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ÇANAKKALE’NİN ENGELLİLER AÇISINDAN ERİŞİLEBİLİRLİĞİNİN İNCELENMESİ¹

Murat Balcı²

Yeşim Fazlıoğlu³

Özet: Kentler, ortak yaşam alanları oluşturma, sosyalleşme, toplumsal ve ekonomik yaşam alanları meydana getirme, aitlik duygusu geliştirme ve ortak bir kent kültürü oluşturma açısından önemli görevler üstlenmektedirler.

Bu sebeple engelli olsun ya da olmasın tüm bireylerin ikinci kişilerin yardımları olmaksızın kentlerin sunduğu imkân ve olanaklardan eşitlik ilkesi kapsamında eşit koşullar altında yararlanma hakları bulunmaktadır. Bu haklardan doğan kentsel düzenlemeleri yaşama geçirme görevi ise başta ulusal olmak üzere yerel yönetimlerin görev ve sorumluluk alanına girmektedir.

Türkiye’deki yasal düzenlemeler incelendiğinde toplumu oluşturan tüm bireyleri ayırım yapmaksızın toplumsal yaşama dâhil edecek engelsiz kentler oluşturmak için asıl problemin yasa kaynaklı değil çıkarılan yasaların uygulanması ve yaşama geçirilmesinden kaynaklandığı görülmektedir.

Çanakkale’nin sunduğu kentsel imkân ve olanaklardan engelli bireylerin eşitlik, erişilebilirlik, ulaşılabilirlik açısından ne derece yararlanabildikleri ve gerek toplum gerekse de kentle ne derecede bütünleşebildiklerini ortaya koymak amacıyla gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmanın amacı, kentte yaşayan ve kenti ziyaret eden engelli bireylerin kentle bütünleşmesini sağlayan unsurların yeterli olmadığı savından hareketle bu düşüncenin ortaya konmasıdır.

Bu doğrultuda Çanakkale, bir kenti oluşturan tüm paydaşları ile (caddeler, kaldırımlar, kentsel donatılar, mobilyalar ve aksesuarlar, kafeteryalar, restoranlar, AVM’ler, umumi tuvaletler, çeşmeler, bankamatikler, trafik lambaları, telefon kulüpleri, rekreasyon alanları, müzeler, şehirler arası toplu ulaşım araçları ve durakları, feribot iskeleleri ve yolcu feribotları, havalimanı, plajlar, kale, han, turizm işletme belgeli konaklama işletmeleri) engelli bireyler açısından ne derece uygun olduğu incelenmiş, engelli bireylere yönelik olumlu bazı düzenlemelere karşın genel anlamda erişilebilir ulaşılabilirlik açısından yeterli olmaktan çok uzak olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu anlamda Çanakkale engelli bireyler açısından erişilebilir bir kent değildir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Engelliler, Erişilebilir Şehir, Engelsiz Şehir, Çanakkale, Ulaşılabilirlik

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² Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, muratbalci@aydin.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0003-3898-8651

³ Prof. Dr., yfazlioglu@trakya.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0002-3970-7084

EXAMINING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF ÇANAKKALE IN TERMS OF DISABLED PERSONS

Abstract: Cities undertake important tasks in terms of creating common living spaces, socialization, social and economic living spaces, developing a sense of belonging, and creating a common urban culture.

For this reason, all individuals, whether disabled or not, have the right to benefit from the opportunities offered by cities under equal conditions within the scope of the principle of equality and without the help of second persons. The task of implementing urban regulations arising from these rights falls within the scope of duty and responsibility of local governments, especially national ones.

When legal regulations in Turkey are examined, it is seen that the main problem is not the law, but the implementation of the law in order to create barrier-free cities that will include all individuals who make up the society in social life without discrimination.

This study was carried out in order to reveal to what extent people with disabilities can benefit from the urban opportunities offered by Çanakkale in terms of equality and accessibility and integrate with the society and the city.

The aim of this study was, therefore, to indicate that the elements ensuring the integration of people, having disabilities and living in and visiting the city, with the city were not sufficient.

