced meditation on Beirut's complex layers of history and identity. Simultaneously, it unfolds as a poignant letter to the city's future; a place that has long captured the imagination of poets, musicians, and filmmakers.

# Cities Under Fire: Solidarity Through Cinema

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 D2

**Tags:** Space, Community, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association

**Moderator:** Övgü Gökçe, Film Critic & Cultural Manager, Altyazı Cinema Association

**Speakers:** Ola Salama, Executive Director, Filmlab Palestine

Stuart Sloan, Head Programmer, Docs Ireland

**Summary:** This Urban Cinema session offered a compelling exploration of cinema's role in conflict; not just as an art form, but as a vital instrument of solidarity, witness, and collective memory. Framed by the theme "Film Production and Screenings in Solidarity with Cities Under Fire," the panel delved into the intricate dynamics between producing films in war zones and circulating them through global festival networks.

Central to the discussion were the initiatives of Palestine Cinema Days and Filmlab Palestine. Since 2014, they have cultivated the world's most extensive international platform dedicated to Palestinian cinema. Speakers illustrated how these projects have amplified the voices of besieged cities, transforming cinema into both an act of resistance and a crucial archive for preserving lived experience.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing war and genocide in Gaza, the conversation turned to the remarkable expansion of Palestine Cinema Days since 2023, now reaching nearly one hundred cities worldwide. This growth has pioneered new models of global solidarity through film. The panel then heard from one of the festival's international hosts, Stuart Sloan (Docs Ireland), which provided insight into how European documentary networks navigate and respond to urgent political realities.

In conclusion, the discussion powerfully affirmed the inherently political nature of film production and curation in times of crisis. It highlighted the ethical and aesthetic imperatives facing filmmakers and programmers, and reaffirmed cinema's enduring capacity to serve as a space for collective conscience and transnational solidarity.

SENSES ON URBAN CINEMA

# Days Of Fire, Love And Anarchy: The Turkish Sinematek and Onat Kutlar, Önder Esmem, 2023, 76'

1 October 2025 | 15.30-17.00 | D2

**Tags:** Space, Community, Heritage, Art

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association

**Summary:** Presented as part of the MARUF25 Urban Cinema program, Days of Love, Fire and Anarchy tells the story of the Turkish Cinematheque, a pioneering institution that was instrumental in the rise of art cinema and the development of film culture in Türkiye. The documentary follows a journey that began in 1961, when Onat Kutlar, a future founder of the Cinematheque, discovered the French Cinémathèque while studying philosophy in Paris. Inspired by this encounter, he gathered a group of intellectuals in Istanbul and, in 1965, co-founded the Turkish Cinematheque Association.

More than just chronicling an institution that introduced Turkish audiences to essential works of world cinema, the film reveals how the Cinematheque became a vital intellectual hub. It was a space where a new generation of filmmakers, critics, and cinephiles converged, forging a shared cinematic culture. By drawing a line between Kutlar's literary work and his pivotal role in establishing and guiding the Istanbul Film Festival, the documentary illuminates a defining chapter in Türkiye's cultural memory. Through testimonies from writers and directors who have shaped the nation's cinema, it also explores the dynamic encounters - and occasional tensions - among diverse intellectual and political circles within this landscape.

In this way, Days of Love, Fire and Anarchy acts as a foundational film for the Urban Cinema program. It strengthens the program's conceptual framework by delving into the intertwined themes of cultural heritage, intellectual production, and public memory within the context of cinema and the city.

# Urban Library X Urban Cinema Special Screening: Manguel's Journey to Türkiye: In the Footsteps of Tanpınar, Melik Külekci, 2025, 60'

📅 1 October 2025 | 🕒 17.30-18.30 | 📺 D2

**Tags:** Space, Art, Heritage, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Yapı Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing

**Summary:** Presented alongside the main Urban Cinema program at MARUF25, this special screening was supported by Yapı Kredi Culture Arts and Publishing, the primary sponsor of the Urban Library. The featured film, Alberto Manguel's Journey to Türkiye: In the Footsteps of Tanpınar, reached a broader audience following its premiere at the Yapı Kredi Culture Centre in June 2025. The documentary traces the journey of renowned writer Alberto Manguel. Invited to Türkiye for the 2013 Istanbul Tanpınar Literature Festival (İTEF), Manguel traveled through Istanbul, Erzurum, Konya, Ankara, and Bursa. His observations formed the basis of his book, In the Footsteps of Tanpınar: Five Cities, and subsequently, this film. Offering a dual portrait, the documentary serves as both a record of the author's personal encounter with Türkiye and a cinematic exploration of his literary quest. Production began under the direction of Didem Şahin in 2013 and was completed by director Melik Külekci following her passing. After the screening, Külekci participated in a Q&A session with the audience.

SENSES ON URBAN CINEMA

# Komm mit mir in das Cinema – Die Gregors, Alice Agneskirchner, 2022, 155'

📅 2 October 2025 | ⌚ 10.30-13.00 | 📺 D2

**Tags:** Art, Culture, Heritage, Space, Community

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazi Cinema Association

**Summary:** As part of the MARUF25 Urban Cinema program, *Komm mit mir in das Cinema – Die Gregors* was screened as a tribute to the enduring spirit of independent cinema. The documentary offered a window into the remarkable life and partnership of Erika and Ulrich Gregor, founders of Berlin's Kino Arsenal, an institution long considered the heart of the city's independent film culture. Through a refined cinematic lens, the film traced the Gregors' six-decade journey, exploring their profound love for cinema and their transformation of Arsenal into a vital plat-

form. It became a beacon not only for Berlin but for independent filmmakers worldwide seeking an audience. The film chronicled how this creative partnership evolved into the Berlinale's Forum section, the festival's emblematic space for extraordinary and unconventional cinema. Through a series of insightful interviews, it highlighted the Gregors' vision and far-reaching influence. Appearances by figures such as Peter Greenaway, Aki Kaurismäki, Jim Jarmusch, and Wong Kar-Wai served as powerful testaments to their lasting impact on global film culture. Set against the shifting cultural and social landscape of Germany, the documentary captured the Gregors' unwavering commitment to cinema as both an art form and a means of connection. Enriched with archival treasures and vivid testimonies, its screening at MARUF25 provided audiences with a contemplative journey through the history of independent cinema and an inspiring reminder of the medium's power to bridge worlds.

# Audience Emancipated: The Struggle for the Emek Movie Theater, Emek Bizim İstanbul Bizim İnisiyatifi, 2016, 48'

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-15.00 | 📺 D2

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**Tags:** Space, Art, Culture, Heritage, Participation  
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**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
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**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association  
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**Summary:** Screened as part of the MARUF25 Urban Cinema program, Audience Emancipated: The Struggle for the Emek Movie Theater offered a powerful meditation on cinema, public space, and civic resistance in Istanbul. The documentary weaves together footage from the prolonged struggle, beginning in 2010 against the cinema's planned demolition and intensifying until its destruction in 2013, forging a collective narrative from the records of an audience defending its right to the city. Through its portrayal of the fight to save a cinema uniquely open to the street, the film makes clear that this was more than a battle to preserve a cultural landmark. It was a struggle to sustain the very imagination and sense of possibility the place embodied. Emerging as the shared story of those who claimed this collective spirit, the documentary resonates in solidarity with urban and cinematic movements worldwide, standing as a potent example of cinema as both an act of resistance and a means of reclaiming the city. By presenting this story within the MARUF25 framework, the screening provided audiences with both a memorial to past resistance and a vision for how cinema can function as a unifying, transformative civic force.

SENSES ON URBAN CINEMA

# Cinema Cities, Cinematheques, and Community Cinemas

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 15.30-16.15 | 📍 D2

**Tags:** Space, Community, Heritage, Culture, Art

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association

**Moderator:** Engin Ertan, Curator and Film Critic, Film Critics Association & Goethe-Institut Istanbul

**Speakers:** Can Sungu, Artistic Director, SİNEMA TRANSTOPIA

Elif Ergezen, General Coordinator, Sinematek Istanbul

Madhusree Dutta, Curator & Filmmaker

**Summary:** This panel offered a nuanced exploration of how cinema weaves itself into the cultural fabric, social interactions, and collective memory of cities. Examining both historic cinematheque traditions and emerging cinema spaces, the discussion focused on Istanbul, Berlin, and Mumbai, tracing the evolution of film culture through spatial, social, and political dimensions. The conver-

sation first revisited Istanbul's rich cinematheque heritage, considering how its festivals and alternative venues have transformed over time. Speakers reflected on how these shifts have redefined the audience experience, turning film viewing into a form of collective engagement firmly embedded in the city's memory. The focus then shifted to Berlin's Sinema Transtopia, a venue that has revitalized local film culture through alternative programming and a highly inclusive approach. Operating as a genuine community cinema, Sinema Transtopia demonstrates how screening spaces can become vital platforms for dialogue, participation, and shared creation. Finally, the discussion turned to Mumbai, whose cinematic heritage introduced a crucial global perspective. Drawing on specific urban cinema initiatives, participants explored how the city's film culture is intertwined with its social fabric, connecting this to broader European practices where film cultures engage with diverse geographies through decolonial lenses. In conclusion, the panel highlighted the dynamic relationship between cinema and the city, illustrating how traditions and community spaces collectively redefine cinema as a transformative realm of aesthetics, dialogue, and solidarity.

# Film Culture in Türkiye: Past and Present

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 16:15-17:00 | 📍 D2

**Tags:** Space, Community, Art, Culture, Heritage

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Altyazı Cinema Association

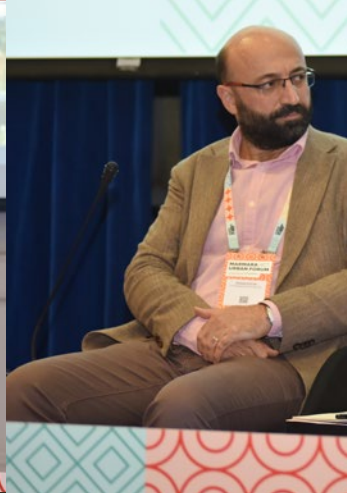
**Moderator:** Evrim Kaya, Writer, Altyazı Film Magazine


**Speakers:** Aydın Çam, Assoc. Prof., Faculty of  
Communication, Çukurova University

**Bilge Taş,** Festival and Civil Society Expert

**Özkan Küçük,** Coordinator & Film Director, Diyarbakır  
Arts Center

**Summary:** This session examined the history of film culture in Türkiye, both past and present, through the examples of Adana, Diyarbakır, and Ankara. Discussions focused on the evolution of film culture, encompassing cinemas, institutions, and audiences. Participants paid particular attention to how cinema interacted with urban cultural identities through festivals, alternative distribution networks, and institutional support structures. The session emphasized that cities with diverse social and historical contexts have both shaped and been shaped by cinema, revealing a dynamic, reciprocal relationship. By tracing these transformations, the session shed light on the rich yet under-represented cinematic experiences of these cities, offering a deeper understanding of how film culture contributes to urban identity and imagination.





# COLLECTIVE WORK

MARUF25's collective works fostered collaboration and participation, inviting attendees into a shared process of thinking, creating, and reimagining urban spaces. Through a focus on co-creation, these encounters channeled participants' diverse urban experiences, ideas, and dreams into a tangible, shared production. Integrated throughout the venue, they became interactive spaces dedicated to collective expression.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Weaveing the New With Waste

1-2-3 October 2025 | S4

**Tags:** Climate, Nature, Art, Participation, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Mind Your Waste Foundation

**Curator:** Firat Neziroğlu, PhD, Artist, Mind Your Waste Foundation

**Summary:** This collective work aimed to demonstrate how materials considered waste can be re-evaluated and imbued with new meaning. It became a hands on process intertwining sustainability, participation, and creation. Throughout the event, participants wove textile waste - thread by thread - on a loom, transforming it into new forms. They worked with both materials they brought themselves and those provided by the artist, creating a powerful symbol of shared labor and collective creativity.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Meme Station

1-2-3 October 2025 | C15

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Feminist Design

**Curator:** Sinem Görücü, Founder, Feminist Design

**Facilitators:** Efe Kağan Yurt, Facilitator,  
Feminist Design

**Mustafa Gökberk Tektok,** Creative Strategist,  
Researcher, Feminist Design

**Sıla Kartal Al,** Facilitator, Architect, Feminist Design

**Summary:** The Meme Station was an interactive installation where participants created memes about the city, channeling their thoughts, observations, and MARUF25 experiences through both digital and analog mediums. In this playful space, ideas were expressed with humor and then displayed on an expanding wall. This transformed individual voices into a broader visual dialogue, turning the wall itself into a collective canvas for sharing urban stories.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Seeing. Hearing. Narrating

1-2-3 October 2025 | C22

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Participation, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** İzmir Film Lab

**Facilitator:** Gülen Saygi, Creative Director, İzmir Film Lab

**Summary:** As part of the MARUF on the Go program, participants brought their online learning to life at the forum. Having previously explored techniques for documenting the city and transforming urban experiences into digital narratives, they now applied these skills in person. By capturing the sights and sounds of MARUF25, they engaged in real-time storytelling and moment-making. Their creations - crafted through writing, sound, and video - were later edited and compiled, contributing to the event's lasting digital archive. Ultimately, each participant embarked on a personal journey of filming and creation, producing a unique narrative of their own MARUF25 experience.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Would You Like to Talk About the City?