In this direction, it was examined how suitable Çanakkale was for all its stakeholders (streets, pavements, urban equipment, furniture and accessories, cafeterias, restaurants, shopping malls, public toilets, fountains, cash machines, traffic lights, telephone booths, recreation areas, museums, intercity public transportation vehicles and stops, ferry piers and passenger ferries, airport, beaches, castle, inn, and accommodation establishments with tourism operation certificate) and for people with disabilities, and it was determined that despite some positive regulations for people with disabilities, it was far from being sufficient in terms of accessibility in general. In this sense, Çanakkale is not an accessible city for people with disabilities.

Keywords: Disabled, Accessible City, Barrier-Free City, Çanakkale, Accessibility

INTRODUCTION

According to the data of 2020, it is predicted that approximately 15% of the world population lives with a disability due to reasons associated with physical, visual, hearing and mental problems, chronic diseases or old age, and that this number will increase rapidly in the coming decades with the aging of the world population (Bulgan 2014:1). Therefore, these numerical data require that the needs of the disabled community, which is the largest minority in the world, should be taken into account and given importance. Beyond a legal obligation, this is a requirement for being a human and for each individual to benefit from the opportunities and services offered to people unconditionally under equal conditions (Arıkan 2002: 12).

Cities are important areas, where the world's population gathers, both in terms of the opportunities they offer and the possibilities they have. For this reason, it is the common duty and responsibility of not only local governments but also all stakeholders that make up cities to facilitate the lives of all individuals, whether they have a disability or not, and to provide cities with livable opportunities for all individuals.

If necessary measures are not taken about cities, which are regarded as artificial organisms expanding by incorporating more people and therefore more buildings, vehicles and

equipment every year due to the opportunities they offer in economic, social and cultural terms, cities will turn into a prison, where the chaos will increase day by day, rather than becoming a reward for those involved in urban life.

While transforming cities into livable areas is important for individuals who make up the society, this situation is more important than anything for individuals with disabilities who cannot be separated from urban life. The fact that cities are free of obstacles and accessible, and most importantly, livable without the help of second persons will facilitate the integration of people with disabilities into society and social life, away from fear and anxiety. However, the arrangements to be made in cities without considering the needs of disabled people will turn cities into places that are impossible to live for all individuals who may potentially face with the situation of being disabled due to a chronic illness or the decrease in physical movement capacity brought on by aging.

For this reason, transformation of cities into accessible living spaces and the integration of all individuals into urban life by being free from obstacles should not be an area of responsibility that only local governments will undertake; on the contrary, other stakeholders of the city (such as NGOs, public and private institutions, foundations, city representatives, etc.) should be included in this process together with local governments, and cities should be transformed into barrier-free cities in the form of social consensus.

Many legal regulations, laws and decree-laws regarding the transformation of cities into barrier-free cities, and zoning regulations containing urban regulations for the disabled have been enacted; local and national administrations have become parties to many international agreements; and it has therefore become obligatory to transform cities into barrier-free cities by clearing them from barriers.

Thus, within the framework of these national and international laws enacted and signed, it has become obligatory to make urban arrangements for the participation of disabled people in social life, to make cities accessible to everyone, and to implement practices for this purpose. Within the framework of these laws, streets, sidewalks, urban furniture (such as benches, trash cans, billboards, afforestation, and flowering areas, etc.), telephone booths, traffic lights, fountains, toilets, cash machines, bus stops, public transportation vehicles, airport, ferry piers, passenger ferries, restaurants, cafeterias, shopping malls, museums, beaches, recreation areas, and all areas that make up urban life are required to be arranged according to the needs and requirements of disabled individuals. Local administrations, namely municipalities, are the most competent authorities that will implement these mandatory practices without leaving them on paper and that will make practices and regulations which will set an example for other institutions and organizations in this field.

Although important legal arrangements have been made to create barrier-free cities, or in other words, to ensure accessibility for everyone by clearing cities from barriers, the main problem is to what extent these laws are implemented. Failure to implement the enacted laws or to monitor the extent to which they are implemented causes the enacted laws to remain only on paper and disabled individuals not to be included in urban life.

In this research, it was observed to what extent the urban and social living areas of Çanakkale had the necessary regulations for the inclusion of disabled people in urban life without the assistance of second persons within the scope of the principle of full equality, and Çanakkale's ability to be a "Barrier-free city" was determined by the observations made throughout the city and the surveys conducted with physically, hearing and visually impaired individuals.

2. CONCEPTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, CITIES, AND CITIES WITHOUT DISABILITIES

Urban practices and planning, which are far from inclusiveness and are carried out without considering all individuals, whether they have disabilities or not, transform cities into areas where individuals feel excluded due to urban barriers and where their participation in urban life is prevented. It is often overlooked that the activities that we can accept as daily routines for non-disabled individuals, such as commuting to work, shopping, visiting a museum, sitting on the beach, swimming, eating in a cafe or restaurant, walking in the park, crossing the street, filling water from the fountain, taking the bus, withdrawing money from ATMs or paying bills, are the usual actions that must be performed by disabled individuals, and the needs of disabled individuals are forgotten, which transforms cities into urban areas where freedom and access are restricted for individuals with disabilities.

The fact that cities are free of obstacles and accessible without the help of second persons and that they have barrier-free urban arrangements based on the principle of equality, are primarily within the responsibility of local governments, and all stakeholders that make up a city, together with local governments, have duties and responsibilities to act together and implement necessary regulations both in theory and in practice. The needs of disadvantaged groups should be taken into consideration while implementing the regulations related to cities, and especially the needs of disabled individuals among these disadvantaged groups, who are most affected by regulations in urban life, should be in the foreground.

The necessary standards regarding the urban needs and regulations of disabled individuals and the accessible regulations of urban living spaces have been determined by the Turkish Standards Institution, and local governments have been determined as the institution responsible for making necessary applications for these regulations to become operative and fulfilling requirements and duties in this direction. However, in spite of all these laws and standards, it is seen that these laws are not followed in order to facilitate the lives of disabled people in urban practices, and in most places they are ignored and non-standard applications are made. As a result of this, it is seen that many problems arise before disabled individuals can participate in urban life (Şahin, 2011).

Just as each individual is different from each other and each individual has unique needs, disabled individuals are also different from each other and each disability group has its own unique needs. For this reason, while making urban arrangements, it is necessary to realize these urban arrangements by taking into account each disability group. Of course, it should not be overlooked that there are many difficulties in making regulations that will include all disability groups throughout the city, but it should not be forgotten that making these regulations is also essential in terms of ensuring social peace and tranquility, and ensuring that all segments of the society are actively involved in urban life.

The emergence of the idea of making the first arrangements for the participation of disabled people in urban life coincides with the period after the Second World War. This is not a coincidence. With the end of the Second World War, it was necessary for soldiers to return to their countries and to have necessary arrangements in order for soldiers, who lost their various limbs or suffered disability, to participate actively in both social and economic life. Thus, the idea of realizing urban regulations for disabled individuals was born (Evcil & Yalın Usal, 2013: 241-242).

In European countries, it has been adopted as an extremely important policy to enable disabled people to participate in social life and take part in all areas of urban life, and to eliminate urban barriers in this direction, and various studies have been carried out to create public opinion and increase social awareness in this direction. To this end, various practices

have been implemented and arrangements have been made and are still being carried out in order to eliminate urban barriers through the consideration of the needs of different disability groups, and cities are being transformed into livable barrier-free spaces for all disabled individuals (Sümer, 2015: 142).

Today, in order for cities around the world to be described as modern, the extent to which cities as a whole have accessible facilities is examined, and cities with exemplary practices in terms of accessibility are rewarded and an awareness is created in the public on this issue. Today, in order for a city to be defined as a modern city, that city must be accessible to everyone living in that city. There are many examples of this in the world. For example, Avila and Lugo in Spain, Salzburg in Austria, Berlin and Gothenburg in Germany, Boras in Sweden, Milan, Alessandria and Rome in Italy, Washington DC and Denver in the United States, Vancouver in Canada, Chester in England, Lyon in France, Breda and Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and Melbourne and Sydney in Australia are shown as the examples of accessible cities without barriers (Sunrise Medical, 2017; Prelli, 2017).