1-2 October 2025 | D8

**Tags:** Participation, Community, Governance, Quality of Life

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Things We Need to Talk About (Konuşmamız Gereken Şeyler)

**Facilitators:** Elif Menderes, Founder, Human Rights Academy

**Gülçin Sinav,** Founder, Things We Need to Talk About

**Summary:** This dialogue corner provided an interactive space for short, meaningful conversations throughout MARUF25. Here, participants shifted from passive listening to becoming active contributors; sharing ideas, connecting with others, and engaging in a collective reflection on cities.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Collective Circle

1-2-3 October 2025 | D4

**Tags:** Participation, Community

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** YERELIZ (Local Monitoring, Research and Implementation Association)

**Summary:** Inspired by the core themes of MARUF25, the Collective Circle provided a space for participants to envision cities that are fair, resilient, inclusive, and built for shared living. Participants began by drawing questions about urban life from a box, responding through narratives they enriched with writing, drawing, and color. These personal reflections were then transferred onto individual circular modules, transforming private thought into a collaborative act. Over the three days, as more modules were added, the collective work grew into a connected whole. It ultimately became a tangible symbol of shared dreams; a “sculpture of togetherness.”

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Collective City

1-2-3 October 2025 | V5

**Tags:** Space, Mobility, Roles, Water, Participation

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Arkki Türkiye

**Summary:** This ongoing drop-in workshop invited people of all ages to use various materials to imagine and build the coastal city they wish to inhabit. By highlighting the environmental challenges facing the Sea of Marmara and the rapid urbanization of the region, it encouraged participants to develop creative ideas for sustainable coastal design. Models crafted from recycled materials were placed on a map of the Golden Horn and displayed throughout the event.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Caught in MARUF's Net

1-2-3 October 2025 | Shore-2

**Tags:** Networks, Participation, Community, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** YERELIZ (Local Monitoring, Research and Implementation Association)

**Summary:** In addition to the notes collected in their Deep Dive Diaries, participants shared their impressions of the city and MARUF25 through words and images on this interactive installation. Continuously enriched with writings, drawings, and objects, the structure grew throughout the event with contributions from participants and volunteers. Positioned along the waterfront overlooking the sea, this dynamic piece transformed individual experiences into a shared collective memory.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Uncover the Possible

1-2-3 October 2025 | S5

**Tags:** Participation, Community, Space, Data

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Curators:** Emre Güzel, Founding Director, Roof Coliving  
Esra Özgür, Experience Designer, Dijital Esenlik  
Gülin Çavuş, Experience Designer, Yapay Gündem  
İpek Lalin Tunç, Roof Coliving

**Summary:** Focusing on the theme of possibilities, this collaborative piece offered participants an interactive experience to explore the city's many layers. As these layers overlapped, they revealed the fragility and transformative power of knowledge, reshaping urban realities. Acting as city dwellers, participants came together to piece these fragments and question the distinction between the visible and the unseen.

SENSES ON COLLECTIVE WORK

# Water's Edge: A Placemaking Experiment

1-2-3 October 2025 | Shore-3

**Tags:** Space, Nature, Participation, Art, Community

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Roof Coliving

**Curator:** Emre Güzel, Founding Director, Roof Coliving

**Summary:** In this placemaking activity, participants created three-dimensional symbolic sculptures using simple materials to understand changing coastlines and develop new visions for the future. With hollow prisms, cubes, and fabrics, they reflected on the building blocks of the city, visualizing current conditions and future projections while examining the system from different perspectives. Through this process, they explored their realities, assumptions, emotions, and intentions. Guided by these insights, participants repeatedly rearranged the sculptures along the Golden Horn waterfront to assess the critical points of coastal transformation.







# EXHIBITION

MARUF25 exhibitions were designed as points where research, memory, and creativity intersect, addressing cities and urban issues from different scales and perspectives. Each aimed to create a dialogue between the past, present, and future of the city around diverse themes such as social interaction, collective imagination, urban memory, construction techniques, and materials. Running parallel to MARUF25's thematic flows, the exhibitions visualized its intellectual framework and offered spaces of exploration that made visible collective production, sharing experiences, and potential solutions.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# 50 Years of “Union”

1-2-3 October 2025 | S1

**Tags:** Heritage, Culture, Region, Local Diplomacy, Services

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Summary:** This exhibition traced the 50-year history of the Marmara Municipalities Union, a key local government association established in 1975 in Türkiye. Using documents, photographs, and publications, it connected the Union’s past to the ongoing future of urban development.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Local Governments and Urbanism in the 100-Year Journey of the Republic of Türkiye

1-2-3 October 2025 | C13

**Tags:** Heritage, Culture, Governance, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** This exhibition was inspired by the five-volume work Local Governments and Urbanism in the 100-Year Journey of the Republic of Türkiye, commissioned by the Marmara Municipalities Union for the republic’s centenary. By shedding light on the history of local governance, the exhibition offered a reference point for understanding the past, present, and future of Turkish cities. It presented excerpts from over 80 experts, covering topics ranging from municipal law and urban planning to social transformation and infrastructure, thereby providing a comprehensive preview of the publication.

## SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Possible with Wood!

📅 1-2-3 October 2025 | 📍 C16

**Tags:** Space, Nature, Energy, Climate

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partners:** Turkish Timber Association, The Circle, Asmaz, Attwood, HSCT, Rothblaas, ATTEC

**Curators:** Demet Sürücü, PhD, Timber Building Construction and Research Center Deputy Manager, Bahçeşehir University

Nesli Kayalı, Program Director, The Circle

**Summary:** Engineered timber, a natural material enhanced through industrial processes for high strength and precision, is playing an increasingly prominent role in modern construction. This exhibition provided a close look at a new generation of building components made possible by techniques like CLT and glulam. Bringing together material samples, connection details, and a full-scale spatial installation, it invited visitors to engage directly with these systems, presenting them as a robust and sustainable alternative for building a more resilient future.

## SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# In the Footsteps of Two Little Urbanites: New Stories

📅 1-2-3 October 2025 | 📍 C14

**Tags:** Care, Space, Art, Culture, Child

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Curator:** Melis Nur Koyuncu, Urban Planner & Architect

**Summary:** Featured in this exhibition was Tan Oral's 1979 classic Two Little City Urbanites, Marmara Municipalities Union's first children's book, alongside new titles from the Marmarathon project inspired by Oral's work. Reinterpreting the urban experience through the eyes of children, these stories served as a creative bridge between contemporary cities and the heritage of the past.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# The Story of My Coastal City

1-2-3 October 2025 | V4

**Tags:** Children, Region, Water, Space, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Arkki Türkiye

**Summary:** This exhibition featured the outcomes of workshops held with children across 10 municipalities in the Marmara Region, part of the MARUF on the Go. It presented the Marmara Sea, coastal life, and coexistence through the unique perspective of children. Inspired by comic books, the children's sketches invited participants to envision new possibilities for the coasts and communal living. The works explored three key themes: "encountering the sea", "astonishment at pollution", and "hope for our coasts".

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Drawings in the Footsteps of Heritage

1-2-3 October 2025 | D7

**Tags:** Heritage, Culture, Space, Art

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Urban Sketchers İstanbul

**Summary:** This exhibition shared the reflections of Istanbul's cultural heritage sites through the sketches of drawing enthusiasts. These are places held in the city's collective memory and brought back to life through adaptive reuse. As part of the MARUF on the Go activities, historic buildings from across Istanbul were transformed into individual sketches. They then converged at the MARUF25 venue, creating a unique intersection of the city's layered memory.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Natural Buildings for Healthy Living Spaces

1-2-3 October 2025 | C19

**Tags:** Nature, Climate, Quality of Life, Energy, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Natural Building Materials and Methods Association

**Summary:** This exhibition highlighted natural, healthy, and energy-efficient buildings, demonstrating how contemporary design and production approaches are being implemented in Türkiye. Moving beyond a simple display of projects, it offered a hands on journey of discovery. Through various demonstrations, it brought participants into direct contact with natural building materials and innovative field practices.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Reclaiming Streets

1-2-3 October 2025 | V6

**Tags:** Child, Care, Mobility, Space, Quality of Life

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Marmara Municipalities Union, Global Designing Cities Initiative (GDCI), Superpool

**Curator:** Dila Toprak, Training and Projects Expert, Marmara Municipalities Union

**Summary:** Reclaiming Streets is a practice-based learning program launched in 2022 by the Marmara Municipalities Union's Local Government Academy, in collaboration with Superpool and the Global Designing Cities Initiative. Its goal is to transform car-dominated streets into safe, healthy, and inclusive public spaces, with a special focus on children and caregivers. This exhibition documented the program's journey through its now fourth edition, showcasing the tangible street transformations implemented by more than 20 municipalities using tactical urbanism.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Looking at Marmara from the Shore of All Possibles

1-2-3 October 2025 | C18

**Tags:** Water, Nature, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** İstanbul Illustration Days

**Curator:** Hakan Dağ, Founder, İstanbul Illustration Days

**Summary:** The Marmara Sea is an inland sea of both limited expanse and vital passages. These thresholds and transformations lend it rich symbolic meaning, encompassing a world of possibilities. To exist on its coast is to inhabit a space between land and open sea, to be simultaneously at the center and at the edge. This in-between quality inspired the exhibition's design, which opened a creative space across a wide intellectual and visual spectrum. It brought together themes ranging from the region's fauna and flora to ancient cultural symbols, and from the relationship between coastal cities and water to ongoing urban transformations. The works on display included pieces produced as part of the MARUF on the Go activities, created in collaboration with participants.

SENSES ON EXHIBITION

# Woodlife Sweden

1-2-3 October 2025 | C17

**Tags:** Space, Nature, Climate, Technology

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** Consulate General of Sweden İstanbul

**Summary:** From candle holders and stools to schools, high-rises, and entire cities, wood stands out as one of our few renewable building materials. Sweden is at the forefront of innovation and technical progress in its use. This exhibition showcased contemporary wooden projects of various scales from across Sweden. The selected works demonstrate how architecture, design, and urbanism can actively reduce the climate impact of buildings and products, while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.







# URBAN RHYTHM

Music and dance serve as powerful mediums in urban life, enabling people to come together, express their emotions, and establish a common language. The Urban Rhythm events held at MARUF25 made the experiences of interaction, movement, and co-production within the city visible through music. The program featured both music performances and interactive workshops. While musicians delivered live performances resonating with the city's tempo, sounds, and diversity, participants in the dance workshops engaged in a collective experience centered on rhythm, sound, and bodily movement. As one of the events blending culture, arts, and the urban experience, Urban Rhythm offered participants a unique journey focused on sharing and interaction.

SENSES ON URBAN RYTHM

# Kreşendo Live Performance

1 October 2025 | 17.30-18.00 | Shore-1

**Tags:** Art, Culture, Community

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

How is it possible to have a resilient city?

How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partner:** Kreşendo

**Summary:** The Kreşendo Orchestra, featuring Ezgi Karadayı, İpek Ektaş, Nihal Saruhanlı, Seda Kireççi, and Ceren Deniz, brought its dynamic and vibrant repertoire to MARUF as part of the Urban Rhythm program. The ensemble skillfully blended diverse musical styles, weaving together contemporary and traditional influences to create an immersive soundscape that mirrored the city's energy. Through their performance, attendees experienced not only the music's intricate layers but also a profound connection to the urban environment, as each note echoed the city's pulse. The project demonstrated how music can animate public spaces, inviting the audience to engage collectively with the rhythm of the city in a shared, interactive experience.

SENSES ON URBAN RYTHM, SIDE EVENT

# Heritage: An Album of Birdsongs

2 October 2025 | 12.30-13.00 | C6

**Tags:** Nature, Roles, Quality of Life

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitators:** Kerem Feyzi, Musical Artist, Kuş Kolektifi (Bird Collective)

Suat Akin Orbay, Musical Artist, Kuş Kolektifi (Bird Collective)

Yaz Güvendi, Founder, Kuş Kolektifi (Bird Collective)

**Summary:** “Kuş Kolektifi” (Bird Collective) bridged nature and art by bringing together the calls of endangered birds with the sounds of nearly forgotten traditional instruments. The event featured the launch of their album “Heritage,” accompanied by a short video screening, a presentation, and a live performance, all underscoring the urgent need to preserve our cultural and ecological heritage. Through music, participants discovered new ways to connect with nature in the heart of the urban environment.

SENSES ON URBAN RYHTHM

# Half Break: Solo Jazz Dance

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 13:15-13:45 | 📍 S6

**Tags:** Art, Culture

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Mustafa Said Cengiz

**Summary:** The city pulsates with a rhythm shaped by our daily steps; the flow of its streets, sidewalks, and squares is influenced by the movements of all who inhabit it. In this rhythm, dance provides a means of embodiment: every step, pause, and turn allows participants to connect with the city's dynamic energy. With this in mind, the workshop was designed to bring the city's rhythm to life through the free and improvisational steps of jazz, offering attendees a brief midday pause. Participants were invited to feel the rhythm and align their own movements with the city, creating a shared experience of urban motion.

SENSES ON URBAN RYHTHM

# Urban Rythm Concert: Peradi Ensemble

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 19:00-19:30 | 📍 Shore-1

**Tags:** Community, Art, Culture

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Artist:** Peradi Ensemble

**Summary:** Peradi Ensemble is a vocal group founded in Istanbul in 2019 by nine women, renowned for its rich, multilingual repertoire. Covering folk melodies from Anatolia, the Balkans, the

Caucasus, and beyond in roughly 25 languages, the ensemble performed at MARUF25 as part of the Urban Rhythm events. Through their unique vocal arrangements and traditional instruments, Peradi Ensemble offered participants a chance to experience the rhythm of the city while demonstrating how diverse cultures can coexist harmoniously. The diversity of their repertoire resonated with one of the MARUF25's key themes: "How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living in solidarity and embraces social diversity?" Their performance invited reflection on the possibilities of shared life in a multicultural context.