If we focus on Breda (the Netherlands), which received the barrier-free city award in 2019, we see that disabled individuals carry out many practices to participate in social life and facilitate their lives. One of the most important regulations is that the cobblestones on the pavements and roads have been leveled, thus ensuring the freedom of movement of disabled individuals in all public spaces. Another important arrangement is the presence of portable ramps placed to provide access to all stores. In addition, both bus drivers and other tradesmen were trained on disability awareness, platforms for disabled people were installed at buses and stops, and motion sensors were installed on the doors for automatic opening and closing. While audible and visual information is used in vehicles used in public transportation, navigation support is also provided. In addition to all these regulations, in 2017, the main website of the city of Breda was made fully accessible to everyone, including those with sensory disorders (Yates, 2019).

The “Accessible Cities” project, which was initiated by the European Union in 2010 and where good practice examples were awarded, has emerged as a concept that has been on the agenda of Turkey as well as the rest of the world in recent years, and studies and urban improvements have been made in this direction.

However, Turkey’s problem in “Accessible Cities” stems from the operability which cannot be brought to the implementation of the laws. Turkey has approval for the implementation of many international conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities, especially the “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” signed in 2009, and the regulations in these conventions. In addition, many laws and regulations enacted in the national area have created the legal infrastructure for disabled individuals, and regulations aimed at ensuring social equality have been made at least in the legal dimension. In Turkey, there are many legal regulations, such as Disabled Law No. 5378, Municipal Law No. 5393, Metropolitan Municipality Law No. 5216, Special Provincial Administration Law No. 5302, Zoning Law No. 3194, Universal Service No. 5369, and the Accessibility Monitoring and Inspection Regulation, regarding the accessibility of persons with disabilities. In addition, many national standards, such as TS 9111, TS 12460, TS 12576, TS ISO 23600, TS ISO 23599 and TS 13536, have been determined on the basis of international regulations in public transportation vehicles and access to public spaces and buildings for the inclusion of disabled individuals in urban life (Erten & Aktel, 2020: 908). However, the problem in Turkey does not arise from the laws. The problem in Turkey stems from the lack of sufficient control over whether the laws enacted or the standards set are applied, and from the absence of serious penal sanctions for the laws that are not implemented.

3. NATIONAL STUDIES ON BARRIER-FREE CITIES

Various studies conducted by many researchers in Turkey on whether cities are accessible to people with disabilities reveal that there are problems in the implementation of laws rather than laws and in the implementation of determined standards, and that cities are therefore far from being accessible to people with disabilities.

In a study based on Yozgat Province by Tıptı (2011: 856), it was revealed that the city of Yozgat was not an accessible city for people with disabilities in general, and that it did not have the necessary regulations for disabled people. A similar result is also encountered in the study conducted by Bekçi (2012: 26). In this study, it was determined that the city of Bartın was not suitable for the use of physically disabled individuals in terms of transportation, and that the attempts for the participation of disabled individuals in urban life remained mostly in theory. Another study is that of True and Türel (2013). In this study, it was revealed that the inadequacies regarding the regulations in the physical environment of İzmir constituted a major obstacle for disabled individuals to participate in urban life. Another important study in this area is the study conducted by Sabancı University and published in 2013. In this study, 7 different provinces, namely Konya, Antalya, Bursa, Denizli, Istanbul, Ankara and Alanya, were examined in terms of accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and it was determined that they did not have adequate regulations (Ergenoğlu & Yıldız 2013: 141-142). Another important work carried out in this field is the “Disabled Rights Monitoring Report from Legislation to Practice” which was carried out in 2014 and published in 2015 by the Society for Social Rights and Research. In this report, it was stated that, with the implementation of important regulations in many cities in terms of accessibility of disabled people, many regulations remained mostly on paper and were insufficient to solve the problems of disabled people. In addition, another striking result reached in the report prepared by the Accessibility Monitoring and Inspection Commission, which is responsible for inspecting whether legal regulations are fulfilled, is that regulations are mostly made for physically disabled individuals, and that there are no plans to produce realistic solutions, to make the city accessible, and to remove obstacles (Social Rights and Research Association, 2015: 33-36). In the study of Tiyek, Eryiğit and Baş (2016: 258), which deals with the problems faced by disabled people in the field of accessibility from the perspective of the Turkish Standards Institute, the public transportation network of the city of Istanbul was examined in terms of disabled people, and it was concluded that it was not suitable for the use of disabled people. In the study of Çakır Sümer (2015: 139), which evaluated the city of Malatya in terms of disabled individuals, it was found out that although there were some positive regulations for disabled individuals, the city of Malatya was not accessible for disabled individuals in general. In the study, which is based on the Eastern and Southeastern provinces and examines the status of disabled individuals residing in these provinces under 4 main headings (Quality of Life-Health-Education-Economy) and also compares disabled individuals living in these regions with disabled individuals living in the Western Regions, it was determined that disabled individuals were the most disadvantaged group in terms of the determined criteria (Eliöz, Demir & Akbuğa, 2018: 363). In the study based on Zonguldak Province conducted by Berkün (2019: 55), results in parallel with the results of the study in the examples above were reached. It was determined that Zonguldak province was far from meeting the needs of disabled individuals in terms of accessibility.