# URBAN ROUTE

Within the scope of MARUF25, Urban Routes were conducted as thematic tours and walking workshops, offering the opportunity to experience Istanbul through its diverse facets. Designed as more than mere sightseeing tours, these routes served as experiential spaces fostering encounters, dialogues, walks, and co-production. They enabled participants to feel the rhythm of the city on the ground and bear witness to multi-layered urban narratives under the guidance of field experts. These routes were curated in collaboration with various MARUF stakeholders, including the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels), Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM), Fatih Municipality, Eyüpsultan Municipality, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), and Parabol. In the Walking Workshops, participants seized the opportunity to observe, trace the city's footprints, and examine public spaces, experiencing various locations in Istanbul through experiential walks. On the evening of October 2—the second day of MARUF—two exclusive routes were conducted for speakers in collaboration with IMM: the Basilica Cistern and the Digital Experience Museum. On the final day of the forum, 4 English and 15 Turkish routes were organized for both speakers and participants. Commencing at 14:00 on October 3, 2025, following the closing session, these routes provided an opportunity to explore the city's history, cultural diversity, social memory, and spatial transformation in the field. Spanning a wide spectrum from Be-yoğlu to Balat, and from the Grand Bazaar to the industrial heritage around the Golden Horn, a total of 21 routes were conducted throughout MARUF.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE Special Route

# The Basilica Cistern Museum

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 19.00-22.00

**Tags:** Culture, Space, Heritage

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Summary:** In collaboration with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, a guided visit to the Basilica Cistern was organized exclusively for MARUF speakers. During the visit, participants received information about the structure's spatial layout, columns, and stone craftsmanship. They also had the opportunity to observe how the cistern reflects the city's historical and cultural fabric.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE Special Route

# Digital Experience Center

📅 2 October 2025 | 🕒 19.00-22.00

**Tags:** Technology, People, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

**Summary:** In collaboration with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, a special route at the Digital Experience Museum was designed for MARUF speakers. The tour offered participants the chance to explore digital exhibitions and interactive spaces, demonstrating the role of technology in presenting cultural content.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Apartments, Hans and Tales: Galata-Pera-Beyoğlu

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space, Heritage, People

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Volkan Arkun, İstanbul Tükenmeden

**Summary:** Guided by the İstanbul Tükenmeden team, this route began in Beyoğlu and explored the side streets of Pera, an area shaped by Western influences since the 19th century. Participants visited a variety of spaces—from historic apartment buildings and hans to schools and shops—uncovering stories of the neighborhood's daily life along the way. The journey traced urban layers representing different historical eras, concluding at the iconic Galata Tower.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# 18th Istanbul Biennial: Galata Greek School and Zihni Han

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space, Heritage

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSÜ)

**Summary:** As part of the 18th Istanbul Biennial, a special guided tour was organized for MARUF in collaboration with the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSÜ). The tour included visits to the Galata Greek Primary School and Zihni Han, where participants explored the biennial artworks on site.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Eyüpsultan Street Reclamation Project

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Care, Children, Mobility, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Eyüpsultan Municipality

**Facilitator:** Aslı Yüksekdağ, Landscape Architect, Eyüpsultan Municipality

**Summary:** This route featured a site visit to School Street in Eyüpsultan's Kemberburgaz-Mimarsinan Neighborhood, where the municipality has implemented a transformative urban design project. As part of the Marmara Municipalities Union's "Reclaiming Streets" program, developed with Superpool and GDCl, the intervention simplified a two-lane road into a single lane to prioritize the safety of children and caregivers. Participants observed the space during school dismissal time, discussing firsthand how this redesign influenced the street's use and social dynamics.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

## Eyüpsultan Cultural Heritage

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Heritage, Space, Culture

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Eyüpsultan Municipality

**Summary:** Hosted by Eyüpsultan Municipality, this exclusive route offered MARUF participants an in-depth exploration of the district's rich cultural heritage. Led by an expert guide, the journey began at Cülus Road and continued through key historic sites, including the Eyüpsultan Mosque and Complex, the Hamam Museum, the Gallery and Ahmet Kekeç Library, the Zal Paşa Complex, and the charming streets of the Nişancı Neighborhood.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

## Golden Horn Labor and Industry Collective Memory Route

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Care, Heritage, Space, Culture

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a fair city?  
How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Facilitator:** Asli Odman, Assist. Prof., Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

**Summary:** This route explored the elements; natural, built, and ecological, along with the labor history that forged Istanbul's "darüssinai" (industrial) identity, all from the unique vantage point of the water. From the deck of the Golden Horn Line ferry, participants observed the spatial organization of factories lining the shores, their relationship with the water, and the labor structures of the past. The journey traced the Golden Horn's transformation across the Byzantine, Ottoman, and Republican periods, evaluating its evolution through the lenses of literature, cinema, music, and visual arts. It prompted a comparison of the changing actors and landscapes along the transition from an "industrial culture" to one of "cultural industries." The route began with a ferry ride from Karaköy and concluded at the symbolic Silahtarağa Campus, the city's first power plant.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Istanbul Modern: Floating Islands Exhibition

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Summary:** MARUF participants joined a guided tour of Istanbul Modern's ninth collection exhibition, "Floating Islands." The tour explored the development and diversity of Turkish art from 1945 to the present, featuring a rich selection of works ranging from abstract and figurative pieces to installations and video art. By focusing on the artists' unique imaginations, local roots, and transnational influences, the exhibition provided a comprehensive overview, allowing participants to experience the museum in depth.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# The Roof of the Grand Bazaar and Han's

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Fatih Municipality

**Summary:** Hosted by the Fatih Municipality, this route offered a unique perspective by taking participants onto the roof of the Grand Bazaar. From this vantage point, they experienced a breathtaking view of one of Istanbul's most iconic landmarks—a hub of culture, history, and commerce for over 550 years. The exploration continued through the Bazaar's historic hans, where participants admired their striking architecture and learned about their enduring commercial role.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# City Panels as the Intersection of Architecture and Art: Istanbul Textile Traders' Market

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Space, Heritage, Art

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Partners:** Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels), Kale Design and Art Center

**Facilitator:** Mustafa Ergül, Research Projects Manager, Istanbul Research Institute

**Summary:** The Istanbul Textile Traders' Market (IMÇ) stands as an early and pioneering example of collaboration between architecture and art in Türkiye. Completed between 1958 and 1967 by architects Doğan Tekeli and Sami Sisa, the building complex features ceramic and mosaic panels by artists including Füreya Koral and Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu. Organized in collaboration with Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels) and supported by the Kale Design and Art Center, this architecture-art route focused on nine works by eight artists. It provided an in-situ exploration of "art in public space" that helped shape the identity of its era.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# City Panels as the Intersection of Architecture and Art: Kadıköy

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Space, Heritage, Art

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels), Kale Design and Art Center

**Facilitator:** Nurtaç Buluç, Art Historian, Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels)

**Summary:** In Kadıköy neighborhoods like Bağdat Avenue, Feneryolu, and Fenerbahçe, the ceramic and mosaic panels that shaped the social memory from the 1970s to 2000s remain visible on building façades and entrances. Created by renowned artists such as Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Eren Eyüboğlu, Cevdet Altuğ, Erdinç Bakla, İlgi Adalan, Taci Alpaslan, Yalçın Tokay, and many others, these works collectively form a unique open-air museum. Organized in collaboration with Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels) and supported by the Kale Design and Art Center, this route examined around ten such panels along Bağdat Avenue and its side streets.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walking Through Urban Memory

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Food, Mobility, Heritage, Culture, Space

**Streams:** How is it possible to have a caring city?  
How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Partner:** Karaköy Güllüoğlu

**Facilitator:** Merin Sever, Executive Editor & Researcher,  
Can Publishing

**Summary:** On the Eminönü–Karaköy route, which bears traces of the Byzantine, Ottoman, and Republican periods, participants observed the city's layers, questioned modes of seeing, and viewed everyday buildings from new perspectives. The walk began at Yeni Cami Square and continued along Kurukahveci Han, Galata Bridge, Karaköy Palas, Karaköy Pier, and Galataport. The route concluded at the Karaköy Güllüoğlu building, a unique example of Istanbul's layered history. Dating from the 1930s, the building features vaulted ceilings, while its courtyard preserves stone walls from the Genoese era.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Historical Traces, Vibrant Streets: Cibali-Fener-Balat

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Aleksandır Masev, İstanbul Tükenmeden

**Summary:** Guided by the İstanbul Tükenmeden team, this route took participants on a journey through the historic neighborhoods along the Golden Horn. As they explored the narrow streets of Cibali, Fener, and Balat, they encountered traces of ancient cultures that persisted until the 1960s and felt the echoes of traditional communal life. The experience allowed them to discover the neighborhood's past step by step while immersing themselves in the contemporary colors and lifestyles that define these districts today.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Grand Bazaar and Hans of Historic Peninsula

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, Space, Heritage

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Mustafa Meriç, İstanbul Tükenmeden

**Summary:** Guided by the İstanbul Tükenmeden team, this route invited participants to explore the historic hans of the Grand Bazaar. The journey traced the footsteps of craftsmen, beginning with the history of the hans and bedestens while creating a space to witness the transformation of İstanbul's commercial life from the Ottoman era to the present. Key sites visited included the Beyazıt Mosque, Sahaflar Bazaar, Yağlıkcılar Street, the Bedesten, various hans, and the Nuruosmaniye Mosque.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# The Seventh Hill of Istanbul: Pashas and Saints

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Heritage, Space, People

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitators:** Ebru Kurt-Özman, PhD, Urban Governance Expert & Policy and Networks Analyst, Amsterdam University

Oktay Özman, Assoc. Prof, Memorial Hospital Group

**Summary:** The story of İstanbul is best told through its roads. This tour followed the southern branch of the ancient Mese Road, entering the city through the Golden Gate and traversing its seventh hill. It explored the area's topography and demographics across Byzantine and Ottoman history. Participants observed the striking elevation differences between mosques and churches, and between the domains of pashas and saints. They traced the geometric structure of Constantinople from the Roman-Byzantine era and witnessed how it evolved into the Islamic city of Kostantiniyye under the Ottomans. The journey revealed how the seventh hill, transformed in the 19th century by innovations like trains and trams, remains a place where the echoes of this long history are still palpable today.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# YTU Yıldız Technopark: IMEHub Project

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Technology, Local Development, Economy, Networks, Migration

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a resilient city?

**Partner:** International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

**Facilitators:** Mehtap Yalçın Tahiroğulları, Expert, Yıldız Teknopark  
Özgür Altıntop, International Projects Unit Specialist, Yıldız Teknopark

**Summary:** This route featured a visit to the Yıldız Technical University Technopark, a beneficiary of ICMPD's ENHANCER Project through its Local Shared Facilities (YOKT) Grant Program. Participants learned about the IMEHub Project, an initiative based at the technopark that supports IT and technology entrepreneurs. The project provides a comprehensive ecosystem of shared workspaces, specialized equipment, mentorship, business development support, and valuable collaboration opportunities to help startups grow.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walkshop | Walking the Invisible Lines of Golden Horn: Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Mobility, Space, Nature

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a caring city?

**Facilitators:** Bahar Aksel, Assoc. Prof., Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University  
Melih Birik, Assoc. Prof., Urban Planner, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

**Summary:** Istanbul's unique identity is deeply embodied in its topography. The monumental skyline of the Historic Peninsula, for instance, has been shaped by a longstanding construction restriction above the +40 meter elevation to preserve its distinct silhouette. This route examined the city's relationship with its shoreline, exploring not just the coastline itself but also the uses and interactions at different elevations. Against the backdrop of the climate crisis, the tour also explored and evaluated potential shoreline shifts and spatial transformations, using scenarios of rising sea levels to gain critical insights into the city's future form and coastal uses.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walkshop | Galata's Everyday Acoustic Palimpsest

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Mobility, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

**Facilitator:** Sena Karahan, Architect & Researcher, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University

**Summary:** The sound walk, conducted as part of the "Everyday Acoustic Palimpsest" research practice, involved participants walking a route while simultaneously listening to sounds previously recorded from the same path. This method created a "time-space rupture" by consciously disrupting the synchronization between what was heard, seen, and physically experienced. By stepping outside the ordinary, the walk provided a space for participants to reflect on and discuss everyday life and public space from new perspectives.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walkshop | Discovery of Safe Walking Areas

3 October 2025 | 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Mobility, People, Space, Quality of Life, Data

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Parabol

**Facilitators:** Aişe İçli, Urban and Transportation Planner, Konya Metropolitan Municipality

Elif Çora, Urban Planner, Parabol

Tuğçe Işık, Marketing Director, Parabol

shop focused on citizen participation in traffic safety analysis. Starting from the Haliç Congress Center, participants examined the city's safe and inclusive mobility options from different observational perspectives. At each stop, participants accessed the Mapalyse survey via QR codes to share their observations and mark hazardous points on the map. In this way, participants not only raised their own awareness but also contributed to local authorities' efforts to create safer walking environments. Mapalyse is a digital tool that allows participants to input data by marking locations on a map, enabling them to indicate hazards, inadequate sidewalks, or accessibility obstacles observed along the walking route.

**Summary:** As part of the SAFELY project, supported by EIT Urban Mobility, this walking work-

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walkshop | Jane's Walk: Exploring Fikirtepe on Foot

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Mobility, Space, Quality of Life

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a fair city?

**Partner:** Jane's Walk

**Facilitator:** Refika Boz, Urban Planner, Nofa Planning and Construction

**Summary:** Inspired by the spirit of Jane's Walk, this "walkshop" followed the atelier "Just My Two Cents on my City: Through the Lens of Jane Jacobs." Guided by Jacobs' approach to urbanism, participants explored Kadıköy Fikirtepe, tracing its transformation from historic neighborhood textures to new constructions, and from vacant lots to their social impacts. Throughout the walk, participant-led stops and observations were recorded on the Walkability app, converting their collective insights into an accessible digital map.

SENSES ON URBAN ROUTE

# Walkshop | O'film Route: In the Footsteps of Muhsin Bey

📅 3 October 2025 | 🕒 14.00-17.00

**Tags:** Culture, Art, People, Space

**Stream:** How is it possible to have a city that enables co-living?

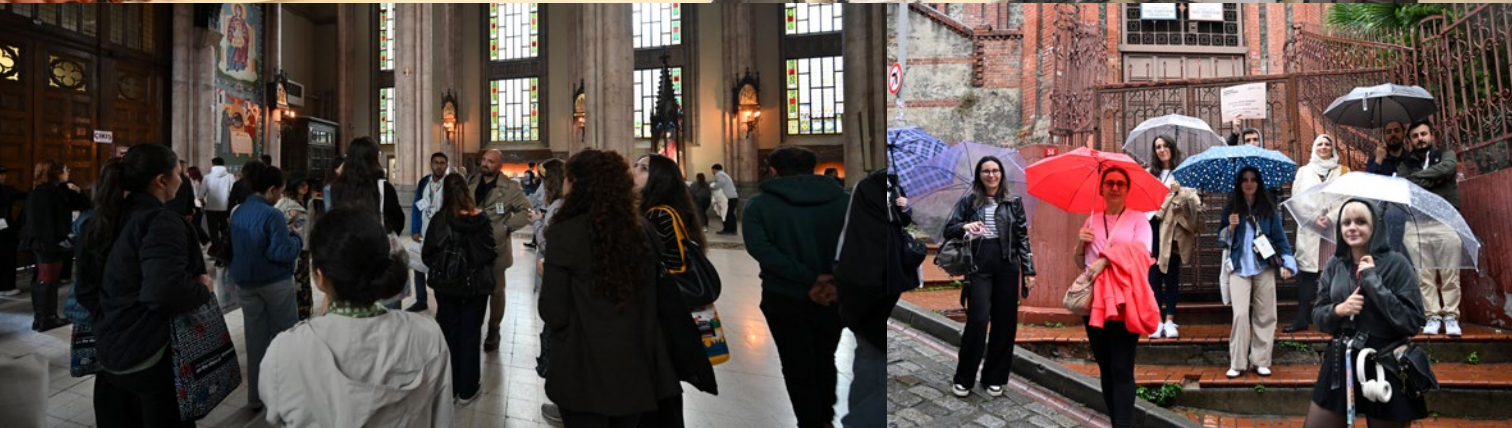
**Partner:** O'film Route

**Facilitator:** Ali Gençoğlu, PhD, Research Assistant, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

**Summary:** Istanbul, and Beyoğlu in particular, has long been a central character in Turkish cinema. Yavuz Turgul's *Muhsin Bey*, starring Şener Şen and Uğur Yücel, is a landmark film that captures the soci-

ological transformation, migration, and cultural conflicts of 1980s Istanbul. This route invited participants to walk in the footsteps of Muhsin Bey, creating a dynamic interplay between cinema, collective memory, and urban sociology. Starting on Tarlabaşı Boulevard, the walk wove through the backstreets of İstiklal Avenue to Galata, visiting key film locations. At each site, participants learned the stories of these spaces and their intersection with the film's narrative. Using the "Frame within a Frame" application, they stepped directly into the film scenes, connecting with both the history of the locations and the characters. In a unique culmination of the experience, participants marked their emotions in real-time at each location, collectively creating an "emotional map" of Muhsin Bey's Istanbul by the workshop's end.











# REFLECTIONS

## **Gökhan Yılmaz, Head of Marmara Disaster Risk Reduction Department, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of the Republic of Türkiye (AFAD)**

With its scope, volume of participants, diversity of events, and level of international engagement, the Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF) stands out as one of the premier forums and collaborative platforms in Türkiye. Given the increasing frequency of disasters globally, the inclusion of urban resilience and disaster management as key themes is particularly valuable for the work of both our country and AFAD. Involving AFAD in the preparatory phase—allowing us to contribute to the forum’s design—was crucial. Participating in a forum organized by Marmara Municipalities Union, on a platform that aligns with AFAD’s role and responsibilities in disaster management, offered us new opportunities and perspectives.

The Marmara Region is of critical importance to Türkiye, not only for its population density, building stock, and vehicle volume but also for its diverse economic activities and infrastructure. Istanbul, the heart of this region, has served as the capital of three empires and remains one of the world’s most significant metropolises. When viewing these factors through the lens of disaster risk, the AFAD Marmara Disaster Risk Reduction Department focuses heavily on risk mitigation efforts across the region, conducting joint operations with all relevant institutions to ensure the safety of our cities and citizens. For AFAD, engaging in platforms like MARUF is institutionally vital to identify disaster risks, bring them to the public agenda, and discuss them openly with public stakeholders.

Reflecting on our involvement, we believe that discussing disaster-related issues through a series of supported events generated positive value for both the AFAD and MARUF identities. Participants gained the opportunity to hear the disaster management approach directly from the perspective of the national authority, while AFAD seized the

chance to capture the attention of professionals from diverse disciplines in an international urban forum.

Furthermore, in line with national policies that require active local government involvement in the disaster management system, platforms that bridge national disaster authorities with local administrators and professionals are essential for translating national policies into local action. In this regard, we assess that the closed meeting for decision-makers and the networking event bringing together actors from various sectors during MARUF25 successfully achieved their objectives. We are eager to continue this cooperation with Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU) in future forums.

Moving forward, beyond the hospitality shown to us by the MMU team, we foresee the potential for organizing joint events specifically with local government managers, decision-makers, and experts in the disaster field. We believe such collaboration fits the nature of this platform, supporting a culture of joint working and increasing ownership of the events. Additionally, organizing interactive workshops where we can discuss disaster management with those who actively study and produce work on the city could create new fields of operation for both AFAD and local governments.

While we observed many insightful exchanges, we foresee that increasing international participation in our specific stream would be beneficial for establishing new partnerships. For future events, inviting international organizations that address the reality of disasters through their impact on cities and society—and linking this to development—would be highly valuable. Acting on the premise that MARUF is a platform for urban

dialogue rather than a strictly academic conference, we also find that early-stage guidance by the organizing committee is crucial for maximizing the efficiency of these events.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the esteemed team and executives of Marmara Municipalities Union for the institutional cooperation fostered by their genuine and open approach, as well as to all institutions and organizations that organized and supported this event.

## Anastasia Sukhoroslova, CEO & Founder, All Things Urban

MARUF25 was my first time attending this forum, and it left a strong impression on me from the very first day. Experiencing the event as an official partner through All Things Urban, while also speaking, moderating, and joining sessions as a participant, gave me a full sense of how the forum works and why it's so valued by the urban community.

What stood out most was the balance between the local context and the international voices in the room. It was inspiring to understand the priorities and challenges of the Marmara Region while also hearing perspectives from experts and guests coming from very different geographic and professional backgrounds. This mix made the conversations richer and more connected to reality.

The motto "Cities Developing Solutions" came through clearly across the sessions I attended. The diversity of participants was great: local governments, NGOs, academics, private sector companies, researchers, and young professionals all contributed to the discussions. As a first-time attendee, I appreciated how open and collaborative the atmosphere was. It felt like people genuinely came to exchange ideas and learn from one another.

My session, "How to Be an Urbanist in a Changing World?", reflected this energy well. We explored how the profession is evolving and what skills and mindsets urbanists need today. Participants shared examples from their own cities and professional pathways, which helped create a broader picture of

the opportunities and challenges ahead. The workshop I co-led with Ervin Sezgin afterwards turned into a very honest and engaging space where people discussed their own paths and hopes for the future of city-making.

As a partner, the experience also resonated with our work at All Things Urban, which connects urban professionals from all over the world and supports them in navigating their careers in a rapidly changing field. It was meaningful to see how our mission aligned so closely with MARUF's goals and to be part of a forum that values collaboration, knowledge exchange, and community.

Looking ahead, it would be great to see even more international voices included, along with additional networking opportunities. And given how fast cities and the urban profession are changing, future editions could benefit from more sessions on emerging skills, climate adaptation, data and AI, and the evolving realities of urban careers. MARUF already brings together a wide range of perspectives, and expanding these elements could make the global exchange even stronger.

Overall, MARUF25 was a great introduction to a platform that brings together diverse sectors, generations, and regions. I hope future editions continue building on formats that encourage participation, learning, and co-creation. This year made it very clear how important spaces like this are for shaping better cities.

## Altyazı Cinema Association

As the Altyazı Cinema Association, we were delighted to participate in the MARUF program for the second consecutive year. Undertaking the curation and content design of the “Urban Cinema” track at MARUF25 was a significant experience for us. It allowed us to craft a program that reflects on cities, festivals, memory, and social solidarity through the lens of cinema—an endeavor that not only aligns directly with our mission but also opens new dialogues between local governments, academia, and civil society.

Our primary expectation for MARUF25 was to create a space that could foster public discussion through cinema within an international urban platform. We observed that the program we developed garnered significant interest. However, the early timing of the second day’s screening negatively impacted attendance figures. Nevertheless, the panels cultivated a rich environment for learning and sharing, where we could collectively debate how cinema intersects with urban policies, culture, and freedom of expression. The “Deep Dive” format proved efficient in enabling participants from different fields to truly hear one another. That said, the sheer physical scale of the event venue occasionally hindered spontaneous encounters. We believe a more cohesive spatial layout, coupled with direct guidance targeting audiences from different event zones who might be interested in this program, would bolster such interactions.

The international dimension of MARUF25 was invaluable. However, we observed that bureaucratic hurdles regarding participation from outside Europe created challenges for some of our

guests. For the future, more proactive planning regarding visa processes and the development of solutions for potential issues would be beneficial. Establishing supportive mechanisms in this regard would significantly enhance MARUF’s global accessibility.

Our planning, coordination, and on-site communication with the MARUF team were highly professional. We particularly value the dedication shown in guest hospitality, transfers, and the organization of side events. The preparation process was defined by a flexible and collective workflow; as Altyazı, we were able to maintain content authenticity while establishing a structure aligned with the forum’s general vision. We believe this collaborative production experience will continue into the future.

The defining characteristic that sets MARUF apart from similar forums is its ability to genuinely convene diverse sectors—local governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector. Preserving this structure and opening more space for culture and arts policies will only increase the forum’s impact. In the coming years, we believe themes where cinema and creative industries intersect with critical issues—such as the climate crisis, cultural heritage preservation, the artistic use of public space, democratic participation, and freedom of expression—should be further strengthened.

For us, MARUF25 served as a bridge connecting urban policies with independent cinema—an experience that unlocked new partnerships and intellectual territories.

## Abdallah Anati, Executive Director, APLA

APLA's first participation in the Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF25) marked a significant step in advancing its international presence and engagement within the global dialogue on urban governance. As an official partner, APLA contributed to a forum that brought together over 8,000 participants and 500 speakers from more than 50 countries — creating a vibrant space for local leaders, policymakers, and practitioners to exchange practical experiences on building sustainable and inclusive cities.

For APLA, MARUF25 was more than an event; it was a platform to position the Palestinian local government voice among peers facing shared urban challenges across different contexts. Through its active participation in plenary sessions, side meetings, and the Palestine booth, APLA presented the resilience, innovation, and determination of Palestinian municipalities in upholding service delivery, community protection, and local democracy under occupation and crisis.

The special session “Cities that Listen, Cities that Lead” offered an opportunity for mayors and municipal leaders to showcase locally driven solutions and reaffirm that Palestinian local governments are not only surviving adversity but are actively shaping pathways of inclusion and recovery. Likewise, APLA's contribution to the “Cities at Wartime” session, led by the Mayor of Tulkarem, provided an authentic perspective on what urban resilience means in contexts of conflict — a message that resonated strongly with international audiences.

Beyond visibility, MARUF25 offered meaningful networking and cooperation prospects. Bilateral meetings, notably with Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality and Marmara Municipalities Union, opened doors for structured collaboration around capacity-building, technical exchange, and municipal solidarity. The Palestine booth itself became a hub of interaction, drawing over 2,000 visitors and serving as a symbol of Palestinian endurance and partnership.

From an institutional learning perspective, MARUF25 underscored the importance of connecting APLA's local initiatives to global agendas such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. The forum also reaffirmed APLA's role as a bridge between Palestinian municipalities and regional platforms advocating for good governance, transparency, and people-centered urban transformation.

For future engagements, it is recommended that APLA build on this momentum by translating the discussions and connections from MARUF25 into concrete frameworks for cooperation. Strengthening follow-up mechanisms, maintaining continuous dialogue with new partners, and aligning these exchanges with APLA's 2026–2027 Cooperation and Advocacy Strategy will ensure that participation evolves from representation to impact.

Overall, MARUF25 was a transformative first step — one that expanded APLA's visibility, reinforced its advocacy mission, and positioned the Palestinian municipal experience as an essential voice in the global conversation on resilience, democracy, and sustainable local governance.

## Merin Sever, Executive Editor & Researcher, Can Publishing

At this year's MARUF, I participated with two separate events. The first was a talk titled "Urban Talk: Tracing Urban Memory," which I co-hosted with Ceren Sungur as part of the Minds On track. The second was an Urban Route under the Senses On program, a guided walk titled "Walking Through Urban Memory," taking participants from Eminönü to Karaköy to explore the layered memory of the city.