4. EVALUATION OF ÇANAKKALE CITY AND ÇANAKKALE URBAN ARRANGEMENTS IN TERMS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The extent to which people with disabilities could benefit from the urban opportunities offered by Çanakkale was attempted to be revealed by both observations made throughout the city and surveys conducted with disabled individuals, and how accessible the city of Çanakkale for disabled people was determined.

When the city of Çanakkale is evaluated in terms of accessibility, it is seen that various urban arrangements have been made for disabled people, that these regulations are, however, not sufficient for full, equal and participation of disabled people in urban life without the help of second persons, and that disabled people face many problems in terms of accessibility throughout the city.

When entertainment and shopping places, such as restaurants, cafeterias, shopping malls, beaches; historical places, such as mosques, inns, castles, and museums that make up the urban texture; workplaces of individuals; various public institutions, such as hospitals, schools, post offices; and streets, sidewalks and buses that provide transportation are examined in terms of accessibility, it is seen that although there are some relatively positive regulations for the disabled, it is far from being accessible in general. In order to determine how accessible the city of Çanakkale is for the disabled as a whole, instead of examining or researching the whole city, it will be sufficient to examine the areas and structures used extensively by the inhabitants of Çanakkale in order to have an idea of how barrier-free the city is. Therefore, streets, restaurants, cafeterias and shopping malls, beaches, the covered bazaar, inns, mosques, museums, banks, post offices, toilets, fountains, cash machines, telephone booths, traffic lights, buses and bus stops throughout the city, and the Municipality building and the Governor's Office were evaluated within the scope of the study in terms of accessibility of disabled individuals.

When areas such as restaurants and cafeterias are examined, it is seen that the access to these areas is generally with steps, that there are no ramps in front of the stepped access, and that there are no elevators or stairlifts that provide access to the upper floors in multi-storey buildings. Another important shortcoming in these places is the absence of a tactile surface. In addition, there are no audio menus or Braille menus in restaurants or cafeterias. Another problem is that there are no disabled toilets or that even if there are disabled toilets, they do not meet the standards.

Shopping malls are among the places preferred by many people as they gather businesses in many different sectors under one roof (such as cinemas, cafeterias, restaurants, entertainment centers for children and adults, clothing and electronics stores, etc.). For this reason, it is important that these structures, which gather businesses with many different functions, are accessible (Özgen & Kırklar, 2014: 52).

When the shopping malls in Çanakkale (they will be named as AVM1 and AVM2) are examined in terms of how accessible they are for disabled people or the freedom of movement, it was seen that the entrance doors and widths of the AVM1 were at appropriate standards for disabled people. It was determined that the tactile surface only covered the area from the bus stop to the security area on the ground floor of the AVM 1, and that no tactile surface was used in the other areas. Despite these problems, access to the other floors of the AVM1 was provided by an elevator (However, there was no voice guidance in the elevator), there was a toilet for the disabled in accordance with the standards, wheelchair support was provided in the information office, and there was a parking lot for the disabled. In the AVM2, on the other hand, a single opening and closing door was used to enter, and there was no second door for disabled people to enter. No tactile surface was used throughout the AVM2, and there were no contrasting colors on the glass surfaces. In the AVM2, which has two floors, access was provided by elevators in compliance with the standards on the upper floor, there was a disabled car park and toilets for the disabled. However, the flower beds used for decorative purposes on the second floor and the 8 cm level difference before the railing on the viewing terrace posed a serious danger, especially for the visually impaired.