For me personally, both the talk and the walk were deeply enjoyable precisely because the people who joined were genuinely interested. Their enthusiasm, thoughtful questions, and personal stories enriched the experience for everyone involved.

The Urban Route, however, held special value. There is something fundamentally different, and more effective, about learning by seeing the city, hearing its rhythm, feeling its wind, noticing its scents, all paced by the act of walking itself. It naturally transcends more conventional formats. I found it far more engaging and enjoyable, too. As someone who often gives talks, I rarely get to host interactive experiences like this, and it left me wanting to do much more of it.

I was truly impressed by the sheer diversity of topics and formats. The way events were distributed across different conceptual tracks created an incredible richness—there really seemed to be something for every curiosity.

A standout aspect for me was the event team. They were exceptionally warm, sincere, helpful, and kind; it was one of the most memorable parts of the whole experience.

If I were to note one area for improvement from the planning phase, it would be communication—specifically, ensuring events reach their intended audiences. I sensed some delays both in promoting events and in responding to questions under promotional social media posts. This likely led interested participants to reach out to us directly with their queries. There is also the common challenge with free registrations: the gap between sign-ups and actual attendance. While perhaps unavoidable, it did lead to some frustration, as we received messages like, "We could not register because it was "full," but photos showed fewer attendees than the stated capacity."

Having not attended previous MARUFs, I cannot make a comparison, but I see no reason why the organisation should not keep advancing. For the future, I believe the most valuable step would be to increase the proportion of dynamic, interactive, experience-based activities - walks, workshops, hands-on sessions - relative to traditional talks. While a talk can happen anywhere, anytime, it is platforms like MARUF that make these richer, experiential formats truly possible.

On a personal note, I remain fully open to supporting the MARUF initiative in any way I can.

## **Bernd Vöhringer, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe**

I was one of the discussants at the opening session of MARUF25 on 1 October morning. I was invited to reflect on one of the 4 main streams of MARUF25: How is it possible to have a fair city with participatory, reliable and accountable institutional structures where local democracy is rooted? During my intervention I mostly insisted on the need to have strong structures and institutions for democratic governance to be efficient. I also drew attention to the current climate of mistrust, polarisation and disinformation, which requires us to regain and restore trust in democracy and its institutions. If we want to revive people's commitment to democracy, we must address current challenges collectively, at all levels. And we must rethink our methods, innovate and invent new ways to involve and engage citizens.

Democracy is a living, breathing system that gives every citizen a voice and every voice a value. It is not just a system of governance, not only about elections, laws, institutions and procedures. Democracy, unlike other systems, upholds the principles of freedom, equality, security and justice. In order to preserve and revive it, to make it work more effectively, we must involve the whole of society and all level of governance. To that end, representative democracy must be complemented with participative democracy and more multi-level cooperation. MARUF25 has allowed us to discuss ways and means to work towards this common goal and has been a fertile and inspiring gathering of likeminded actors determined to strengthen local democracy.

In the afternoon of the 1st of October, the Congress also organised a panel discussion on Resilience in Action: Local Preparedness for Environmental Challenges. This panel explored how local and regional authorities can anticipate, manage,

and respond to growing climate-related challenges. As local elected representatives, we presented our own field experience and discussed key aspects of local governance in the face of various challenges. These include water management, coastal erosion, wildfires, floods, water pollution. We underlined the need for preparedness, coordinated responses and resilience of societies to face crisis situations but also awareness raising of citizens on the role they can play.

All in all, the Congress members participating in MARUF25 were very satisfied. We found it very interesting, relevant in terms of topics covered, and representative of a wide diversity of participants. We wish to congratulate and thank Marmara Municipalities Union for having provided such a valuable platform for meeting, exchanging and sharing.

Building sustainable and resilient cities involves the promotion of international and inter-municipal exchanges of experience and good practices and the provision of opportunities to build networks of multilateral co-operation. It involves organising debates on crucial questions faced by our societies, debates where representatives of cities and regions, but also international actors, national governments, the civil society, the economic players, and other relevant stakeholders can meet, share experience and draw innovative policies for the future of their communities.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe provides such opportunities to all local and regional authorities over its 46 European member States. We wish to encourage all stakeholders to take opportunities and events such as MARUF25 to join forces and ideas, to build networks and cooperation.

Through civic engagement, through collective and supportive action, through innovative governance and steadfast leadership at local level, cities can be made safer, more inclusive and more respectful.

I would like also to express a special thanks to Mayor Mustafa Bozbey, the current President of

Marmara Municipalities Union and to all the organising team who have done an amazing job before and during the Forum. They have been very helpful and supportive in organising the Congress participation in the Forum. We are grateful for this efficient and fruitful cooperation and wish to continue it through MARUF and other initiatives such as the European Local Democracy Week.

### **Emre Oğuzöncül, Manager, Climate Strategies and Green Cities, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**

With its diverse content and robust lineup of speakers, MARUF25 stood out as an event that generated high participant satisfaction, distinguished by its well-curated and compelling panels.

However, it was observed that the high volume of concurrent sessions and the placement of some discussions in relatively smaller halls occasional-

ly posed a challenge in following specific topics. Moving forward, curating more focused thematic agendas and prioritizing social media and communication processes could be considered key areas for development. These steps would likely strengthen both participant attendance and experience, as well as foster deeper inter-institutional interaction.

### **Laura Hetel, Policy Officer, Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission, European Commission**

Timely topics, inspiring speakers and Marmara Municipalities Union as a wonderful host: MARUF is always a worthwhile stop for thought-provoking exchanges on urban transformations from the angles of implementation, governance and finance. Over the years, it has become the place to celebrate and build momentum for the activities of the European Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission in Türkiye.

At MARUF23, we built a national conversation around mission cities Istanbul and Izmir, bringing in perspectives from other European mission cities and national mission platforms under the CapaCITIES network. We also paved the way for associating to the Cities Mission, under its Twinning

Learning Program, other cities from Türkiye such as Antalya, Bandırma, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, Konya, Menteşe and Şişli.

At MARUF25, we have enlarged the outreach of the Cities Mission through the launch of the Climate-Neutral Cities Network (İNŞA). Over 50 cities from Türkiye are now part of this capacity-building and peer learning network, coordinated by Marmara Municipalities Union and set up with funding from the Cities Mission. We also held a policy roundtable with representatives of ministries, local authorities and TÜBİTAK, to understand how we can better support cities and their ambition for climate neutrality.

Looking ahead, we will use the next two years to design and implement the first stages of a fully-fledged Mission Cities Türkiye Platform, with support from the EU IPA III program and working closely with our partners from Türkiye. MARUF27

will be the ideal setting for introducing this platform to a wider audience and for gathering feedback on its activities from user cities. This is the spirit of MARUF: going further, together.

## Nihan Oya Memlük Çobanoğlu, PhD, City Planner, Gazi University

Participating in MARUF for the first time this year, I had the opportunity to take part as an attendee, a facilitator, and a workshop participant. As an attendee, I can say that the entire program—from the opening session to the sub-sessions—was highly instructive, capturing current debates and bringing together experts in their fields. The discussions led by speakers from different countries on a just, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban future offered content that was exceptionally rich in both scope and innovation.

The workshop processes were particularly successful in shifting the participant from a passive position of merely watching or listening to one of active production. The workshops, where unique participatory methods were utilized, ensure that MARUF serves not just as a platform for knowledge transfer but also as one that encourages co-production. Furthermore, the wide variety of activities offered—such as sessions, workshops, urban library events, exhibitions, and film screenings—made the event extremely inclusive by opening space for diverse forms of participation.

I believe MARUF's distinction as truly the only international event organized in our country in the field of planning is significant. In this respect, it provides an extraordinary environment for interaction by gathering numerous experts, organizational representatives, local government actors, academics, and practitioners working on urban issues at both national and international levels under the same roof. I think these encounters between different scales, institutions, and disciplines will make a vital contribution to both following current debates and developing potential future collaborations.

I must express that as both an experience and a meeting platform, I benefited from MARUF with great pleasure and beyond my expectations. Hoping to meet again at the next MARUF with even broader participation, including city planners who could not be with us, and further increased international partnerships!

## Hayrettin Günc, Senior Program Manager, Global Designing Cities Initiative (GDCI)

Another MARUF has come to a close, and once again, it was an unforgettable experience filled with inspiration, energy, and new ideas. There were numerous sessions that aligned directly with my area of expertise, and I found MARUF25 to be incredibly enriching both in terms of content and interaction. The topics covered in the streams I attended were not only timely but also highly relevant to real-world practice. The presentations balanced theory with on-the-ground experience, and hearing diverse approaches in one place kept my interest and enthusiasm high throughout the event.

I found it particularly valuable when speakers did not just share their successes but also talked about their challenges, the mistakes they made, and the lessons learned. It was clear that MARUF's environment fostered this sense of a safe space for open dialogue. Seeing a city planning student ask a question directly to a mayor was a perfect example of this. Such moments can be transformative for young professionals and create a vital bridge between decision-makers and the next generation. In this sense, it was incredibly encouraging to see so many students at the event.

The different intellectual hubs scattered throughout the venue offered a truly unique experience. Moving from one area to another, I would find myself spontaneously immersed in a talk by İlhan Tekeli or lost in thought during a presentation on a completely new topic. This sense of density and inspiration was profoundly valuable to me. I must also make special note of the accessibility and inclusivity. This was one of the most meticulously organized events I have ever attended, and I sincerely thank you for making such a clear commitment to it.

During the preparation phase, as a member of the Advisory Network, I genuinely felt that my input was valued. It was motivating to see resources mobilized to bring suggestions to life. During the event itself, I witnessed the team managing the process with utmost professionalism; even my last-minute requests were met with great courtesy and a solutions-oriented approach. This consistency demonstrated a strong culture of collaboration in both planning and execution.

For me, a key highlight was connecting with representatives from various municipalities, understanding their intentions, and guiding them toward the right starting points. I believe that sparking that initial idea, creating a sense of positive competition, and strengthening that “we can do this too” feeling can open the door to significant long-term transformations. For example, following MARUF, we held a meeting with the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality to discuss how we could advance their mobility agenda—a partnership made possible directly by this forum.

MARUF25 intersected perfectly with our institutional focus areas, such as people-centered urbanism and participatory, transparent governance. Events like the PhD Showcase and the CIVICSHIP FORUM, where we saw best practices from different cities and disciplines, and innovative tools like those from Play the City, both inspired our current work and revealed new opportunities for approaches and partnerships.

In my mind, I position MARUF as a unique platform: one that directly tackles the specific problems and opportunities of Türkiye and the region, while simultaneously translating global expertise and trends into actionable, local recommendations.

With that in mind, I would like to respond to your questions with a few of my own. These points come to mind:

- What mechanisms or methods could be encouraged to make MARUF an environment that fosters more dynamic and unexpected ideas?
- To ensure inclusivity, might it be more effective to start with specific, concrete areas rather than approaching topics too broadly?
- How could MARUF make collaboration and "matchmaking" between municipalities more efficient?

- How can the proposals and debates that emerge during the planning process be filtered through a more global perspective?

These questions might help us explore potential pathways to strengthen MARUF's focus on local challenges while deepening its integration with global trends.

It was a truly fantastic event. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed their hard work and passion.

### Jacqueline Leduc Estrada, Program Officer, Global Alliance for Care

As the Global Alliance for Care (GAC), we are delighted to see care included at MARUF25 as part of the theme "On the Shore of All Possibilities." Participating in this forum offered us an important opportunity to advance our strategic priorities, particularly our commitment to positioning care as a cross-cutting element in spaces where it must be taken into account. Local governments play a crucial role in the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of care work through the development of infrastructure and urban policies that can promote greater gender justice.

From the moment we were invited to MARUF25, we felt a strong connection with the organizing team and sensed the beginning of a thoughtful and mutually beneficial partnership. The MARUF25 team's collaborative approach to designing the sessions—especially their willing-

ness to listen to our recommendations and incorporate our suggestions, such as inviting representatives from the Municipality of Bogotá—was greatly appreciated. During the forum, we felt that care was genuinely expected and welcomed as a topic, and many participants recognized our work thanks to the team's efforts to place care firmly on the agenda and in the minds of attendees.

This was one of our first opportunities to bring the topic of care into this type of space, and we clearly observed the breadth of possibilities it opened. MARUF25 enabled us to interact with academics, practitioners, civil society actors, and students who are passionate about care. It was a valuable occasion for expanding our network, strengthening alliances, and continuing to place care at the center of the urban agenda.

## Ekin Çuhadar, Research and Training Coordinator, İKSV Cultural Policy Studies

MARUF25 demonstrated a strong alignment with the core values of "Ortaklaşa: Culture, Dialogue and Support Program," run by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) with EU support and in cooperation with Marmara Municipalities Union. Its "Minds On, Hands On, Senses On" approach – an integrated framework uniting ways of thinking, making, and feeling – fostered a work culture based on collective wisdom, inclusivity, and dialogue. The forum thus became a meeting ground that multiplied encounters between different actors, opportunities for sharing experiences, and collective reflection.

This year's motto, "on the shore of all possibilities," did more than offer a theme; it created a frame that describes the very nature of the work conducted under Ortaklaşa, reminding us of both its potential and its limits. This is because working on local cultural policies often requires operating precisely "on the threshold of the possible," in a complex environment where limited resources, fragile ecosystems, and multi-actor structures intertwine.

During the session on "Crafting a Just City together with Culture and Art," the examples shared from the Marmara Islands, Küçükkuşu, and Hopa offered tangible proof of what can be possible through culture and arts at the local level, despite varying conditions and scales. The challenges of access and spatial constraints in the Marmara Islands met with the transformation of common spaces through a cultural focus. Küçükkuşu's efforts to strengthen the cultural life of a small-scale city through solidarity and local resources, and Hopa's steps toward institutionalizing cultural memory and regional cooperation, all demonstrated that cultural justice can take different forms at every scale. These experiences reminded us that regardless of how variable the conditions local actors face may be, transformation in the cultural sphere only becomes sustainable th-

rough models that forge relationships, think collectively, and respond to the unique needs of the local context.

This year, the "Projects Meet Funds" session was also a key part of the MARUF25 experience. Considering that matching urban-focused ideas with financing is often a challenging process in practice, this session created a meaningful space for encounter. Thanks to its format, it was not merely a presentation by grant-giving institutions; participants also had the opportunity to discuss concrete project opportunities in one-on-one meetings. Gaining practical knowledge about grant processes, establishing direct contact with new institutions, and sharing experiences with actors working in similar fields holds significant value, especially for the culture and arts sector. In this sense, the session created an experiential space that not only provided access to existing resources but also strengthened a culture of solidarity and co-production.

MARUF25's multi-layered program once again proved its success in bringing together different disciplines and actors. However, in today's age of speed, dominated by the pressure to follow everything at once, it might be valuable for such large-scale gatherings to enhance opportunities for selective deepening. In the future, it could be beneficial for MARUF to carve out more spaces that grant more time for specific sessions, allowing participants to focus on the quality of encounters, conversations, and collective reflection rather than trying to catch everything simultaneously. This could contribute to more in-depth discussion of topics and help build more effective and sustainable connections between actors from different sectors. In short, while its programmatic richness is one of MARUF's strengths, complementing this richness with strategic simplification could further amplify the forum's impact.

## Elif Menderes, Founder, Human Rights Academy

Walking through the grounds of MARUF25, I kept returning to the same sentiment: The comfort of making eye contact with familiar faces with whom we have produced together for years, juxtaposed with the excitement of the unknown with people I encountered for the first time in the corridors, wondering, “In which sentence might we find common ground?” For me, MARUF is the name of this precise interval: the ability to hold the confidence of the familiar and the possibility of the new at the same table.

This year, I engaged with three distinct experiential realms: Deep Dive sessions structured around technology and AI, workshops progressing within the framework of accessibility and equal citizenship, and interactive corners in open spaces touching upon people's relationship with the city. Although they all proceeded through different methods, their common ground was the same: If you listen, transformation is possible.

In the Deep Dives, my hope was not to crown the winner of a debate, but to see people truly hearing one another; and that is exactly what I found. We started with questions prone to polarization; yet, the conversation flowed toward expanding together rather than proving oneself right. A participant stating, “My opinion didn't change radically, but the window through which I look has widened,” was one of the most powerful outputs of this method.

In the workshops, accessibility was re-established not as a technical accommodation, but as a matter of equal citizenship and dignity. Having local government representatives and those working in the disability field sit at the same table created a relationship of seeing and being seen, rather than just a feedback loop. This is the point that intersects directly with MARUF's values and insti-

tutional approach: a rights-based, dialogue-oriented urban culture that builds hope.

Witnessing people share their emotions, grievances, and dreams regarding the city in collective working areas reminded me of a simple yet unforgettable truth: Conversation still works. When we listen well, ask the right questions, and view each other not as adversaries but as partners in the same city, both cities and democracies can heal.

When I view the streams at MARUF25 as a whole—the diversity of topics, international participation, cross-sectoral mix, and the importance placed on accessibility—it painted a picture of a strong co-learning ecosystem for me. The feeling I had while a municipal expert, a young activist, an academic, and a private sector representative sat in the same hall was captured in a very simple sentence: The urban issue is not a domain that any of us can claim ownership of alone.

The collaboration we conducted with Marmara Municipalities Union was the institutional reflection of this sentiment. From planning to implementation, and now extending to the memory and reporting phase, the sense of trust is what grew the most. I wish for this partnership—which opens space for innovation, makes experimentation possible, and encourages collective production—to deepen in the future with more cities, more youth, and more spaces for meaningful conversation.

Looking ahead, I place great importance on MARUF deepening its depolarizing, inclusive, accessible, and dialogue-centered approach even further. As the line between city and politics becomes more rigid in Türkiye and across the world, the most valuable thing MARUF can do is to multiply those magical moments of conversation that invite us back to the same table, the same room, and the same question.

## İSTON - Istanbul Concrete Elements and Ready-Mixed Concrete Factories Corporation

MARUF25 was a gathering that reminded us of the courage to redesign cities; not just physically, but intellectually. Its theme, “On the Shore of All Possibilities,” pushed us beyond conventional thinking and invited us to reimagine urban life through the lenses of technology, design, and sustainability.

As İSTON, we took great pride in being part of MARUF this year with products that bridge engineering and aesthetics, along with solutions aimed at enhancing the quality of urban life. Throughout the forum, sitting around the table with representatives from local governments, academia, and the private sector fostered a truly multidisciplinary dialogue about the cities of tomorrow.

One of MARUF's greatest strengths was its ability to encourage participants not just to listen,

but to create together. This collective spirit gave rise to fresh perspectives on what constitutes urban well-being. We were also particularly pleased that our General Manager and our Quality & R&D Manager had the opportunity to speak during the program, sharing our expertise, philosophy, and vision. It was incredibly valuable to connect directly with participants, learn their thoughts about our products and services, and make that personal contact.

Looking ahead, we believe MARUF will continue to guide the sustainable transformation of cities by maintaining its pluralistic and collaborative approach. We look forward eagerly to 2027 and to developing even more comprehensive collaborations.

Thank you for creating such a meaningful platform in our country.

### A.Yalın Karadağ, Strategy Development Manager, İznik Municipality

Spending just a single day at MARUF25 was enough for me to realize that I was experiencing far more than a mere forum. Watching thousands of people on the shores of the Golden Horn approach the same question—“how is the city thought, lived, and transformed?”—from different angles, I saw how urban issues cease to be abstract wholes and permeate the human face, voice, gait, and the way we touch one another. This was an experience nourished not by books or reports, but by the intense energy generated by togetherness.

As I looked at exhibitions reinterpreting cities through photographs, installations, and digital narratives, I thought of the stone texture of İznik, the sounds by the lakeshore, and how the rhythm of the countryside walks side by side with the

memory of historic centers. The daily rhythms of places where the urban and the rural intertwine found a strange familiarity in MARUF's aesthetic narratives. perhaps it was at this precise point that MARUF25's motto, “on the shore of all possibilities,” gained the most meaning: The city was being constructed not only through planning but also through emotion.

Watching the Urban Ateliers, it was particularly striking to see how urban design descended from the desk to the street. There was a field of interaction among people walking in public spaces, experiencing the venue in situ, designing together, and debating together. Inclusivity, climate resilience, pedagogy, design, infrastructure, social science... All met on a single street, and that street suddenly

transformed into a learning laboratory. MARUF25 reminded me once again how vital such micro-approaches are for a city like İznik, which carries both the rhythm of the province and a universal cultural heritage.

One of the forum's greatest strengths was the opportunity to stand side by side with municipalities that have succeeded in bringing implementation to the field. I know from the Reclaiming Streets experience that even a micro-scale intervention requires a multi-actor process; it is a multi-layered labor that a single directorate or a few individuals cannot shoulder alone. Seeing how these layers touched one another in the best practices I listened to at MARUF25, and how they transformed local government practices, gave me courage. Stepping into those narratives, even for a day, allowed me to look at my own city with fresh eyes upon my return.

The forum's accessibility policy—from sign language interpreters to spatial arrangements—demonstrated that the idea of the city being a right for everyone finds a response not only in discourse but in organizational practice. As a local government professional working in a city that carries cultural heritage and rural context together, this approach created a deep awareness regarding how I should approach future planning.

What remains most vivid in my mind, however, are the expressions on people's faces. That slight

smile created by encountering a new thought, by suddenly becoming two halves of the same sentence with a complete stranger, by sharing a sense of a common future... The collective excitement of people discussing the future of cities.

MARUF25 reminded me not only to “think about the city,” but to grasp the city as a living, breathing whole. Through the encounters here, I better understood why programs like Streets Transforming are transformative, and why they are not just a matter of implementation but a matter of mindset. I realized that even if we cannot move to implementation immediately, the preparation, the contact, the learning, and the collective thinking are, in themselves, a transformation.

I owe a debt of sincere gratitude to all the teams, workshop facilitators, artists, and volunteers who made MARUF25 possible, and to the municipalities that courageously shared their experiences from the field. The stories they presented demonstrated once again the invisible bridges between the periphery and the center, the collective nature of the urban dream, and what a powerful learning community local governments can actually be.

Even one day was enough: The city was a journey that started with people and continued with people, and MARUF25 was one of the most vibrant stops on this journey.

## Emir Osmanoğlu, General Director, Urban Research Institute & İdealKent Publications

When addressing the city—one of the most lucid indicators of the complexity within the flow of life—one must always consider its multi-layered nature. As in previous years, MARUF planned its program this year with a keen awareness of these multi-layered contexts inherent to the city. From film screenings to book events, from author meet-ups to musical recitals offering acoustic reflections of life, the forum unfolded like a picturesque narrative where issues addressed with an academic approach were displayed through both local and universal perspectives. It was a highly significant experience for us to participate in this event with a selection of books from İdealKent Publications, which operates openly across all subjects concerning the city, particularly architecture, planning, urbanization, and local governments.

Taking part as a speaker in the “Urban Library” section was not merely a presentation experience, but a process of intense “intellectual engagement.” Sharing why we place importance on urban publishing, our expectations for the future, and our vision regarding urban literature became an interactive learning experience for us, enriched by the deep curiosity and constructive inquiries of the participants.

From the perspective of our expertise—urban publishing—MARUF25’s greatest strength was its ability to align academia and local government practices on the same plane within the same context. In terms of sectoral diversity, this year’s event went on record as one of those rare occasions capable of blending a mayor’s field experience with an academic’s theoretical framework and an NGO representative’s advocacy perspective. The presence of international participants confirmed that the local issues addressed are, in fact, part of the global urbanization agenda. This inclusivity and ac-

cessibility transformed MARUF from a mere event into a living “urban laboratory.”

During the partnership and collaboration processes, the MARUF team’s professional approach—from the planning stage to the end of the event—made the process open to communication and highly efficient. As İdealKent Publications, our institutional goal of “disseminating urban awareness” aligned perfectly with MARUF’s motto, “Cities Developing Solutions.” This intersection offered us the opportunity to demonstrate that our publications are not just academic resources, but also roadmaps for decision-makers. The relationships established during the forum paved the way for forging more organic bonds between the publishing world, urbanism, and local governments.

The most distinct feature setting MARUF apart from other urban events is its dynamism and its seriousness carried within a “festival” atmosphere. The prevalence of a solution-oriented sincerity, rather than the cold face of bureaucracy, is the most important factor highlighting this event. Looking at its development over the years, we can say that MARUF has become a global brand, its topics of debate have deepened, and the participant profile has diversified in a qualified manner.

In the future, MARUF could expand beyond the limited three-day timeframe to cover a broader calendar. Creating a framework where some events are held in different provinces while the final events take place in Istanbul would contribute to knowledge and experience permeating the local level more effectively. In this way, in light of developments in Türkiye and the world, MARUF will continue to undertake the duty of a catalyst where knowledge is not just discussed, but transformed into policies.

## Burcu Korkut, Volunteer, MARUF

My journey as a MARUF volunteer, which began in 2021, has evolved from mere event-based participation into a deep sense of belonging, growing richer with the responsibilities I have assumed over time. Serving as a rapporteur during MARUF21 and MARUF23 allowed me to gain intimate knowledge of the organization's working culture. However, stepping in as a room volunteer at MARUF25, I entered a distinct sphere of responsibility and became part of an entirely new experience.

The circle-based discussion format implemented in my assigned room this year offered a far more fluid and interactive structure compared to previous years; the high number of speakers amplified both the velocity and diversity of the information flow. Thanks to this interactive nature, participants were not merely listeners but were empowered to engage as active constituents of the sessions. This dynamic format kept the energy of the sessions alive while creating a multifaceted space for learning and observation for myself. Engaged in a wide framework of duties—from technical cues and participant guidance to coordinating every step of the room's logistics—I not only honed my organizational skills but also witnessed firsthand the unseen collective labor operating behind the scenes. Seeing the trust placed in me during my third term as a volunteer, expanding my scope of responsibility, and taking initiative in various room-related processes was particularly gratifying.

The ethos of collective production at MARUF has always been one of the elements that impresses me most. From the planning phase through to execution and post-event evaluations, a transparent and inclusive coordination approach prevails, where everyone's labor is acknowledged. The fact that volunteers are not relegated to support roles

but assume responsibilities aligned with their interests—acting as active, valued stakeholders—is a key indicator of why this organization fosters such a profound sense of belonging. This year, I established a strong rapport and trust with my fellow volunteer team in a very short time, which contributed significantly to the seamless flow of our room's operations.

I attribute MARUF's ability to create an enduring sense of community to this genuine relationship it cultivates with its volunteers. This camaraderie paves the way for long-term collaborations by nurturing interaction, particularly among young researchers, professionals, and international experts.

What distinguishes MARUF from other events is its capacity to facilitate not just knowledge transfer, but also co-production and meaningful encounters. The deepening of its thematic scope over the years, its interdisciplinary engagement, and the strides taken to increase access all demonstrate that MARUF possesses a dynamic structure that constantly renews its connection with current urban and social issues. I believe MARUF will continue to carve out a critical, innovative, and responsive space in the face of the rapidly changing agendas of cities in Türkiye and across the globe.