Similar deficiencies were detected in the banks in the city. It was determined that most of the banks had stepped access and that ramp support was not provided at the entrances. One

of the important shortcomings was the lack of tactile surface covering and voice guidance for visually impaired individuals who could speak sign language.

At the entrance of the post office located in the city center, there was a ramp in accordance with the standards that allows disabled people to reach the main building, but the heights of the counters in the building created accessibility problems, especially for wheelchair users. Again, there were no tactile surfaces both inside and outside the building, and there were no necessary regulations for visually impaired individuals. In addition, when the telephone booths in front of the Post Office were examined in terms of accessibility, it was determined that only one of the 10 telephone booths placed in front of the post office was suitable for the use of the disabled in height, and that there were no reliefs on the numbers on any guide sign and telephone handset for the disabled phone booth.

When the ATMs placed in the area called Pier Square were examined, it was determined that there was only 1 ATM for disabled people. Although this ATM located in the area had regulations suitable for disabled individuals, considering the urban population, it is a necessity that the number of ATMs suitable for the use of disabled individuals should be increased.

In the examinations made about the fountains located at various points of the city, it was determined that various urban accessories for decorative purposes were used around the fountains, that there was a level difference in reaching the fountain, that there were no ramps in the areas with a level difference, and that it was not possible to approach the fountain with a wheelchair.

When the public toilets in the city were examined, it was seen that there were important problems, especially in standardization. While there were no disabled toilets in some of the busiest points of the city, it was determined that the toilets, which were described as disabled toilets, were not suitable for the use of disabled people at some points. For example, there was a 5 cm elevation in front of the disabled toilet in the place called Yeni Kordon, which made it difficult for disabled people to access the toilets.

In line with the investigations performed on the four busiest streets of Çanakkale, it was determined that there were ramps for wheelchair users, that these ramps located in most places were, however, non-standard and that the tactile surface was not sufficient. The tactile surface on the street called Kordon Street was the same color as the ground, and while it created a significant problem for visually impaired individuals, it did not continue along the street. Kordon Street continued along the coastline, and there was no warning sign or physical arrangement for visually impaired individuals in the area where the street met the sea. Again, one of the important problems in this street was the random positioning of urban furniture, at some points dangerously close to the tactile surface.

On Yeni Kordon Street, a tactile surface was used along the entire street, but the tactile surface was positioned too close to the bicycle path in some parts, which posed a danger, especially for visually impaired individuals. On Demircioğlu Street, the biggest problem was caused by the occupation of the pavements, and therefore the street narrowed considerably and did not allow disabled people to move freely. At many points along the street, transition barriers were formed due to floor difference, and there was no tactile surface. On the street called Bankalar Caddesi, there was no tactile surface, and there were elevation differences at many points on Demircioğlu Street, significantly restricting the freedom of movement.

As Çanakkale is a summer resort city by the sea, it is a city with a lot of beaches. In this respect, it was seen that there were important deficiencies when the beaches and the regulations on the beaches were examined in terms of disabled individuals, especially in the summer months. There were 6 entrances in total at Yeni Kordon Barış Beach, only one of which was

suitable for use by disabled individuals, and there were no showers, changing cabins, sun loungers, and sunshades for disabled individuals. The ramp, which was connected to the sea, ended approximately 3 m in front of the sea and did not go into the sea. The disabled toilet was located at the other end of the beach and was not in accordance with the standards for the use of disabled individuals. Again, one of the important shortcomings of the beach was the absence of informative signs for visually impaired individuals and the absence of a disabled parking lot. On the other hand, Çanakkale Güzelyalı Public Beach, which is another beach frequently used during the summer months, had made many arrangements for disabled individuals. Çanakkale Güzelyalı Public Beach had disabled toilets, changing cabins and showers for the disabled, and there were three ramps that enabled disabled individuals to access the sea and the beach. There was also a disabled parking lot on the beach.