Being part of the MARUF volunteer team across three different terms has solidified my bond with this community, amplifying it with each passing year. MARUF25, in particular, stands out as one of the most enriching and transformative experiences for me, both personally and professionally. This process has reaffirmed just how potent a vehicle volunteering is for individual growth and social impact.

## Furkan Çetin, Volunteer, MARUF

My volunteer experience at MARUF25 was incredibly valuable, both personally and professionally. While I could not immerse myself fully in the content and sessions, being closer to the operational side gave me a unique vantage point to observe the quality of the event's execution. From this perspective, it was clear that MARUF25 was the result of a robust preparation period, a well-structured organizational plan, and the harmonious effort of a large, dedicated team.

That said, I believe such a meticulously prepared and comprehensive event could have an even greater impact if its advertising and promotional campaigns were planned to reach wider audiences. Scaling up visibility would truly match the scale of the forum's ambitions.

Organizing an international event of this magnitude naturally involves juggling numerous process-

es simultaneously. The fact that even minor hiccups during MARUF25 were addressed swiftly, professionally, and with a solutions-oriented approach speaks volumes about the maturity of the organization. However, I did observe that logistical issues during the Urban Routes negatively impacted the participant experience. Intended as a pleasant finale after a packed program, this segment, in my opinion, did not fully achieve its desired effect due to timing and guidance problems. While I understand there were likely valid reasons for these challenges, I believe sharing this feedback is important for future improvements.

Overall, MARUF25 provided me with a highly educational and enjoyable three days. Thank you for all your hard work and for the support you provided to volunteers. I am confident that MARUF will reach even broader audiences in the coming years and its impact will continue to grow.

## Antonella Contin, Assoc. Prof., Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano

Participating in MARUF25 offered a profound experience of collective reflection on the metropolitan condition. The forum's deep dives encouraged a dialogue between theory and practice, particularly around issues of functional geography (to discuss indeed), cultural welfare, and digital transitions. What I expected was a technical exchange; what I found was an intellectual and human encounter focused on redefining how cities can become spaces of rights, care, and coexistence.

The learning environment created at MARUF was not just academic; it was civic, experimental, and inclusive, opening a space for shared discovery across geographies and disciplines. From the perspective of my field, metropolitan studies and

collaborative planning, MARUF25 demonstrated how local governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector can co-produce knowledge. The diversity of voices was not merely representative; it was constitutive of the debate itself. This polyphony embodied what the Secretary General of Marmara Municipalities Union M. Cemil Arslan said about the localisation of human rights: translating universal principles into context-specific practices that guarantee access, equality, and participation within metropolitan governance. The forum made clear that rights are realized not through declarations but through the spatial, social, and economic structures of the city, affordable housing, access to services, and the right to mobility and environmental quality.

The inclusiveness and international scope of MARUF25 also brought to the fore another essential dimension of the urban debate: migration as a fact, not as a problem. The sessions on demography emphasised that migration is not an emergency to be managed but a permanent condition of metropolitan life. This generative force shapes economies, cultural identities, and social innovation. In this light, migrants are not passive recipients of aid but active agents in redefining the commons. This approach reflects what we have been developing through the MetroHUB Centre and Heritopolis: a vision of the metropolis as a living ecosystem where mobility, memory, and diversity are the authentic sources of resilience.

Collaboration during and after MARUF25 has strengthened this vision. The exchanges with local and international partners confirmed the need to develop a shared metropolitan agenda that can feed into the next World Urban Forum (WUF13). The intersection between our research on the twin green and digital transition and MARUF's focus on local resilience offers a unique opportunity to craft

a coherent proposal for UN-Habitat: a resolution on metropolitan dynamics that grounds global sustainability in human rights and mobility.

What distinguishes MARUF from other events is precisely this capacity to transform debate into action, to act as a bridge between policy, science, and lived experience. For future editions, I envision MARUF expanding its role as a collective laboratory for localisation: experimenting with rights-based approaches, digital commons, and regenerative economies at the metropolitan scale.

Looking toward WUF13, MARUF's legacy should culminate in a clear message: cities are not merely administrative entities but human habitats where rights, mobility, and culture intertwine. Localizing human rights and recognising migration as a constitutive fact of metropolitan life must stand at the centre of the next global urban resolution. This is not only an ethical imperative but the foundation for a sustainable and inclusive future, where the metropolis becomes the most tangible expression of humanity's shared right to dwell, to move, and to belong.

## Kelmend Zajazi, Executive Director, NALAS

MARUF25 was, in many ways, the most impactful event I have participated in throughout my professional career. Its scale — reaching more than 8,000 professionals, practitioners, and young people — created an unparalleled environment for learning, exchange, and co-creation. Beyond the impressive numbers, what stood out was the quality of engagement and the remarkable diversity of voices represented.

For NALAS, MARUF25 reaffirmed the strength and value of our partnership with Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU). Over the years, MARUF has become a trusted platform where our regional network can connect, contribute, and collaborate on issues of shared importance. This year's col-

laboration was particularly meaningful. The MMU team — creative, dedicated, and exceptionally hard-working — ensured that every step of the process, from preparation to implementation, was organized with professionalism and genuine hospitality. Their ability to manage a forum of this scale while maintaining a spirit of openness and co-production is something truly unique in the international urban landscape.

One of the highlights for me was the Forum of Women Mayors, which perfectly demonstrated what MARUF and NALAS can achieve together. The preparatory dialogue with MMU was smooth, strategic, and deeply collaborative. The session itself provided a powerful platform for women

mayors from South-East Europe and beyond to share leadership experiences, discuss gender-responsive governance, and build new alliances. This aligns fully with NALAS' strategic agenda on gender equality and leadership development, and the forum opened new avenues for joint initiatives in this field.

The thematic depth of MARUF25 — particularly on resilience, participatory governance, AI and digital transformation, and inclusive urban development — strongly resonated with our ongoing work across South-East Europe. The diversity of participants, from local governments to academia, civil society, donors, and the private sector, enriched

each discussion. What differentiates MARUF from other events is that it does not simply showcase ideas — it produces them collectively. It is a place where experts and practitioners feel encouraged to explore, question, and design solutions together.

Looking ahead, I see MARUF's role becoming even more relevant. In times of rapid change — geopolitical tensions, climate pressures, technological shifts — local governments need spaces for peer learning and co-creation more than ever. I hope MARUF will continue strengthening its international reach and deepening partnerships with networks like NALAS to transform these inspiring exchanges into tangible regional impact.

### **Ervin Sezgin, PhD, Urban Planner**

My experience of MARUF25 was different this time. In contrast to my usual approach, I made a conscious decision not to dive headfirst into the deep end or go hunting for brand new data. I came to the realization that I can access information anywhere, at any time.

With so many people who think, write, create, and hold ideals for our cities gathered in one place, my focus was on connection. My goal was to learn from experience and to see the world through the eyes of others. For the first time, I deliberately looked away from the main conference program and explored the other types of events on offer. It was absolutely the right decision. I made new acquaintances and had conversations that left a deep and lasting impression.

MARUF25 offered excellent spaces for precisely this purpose. The networking events were not hidden away behind closed doors; they were

designed as open zones where one could slip in and out without breaking the natural flow. Circle meetings transformed passive audiences into active participants. There were vibrant, inviting spaces for spontaneous chats whenever I opted to skip a formal session.

Looking back with this new mindset, I can see that the organization has consistently evolved by experimenting with formats that foster interaction. Perhaps being exposed to this steady progress year after year is exactly what gradually shifted my own perspective.

“Creating space” is the key phrase here. Designing the physical venue and social environment requires as much care and craftsmanship as curating the intellectual content. Diversifying these spaces—enabling people to connect with strangers seamlessly, without any awkward silence—will make future editions of MARUF even richer.

For six years now, MARUF has been breathing new life into Istanbul's intellectual environment. It transcends being just another academic conference or a niche professional event to address the city as a whole. It successfully pulls

everyone—students, municipal experts, artists, politicians—into a shared, vital debate about urban life. It gives voice to the city itself, turning it into a carnival of collective wisdom. Long may that echo continue

## Mustafa Ergül & Nurtaç Buluç, Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels)

At MARUF25, the “Şehrin Panoları (City's Panels): Where Architecture Meets Art” routes positioned themselves as a distinct focal point regarding the preservation, documentation, and reinterpretation of public art within a holistic framework. The configuration of the two routes established through Kadıköy and the Istanbul Textile Traders' Market (IMC) rendered the post-1950 late modern period architecture-art collaborations visible, while simultaneously preparing the ground for current conservation approaches and digital archive discussions.

As professionals working at the intersection of urban memory, public space, architecture, and art, we evaluated MARUF25 as an overarching platform bringing these fields together with broader urban agendas, organizing two routes under the scope of Urban Routes. Thus, Istanbul was reinterpreted not merely as a space to be visited, but as a city to be read, debated, and taken responsibility for regarding its future. In this direction, the sightseeing routes gained importance as a critical component carrying urban memory at the intersection of architecture and art. Participating in the urban route offered a comprehensive workspace allowing for both learning and the testing and sharing of experiences.

It was observed that the communication established with the team during the planning and preparation process provided a regular framework clarifying the schedule and expectations; consequently, the team on the field assumed a

supportive and accessible role in terms of guidance, logistics, and participant experience during the event. Furthermore, it was appreciated that communication channels remained open post-event, leaving a foundation where new partnerships could be possible in the future.

MARUF25 supported addressing these topics alongside fields such as housing policy, disaster resilience, climate, and social inclusion by intersecting directly with works centered on urban memory, cultural heritage, and art and architecture in public spaces. It can be stated that the approach regarding public space projects—viewing them not only as aesthetic endeavors but also as tools for social policy and urban resilience—was strengthened and opened new areas of study. The relationships established during the forum created a ground with the potential to transform into new urban routes, exhibition and workshop programs, and collaborative research and documentation projects. It is foreseen that the network developed with actors from different institutions and cities will be effective in terms of both co-production and knowledge sharing in the medium and long term. In this framework, the MARUF25 process stands as an exemplary model for ensuring that studies focused on urban memory and public space achieve a multi-stakeholder, sustainable, and visible structure.

The fundamental feature distinguishing MARUF from other events is its ability to bring urban-focused solution production together with

an interdisciplinary approach. The wide participation network extending from civil society to local governments, and from academia to the private sector, ensured that different perspectives met on the same platform. International collaborations, the emphasis on sustainability, and the creation of a genuine dialogue environment among participants elevated MARUF from being a mere event to the position of an urban solution laboratory producing collective wisdom.

In the future, MARUF is envisioned as a regional thinking and implementation platform where ur-

ban policies are shaped. By strengthening areas such as cultural heritage preservation compatible with digital transformation, inclusive design, data-driven management tools, participatory planning workshops, and youth-oriented programs; and by contributing to producing concrete solutions in fields like social justice, disaster risk reduction, and innovative governance mechanisms; it is believed that MARUF—supported by data-based decision-making and strong national-international collaborations—will become a reference platform that accelerates knowledge sharing among cities and produces applicable policies.

### **İtir Akdoğan, Research Director, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV)**

In a time defined by overlapping crises and deep uncertainty, MARUF25 did what it does best: it brought together the people who shape our cities. But what lingered for me afterwards was not a policy idea or a speaker's quote—it was a more intimate preoccupation. Time.

The forum's theme promised we would stand "on the shore of all possibilities." The unspoken truth, of course, was that we could not wade into them all. There simply was not enough time. The moment the app launched, that reality hit home. Faced with a schedule of impossible choices, too many compelling sessions running in parallel, I gave up plotting my days and decided to wander instead.

And in the wandering, time behaved strangely. It flowed quickly in the easy rhythm of conversations by the water, then stretched into something endless during the tremor we felt on the second afternoon. It accelerated again afterwards, so much so that I missed the session dedicated to time itself, a fitting irony.

That is when it struck me. We cannot live every version of a city, but we can be deliberate about the one we do have time for. And that reflection opened a door I had not walked through before.

I have spent years talking about the right to the city: access, participation, inclusion. But how often do we talk about the right to time in the city? Who has the hours to enjoy a public square? Whose time is considered in planning processes? We discuss urban poverty, but do we give enough weight to time poverty; the relentless scarcity of hours that defines so many lives?

We imagine technology gives us time back, but what do we do with it? Do we ever question the hours lost to congestion, or think creatively about travel time? We value local knowledge, but do we make space for the kind that comes only from spending unstructured time in a neighborhood?

MARUF, in its rich, chaotic generosity, held clues to these questions. They were tucked into side conversations, woven into presentations, waiting in the exhibitions. That is its quiet power: it shows you what you have been missing, and then scatters the seeds of answers throughout its halls.

For years, MARUF inspired me through its content. This year, it challenged me through its con-

straint. The frustration of not being able to attend five sessions at once gave way to a new curiosity. It turned my attention to time; not as a schedule to manage, but as a core, neglected ingredient of urban justice and local democracy.

What greater gift could a forum give? For that shift in perspective, I am grateful to the entire MARUF team.

## Ceren Ay, Founder of TİD (Turkish Sign Language) Young Translators Platform

### **Accessibility of MARUF25**

MARUF25 stood out as one of the rare platforms among events organized in Türkiye and on a regional scale to treat accessible participation as a corporate responsibility. As sign language interpreters serving throughout the forum, we experienced once again that we are not merely technical instruments enabling communication, but fundamental actors who strengthen participant diversity, render the voices of silenced groups visible, and ensure Deaf individuals' equal access to the circulation of knowledge.

MARUF25 served as a significant testament to the fact that accessibility is handled not merely as an accommodation for individuals with disabilities, but as an integral component of urban policies, democratic culture, and social participation.