While archeological sites undertake an important function in creating the urban texture, they also play an important role in creating a common culture. For this reason, structures and areas such as mosques, museums, inns, covered bazaars, castles, and recreation areas should be arranged in such a way that all individuals living in the city can benefit under equal conditions and wander around.

When Çimenlik Castle, an important historical building located in the city center and visited by many visitors throughout the year, was examined, it was seen that the entrance to the castle was stepped and that there was no ramp support in this area. Despite this negativity, it was seen that there was a one-piece ramp up to the inner courtyard when passing through the stepped section, that there was, however, no slope at the beginning and end of this ramp, and that this situation therefore posed a problem for physically disabled individuals as well as for wheelchair users.

The floor covering in the inner courtyard consisted of intermittent stone pavement, and it was seen that this area posed a serious problem for the visually impaired and for people with walking difficulties and wheelchair users in terms of accessibility due to frequent elevation differences. Although there was a ramp elevator in the transition from the outer castle to the inner castle, the fact that the door of the inner castle had steps and there was no ramp in this area posed an obstacle for disabled individuals. However, there was no direction sign for visually impaired individuals inside and outside the castle, there was no tactile surface, there were no audio descriptions for hearing impaired individuals, and there were no sign language staff.

Another important building in the city center is the historical covered bazaar named Aynalı Çarşı. There was no difference in level both in front of the main entrance gate of Aynalı Çarşı and inside Aynalı Çarşı. However, there was a 10 cm height difference on the route of the disabled toilet in Aynalı Çarşı and in front of the entrance door of the toilet, and there was no ramp in this area.

Another important building, which is located in the city center and is one of the symbols of the city, is the historical Yalı Han. Both the entrance and the inner courtyard floor of the two-storey building were in the form of cobblestones, and the elevation differences due to this flooring posed a serious problem for disabled individuals, and there was no stair lift that provided access to the upper floors. In addition, there was no disabled toilet in the building, and the existing toilets did not meet the appropriate standards for disabled individuals in both access and use of toilets.

There was no difference in elevation at the entrance of the Yalı mosque, which was built in 1854 and is one of the symbols of the city, but the elevation differences in front of the doors that provided the passage from the inner courtyard to the prayer area of the mosque made it difficult for people with disabilities to access these areas. In addition, there was no disabled

toilet in the mosque, and the fact that there was a serious height difference in both the existing toilets and the areas where the fountains were located made these areas far from accessible for disabled individuals. In addition, there was no regulation for visually impaired individuals.

When the City Museum and the Maritime Museum located in the city center were examined in terms of accessibility for disabled individuals, it was seen that there was no level difference on the pedestrian roads of the Maritime Museum, and that these areas were supported by ramps at the crossing points. However, it was determined that there were elevation differences in accessing the artifacts exhibited in the museum, that the information texts about the artifacts did not contain arrangements suitable for visually impaired individuals, that there was no tactile surface, information and direction signs, disabled parking lot, and disabled toilet in the museum area. The entrance of the City Museum, which is a three-storey historical building, had steps, and there was no ramp in this area. Stairs were used in the transition between the floors in the building, and there was no stair lift. While there was one disabled toilet in accordance with the standards in the building, there was no disabled parking lot close to the building. There were no tactile surface, regulations, information and directions for visually impaired individuals in the building.

Transportation in the city was provided in two ways: ferries and buses. It was determined that 98 of the 119 buses, providing transportation in the city, and 66 of the 374 bus stops had regulations for disabled individuals in the form of smart stops. Bus arrangements consisted of ramps, wheelchair fixing systems, disabled seats, passenger drop buttons, and information regarding bus stops and next stops on the screens of the buses. The same app was also available on smart stops. While the existing bus information at smart stops had an arrangement in the form of both written and audio descriptions, only written stop information was shared on the information screens of the buses, and there was no audio description application.

Since Çanakkale is a city located in the Bosphorus and has settlements on both coastlines, ferry transportation is important. There were a total of 11 passenger ferries serving between the two sides. These were Mesudiye, 57 Alay, Çanakkale, Lapseki, Ayvacık, Alinteri I-II-III, Gelibolu, and Şehit Ömer Halisdemir. While 3 of these ferries had disabled elevators, 1 had stairlifts, the others did not have elevators, and access to the upper floors was provided by stairs. While there were disabled toilets in 4 of the ferries and tactile surfaces in 3, ramp arrangements were made in areas with height difference in 3 ferries. However, apart from these practices, there were no other regulations for disabled people on the ferries.