### **Flows, Methods, Diversity, Inclusivity, Accessibility, and Cross-Sectoral Learning**

Addressing topics such as urbanization, social justice, disaster resilience, social participation, digitalization, environmental sustainability, cultural rights, and inclusive service design not only theoretically but through practical examples, experience-based presentations, and multidisciplinary debates expanded the direction and circulation of knowledge. This diversity not only facilitated access to information for Deaf participants but also ensured that the cultural equivalents of concepts

were included in the discussion through sign language interpretation.

International participation opened a comparative learning space regarding how accessible urban policies are shaped in different countries. Diversity was felt not only in terms of geographical representation but also in terms of fields of expertise, perspectives, institution types, and forms of experience.

From an accessibility standpoint, the positioning of sign language interpretation as visible, planned, and holistic within the program—along with the readability of visual content, stage arrangements, moderation styles, and the awareness of the organization team—demonstrated that accessibility is no longer treated as a “supplementary service,” but as a fundamental component of event design.

Sectoral diversity—the coexistence of local governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector, and international actors—was one of the most distinct elements enriching the co-learning experience.

### **Contribution to MARUF's Collective Production, Partnership, and Collaboration Processes**

The communication, task distribution, flow planning, and content coordination conducted prior to the event presented a significant development in integrating sign language interpreta-

tion into the program. Furthermore, it made it felt that the perspective on accessibility was handled not just at a logistical level, but at an institutional mindset level. The communication between interpretation teams, technical crews, moderators, speakers, and organization coordinators strengthened the equal access of Deaf participants to the sessions.

The fact that the feedback, memory creation, and reporting processes conducted after the event also proceeded in alignment with the collective production philosophy revealed that MARUF does not limit its collaborations to the duration of the event. The increased visibility of the Deaf community, the recognition of the interpreters' role within a professional framework, and the sustainability of inclusive policy discussions were among the significant outputs of this process.

Integrating sign language interpretation into the main structure of the event made it visible that accessibility is not a voluntary gesture, but a corporate responsibility and a complementary element of democratic participation. This situation opened a new perspective where my advocacy work intersects not only within the community but also with local government policies, decision-making processes, and institutional transformation models.

### **Relationships and Collaborations Established During the Forum Process**

I hope that the relationships and collaborations established during the MARUF25 process will create a long-term and lasting impact in the field of accessibility and inclusive institutional culture. The strengthening awareness regarding accessible participation among local governments, academic actors, civil society representatives, and private sector stakeholders gathered at the forum holds the potential to transform into concrete outputs in the future—such as policy documents including sign language access, event standards, disaster information protocols, digital service designs, and public communication models.

The evolution of these relationships into sustainable collaborations focused on institutional transformation rather than just project-based work is a crucial step that will increase the visibility and representation power of the Deaf community in public decision-making processes. However, at this point, your support is vital for the inclusion of civil society organizations representing the Deaf Community and the subjects themselves.

### **On MARUF and the Future of MARUF**

The most distinct feature distinguishing MARUF from other events is its holistic approach, addressing urban policies not only as a theoretical discussion space but together with dimensions of application, experience, local government practices, and social participation.

One of the elements making MARUF unique is that inclusivity and accessibility have increasingly become a stronger part of the forum design. Positioning sign language interpretation visibly in the main flows, ensuring Deaf participants' access to debates, strengthening visual communication elements, and evaluating the right to participate as an organizational principle have carried MARUF to an exemplary point in terms of accessible event standards.

Even as a first-time attendee, one feels that the forum has transitioned to a model that not only produces content but transforms participation, shares learning, and encourages co-production. The inclusion of sign language interpretation in the main flows, the integration of the accessibility perspective into the organizational structure, and the inclusion of Deaf individuals in the circulation of knowledge have been particularly striking indicators of this development.

I believe MARUF must undertake a stronger role in the axis of accessible cities, rights-based approaches, and inclusive governance in the coming years. My recommendations for topics to be included in future forums are as follows: sign language access and multi-communication models in local governments, accessible information

for Deaf and disabled individuals during disasters, accessible interface design in digital public services, and addressing cultural, linguistic, and auditory diversity within the context of the right to the city. Furthermore, planning sessions where Deaf individuals are included as panelists, moderators, and experts, and forming working groups aimed at producing policy proposals, roadmaps, and outputs could create a new and robust foundation.

Considering the accelerating urbanization in

Türkiye and the world, the effects of the climate crisis, mass migration movements, digitalization processes, disaster risks, social inequalities, and the increasing need for inclusive services, ensuring that cities become inclusive not only physically but also socially, culturally, and communicatively—and strengthening democratic participation and the equal access of vulnerable groups, especially Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, to public processes—must be one of the fundamental topics MARUF directs.

### **Remy Sietchiping, PhD, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance, UN-Habitat**

Participating in MARUF25 for the first time was a professionally enriching experience. Representing UN-Habitat, I engaged in a Deep Dive session on Urban Resilience and Climate Adaptation, which offered a dynamic space for co-learning and exchange among diverse stakeholders. My expectations of discovering innovative approaches to urban sustainability were exceeded.

A standout session was “Cities Strengthened by Nature”, which explored Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) as strategies for enhancing urban resilience. It showcased enriching findings from a needs assessment across seven municipalities in the Marmara Region of Türkiye and introduced the “NBS Guide for Municipalities”—a practical tool for integrating nature-based approaches into local planning. Supported by the Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin Program, this session provided concrete examples of ecosystem-based responses to climate challenges and natural risks management.

The forum’s diversity—spanning local governments, NGOs, academia, and the private sector—created a rich learning environment. I was really impressed that all sessions were engaging, fully attended. Discussions on housing, urban planning,

and governance were highly relevant to UN-Habitat’s mandate, and the emphasis on localizing global agendas like the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda was commendable.

Institutionally, MARUF25 aligned well with our strategic priorities. The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) co-organized with Marmara Municipalities Union at MARUF was a key moment, advancing dialogue on housing in metropolitan areas. Collaboration with Marmara Municipalities Union was marked by professionalism and shared purpose.

The forum fostered new partnerships and ideas for joint initiatives in areas such as urban data, housing affordability, and climate resilience. MARUF’s regional rootedness and global ambition distinguish it from other events. Having attended other such urban fora, I was impressed by how efficiently the event was organized, engaging people with disabilities and therefore providing an inclusive and action-oriented platform. Blending conference session with well-curated field visits worked very well.

UN-Habitat was proud to be part of this journey and look forward to the next MARUF.

## Agata Krause, PhD, Senior Adviser, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat

MARUF showed that cities are not just sites of challenge, but engines of solutions. The ideas and evidence generated there can inform policy and practice on issues central to urban well-being,

from housing and mobility to public space, inclusion and opportunity, helping local governments worldwide advance quality of life and resilience in uncertain times.

## Onur Atay, Co-Founder, Urban.koop

As individuals, initiatives, and institutions thinking about, researching, and working on the city, our areas of interest and focal points are intricate, similar, or often shared. Unfortunately, however, the tools, platforms, and physical/intellectual environments that could bring us together around these areas and foci are quite limited. Interfaces where we can collectively evaluate urban problems, ideas, and proposals—where we can share and debate them with decision-makers and transform them into partnerships—are, as of today, largely confined to digital realms. While this situation may seem like a communicative advantage in terms of disseminating and sharing information when appropriate, it often establishes a slippery, constantly changing, transforming, and unreliable foundation.

MARUF is a gathering that we, as urban researchers and practitioners, have followed since 2019 and have actively tried to participate in since 2023. While our urban problems on the scale of Istanbul, Türkiye, and our geography grow daily and pervade every capillary, MARUF progresses by consistently building upon each preceding edition. It is transforming into the main address—now on an international scale—for every major topic that needs to be discussed regarding the city, as well as for the experts, researchers, and enthusiasts dedicated to those topics.

On behalf of the Urban.koop team and as an urban practitioner, the aspect I have observed and appreciated most so far is that MARUF—which has almost become the “biennial for everyone involved with the city”—is gradually expanding its scope, growing its partnerships, and further strengthening its sphere of influence. In this respect, it is exceedingly important that diverse individuals, institutions, and even sectors—who do not easily encounter one another in the city but focus on common problems—come together under a common roof. Consequently, I believe MARUF provides a significant opportunity to conduct a healthy and qualified analysis of common problems in line with the principles of coexistence; it facilitates a more participatory and multi-stakeholder interpretation of solutions to these problems; and it successfully fills the void for a collaboration environment that is normally hard to see but essential for solutions.

I am of the opinion that the transformation of urban topics, problems, and proposals—transcending fields of expertise to become mainstream agendas owned by subjects—paves the way for MARUF and its stakeholders. In this regard, I think the MARUF follower network is increasingly expanding and enriching in an interdisciplinary manner, reaching beyond urban and creative disciplines; my personal experiences at MARUF as both an audience member and an implementer serve as proof of this.

Bringing many current issues regarding the physical environment—whether intrinsic to the city or not—to its agenda across a broad spectrum ranging from civil society collaborations to transportation technologies, and from climate issues to innovation in agriculture, MARUF succeeds better

each time in presenting us with the boundaries, opportunities, and potentials within the reach of municipalism. With the belief and hope that this situation will grow further, I wait with curiosity to see where the boundaries of the next MARUF might reach.

## Norliza Hashim, Chief Executive Officer, URBANICE Malaysia

My participation in MARUF25 reaffirmed the essential role of cities and local governments as drivers of sustainable, resilient and people-centred development. This year's edition demonstrated a remarkable evolution of MARUF as a platform that not only convenes diverse voices but also creates meaningful opportunities for co-learning, co-creation and collective action.

The Roundtable on "Key Aspects of Metropolitan Planning to Promote Adequate Housing" served as a platform for me to present Malaysia's comprehensive approach to housing. This strategy is built on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort, prioritizing inclusivity, affordability, and enduring resilience. Engaging with metropolitan practitioners from diverse regions confirmed the global relevance of housing challenges and emphasized the critical role of integrated spatial planning, active community involvement, and decision-making supported by robust data.

In the Networking Session on "International Urban Events in Dialogue – Room of Possibilities," I was pleased to present the evolution of the Malaysia Urban Forum (MUF) as a national movement for SDG localisation and urban innovation. Being able to exchange practices with other international urban platforms reinforced the value of interconnected learning ecosystems—where local experiences enrich global agendas, and global agendas empower local action.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between URBANICE Malaysia and Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU) stood out as a significant achievement during MARUF25. This agreement formally establishes a joint dedication to promoting South–South cooperation, enhancing institutional capabilities, and expanding urban sustainability efforts. The collaborative work, spanning before, during, and after the forum, has successfully identified fresh avenues for urban innovation. This is especially true in areas such as SDG localisation methods, resilience planning, and community-focused urban projects.

What distinguishes MARUF from other global events is its experiential format. MARUF25 went beyond traditional panel discussions by providing hands-on workshops, interactive labs, sense-based activities and applied urban learning sessions that allowed participants to engage directly with tools, prototypes, and real-world solutions. This shift toward more experiential learning made urban issues not only more understandable, but also more actionable.

The forum's setting at the Golden Horn, with its open, inviting atmosphere and beautifully curated spaces, added a unique dimension to the experience. The environment encouraged dialogue, reflection, and collaboration. It reminded us that the spaces in which we gather also shape the quality of our conversations and the depth of our shared understanding.

I have observed MARUF's transformation over the years, evolving from a regional gathering into a truly global platform. It champions inclusivity, diversity, and the collaborative generation of knowledge. Moving ahead, I see MARUF further cementing its position as an ongoing platform for urban learning and cooperation. Future events could place greater emphasis on innovation labs, city-to-city knowledge transfer, nurturing youth leadership, and practical urban solutioning

formats that bolster climate resilience, digital inclusion, and sustainable urban financing.

Given the rapidly evolving urban environment, MARUF must continue to embody a spirit of optimism, serve as a platform for learning, and drive action. The goal is for the partnerships established today to result in practical, community-level effects in the future.

### **İlhan Tekeli, Professor Emeritus of Urban and Regional Planning & Social Scientist\***

While I could not attend every session, what stands out to me most is the remarkable energy here. That kind of enthusiasm is not easy to create. People come to this event voluntarily; not because they must, but because they want to. That is what gives this gathering its vitality.

Another important achievement is that MARUF manages to serve as a platform that transcends political divides, even in Türkiye's deeply polarized climate. That is no small feat. The substance of each session matters, of course, but what is even more significant is the overarching atmosphere; one defined by the topics themselves, not by political loyalties. In today's Türkiye, that kind of space is both rare and deeply needed.

Here at the forum, urban and municipal challenges are taken on with real ambition. There is no hint of "we'll only go this far." It is a mindset Türkiye has been longing for.

Holding this event in Istanbul also carries special meaning. The city acts as a living laboratory for urban planning and governance in Türkiye. Not long ago, we would not have used the word "laboratory" in our field; it belonged to the hard sciences. But today, it fits. MARUF is where the findings from that laboratory are discussed, where empirical experience meets dialogue.

If MARUF shows us anything, it is this: Türkiye has a real depth of expertise and accumulated knowledge in urbanism and city governance. What has been missing, at times, is the right environment for that knowledge to be voiced and shared. MARUF provides that environment. It creates the platform where this expertise can finally speak.

My thanks to everyone who made it possible.

\* This text is adapted from a speech given by İlhan Tekeli during the "Closing Session | In Pursuit of New Possibilities" panel at MARUF25 on October 3, 2025.









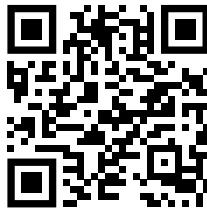












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