Çanakkale Airport is a transportation route that is frequently used as an alternative to highways in intercity transportation. The airport had conditions suitable for the use of individuals with physical, hearing or visual impairment. However, it was determined that it had some shortcomings. These were the staff using sign language, the embossed map showing the location of the airport, the informative and introductory brochures prepared in Braille alphabet, and the absence of audio warning and warning systems.

5. CONCLUSION

While life in cities brings many difficulties even for non-disabled individuals in terms of having many complex processes and relationships originating from structures, spaces, vehicles and people, this situation is a much more difficult and troublesome process for disabled individuals. For this reason, especially since the second quarter of the twentieth century, in line with the development of human rights, based on the idea that cities are the common living space of all individuals forming the society, the practices of transforming cities into accessible areas by clearing them from obstacles have become more and more widespread and many examples of good practices have been seen around the world.

In Turkey, on the other hand, it is seen that many laws have been enacted and various standards have been determined by the Turkish Standards Institute for the removal of obstacles and the inclusion of disabled people in urban life. However, it is also seen that these regulations cannot be applied at the desired level in clearing cities from obstacles, and that these practices remain mostly in theory and cannot be transferred to life.

For this reason, it is necessary to organize all areas in cities, whether they are common areas or not, on the basis of equality and full access; then, cities would be more accessible and inclusive through urban transformation policies that would also be adopted by city stakeholders.

Urban arrangements should be carried out under the leadership of local governments in the form of a social consensus, and all areas that make up the urban fabric, such as restaurants, cafeterias, shopping malls, museums, beaches, buses and bus stops, passenger ferries, recreation areas, sidewalks, toilets, fountains, etc., should be arranged accordingly.

There is no deficiency in law in Turkey in order to ensure that cities are accessible by being free of obstacles. The problem in Turkey arises from the lack of adequate control regarding the enforcement of the laws for the disabled and the implementation of the determined standards. In particular, the regulations that are not made in accordance with the determined standards seem to create the impression that the necessary regulations are made in accordance with the needs of the disabled in this area and that there is no problem for disabled individuals. However, applications, such as non-standard ramps with no suitable slope, stairs with height difference, sidewalks with level difference, elevators not suitable for wheelchairs, etc., transform cities into inaccessible areas for disabled individuals who try to be included in urban life.

Considering the observations and examinations made on the regulations that could facilitate the lives of disabled people in Çanakkale and ensure their inclusion in urban life, it was determined that there were many shortcomings for disabled people throughout the city and that Çanakkale was not enough to have the features brought by the concept of being a “Barrier-free City”.

While establishing urban transportation systems in Çanakkale, as throughout Turkey, priority was given to vehicle traffic instead of pedestrians, and as a result, disabled individuals encounter many problems in both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The fact that the sidewalks did not have a certain standard prevented the buses from approaching the stops and the access of the disabled to the buses. A similar situation was valid for the buildings belonging to the institutions, as in the restaurants and cafeterias in the city. The disabled experienced access problems to these spaces due to the steps in the entrances of the spaces, the inadequacy of door widths, the presence of level differences, and the absence of ramps or elevators with suitable slopes. However, the point that should not be ignored is that these urban barriers should be removed in order for disabled people to participate in social life.

Although it is of course a utopian approach to transform a city in line with the needs of disabled people, it is possible to realize this step by step, starting from one point of the city, with the support of city stakeholders and social support. The point to be noted here is that existing structures and areas should be arranged according to disabled individuals, rather than creating separate structures and areas for disabled individuals. A contrary arrangement would result in the exclusion and marginalization of individuals with disabilities from social and urban life.

Considering the concept of “Barrier-free City”, it is seen that many positive arrangements have been made for persons with disabilities in Çanakkale; however, it is seen

that these arrangements are not sufficient to enable persons with disabilities to participate fully and freely in urban life and that Çanakkale cannot therefore be qualified as a “Barrier-free City”.

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