



4th SURE World Conference in Istanbul, Türkiye

Between **16 and 19 July 2025**, the **4th SURE World Conference** took place in **Istanbul, Türkiye**, under the theme “*Cities Under Global Social Transformations: Embracing Change for a Greener Future*”. **Hosted at Yıldız Technical University**, the conference brought together scholars, practitioners, and decision-makers from around the world to exchange knowledge, build networks, and inspire future actions in urban ecology.

Core topics included:

- Urban biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Nature-based solutions and climate resilience
- Green infrastructure and public health
- Community engagement and environmental and multi-species justice
- Urban planning, transformation, and governance
- Inter- and Transdisciplinary Approaches to Urban Ecology
- Green and Blue Infrastructure in Urban Design
- Water and Soil in Urban Sustainability
- Citizen Participation and Urban Governance
- Socio-Ecological Approaches and Equity
- Technological Innovations and AI in Urban Planning
- Urban Soundscapes and Cultural Perception
- Nature Education and Youth Engagement

The conference hosted a majority of participants from the People's Republic of China, Germany, Türkiye, Romania, the Russian Federation, and Poland. A total of 498 individuals were listed as authors of the presented papers. An analysis of the country distribution shows that out of 134 papers in total, 23 were presented online. Authors from 54 different countries contributed to the papers either individually or in collaboration with others (Figure 1).

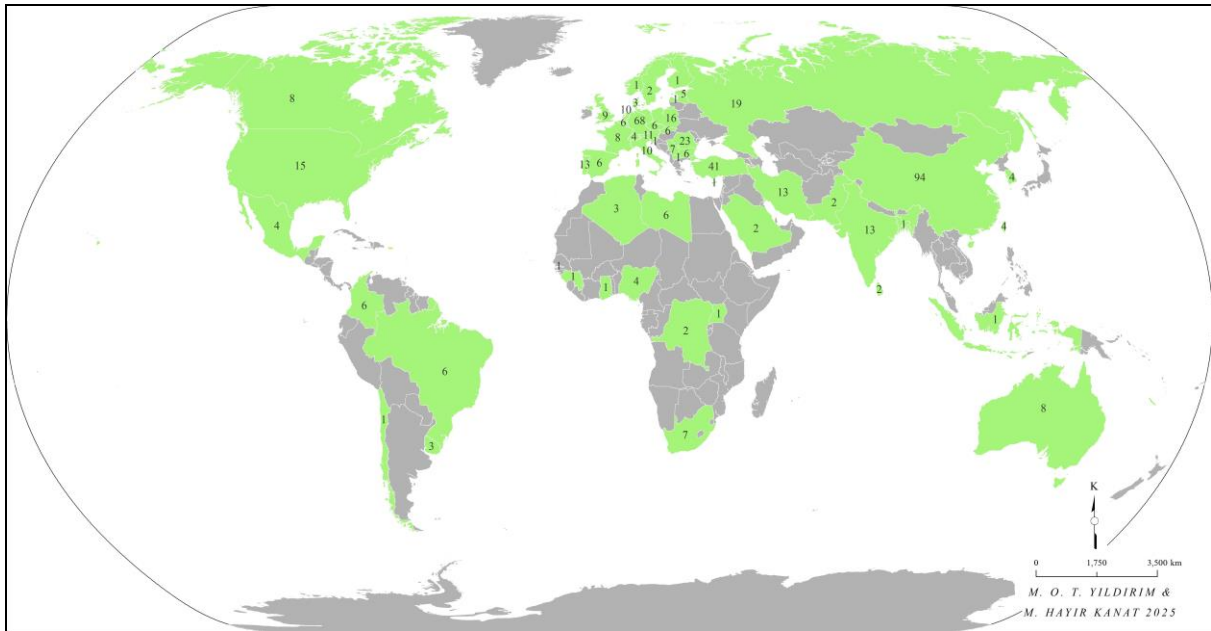


Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of the 498 Scholars Listed as Authors of Papers Presented at the Conference (from 54 Countries)

More than 200 participants from over 31 countries attended the event to explore inter- and transdisciplinary approaches to sustainable urban development, nature-based solutions, and the role of urban nature in climate adaptation and social well-being. The program featured inspiring keynote speeches, thematic sessions, interactive workshops, and field excursions across Istanbul's diverse urban landscape. In total, the conference welcomed 133 paid participants, including 114 paper presenters and 19 listeners, representing 31 different countries (Figure 2). Thanks to the hybrid format, the event was also accessible to interested individuals who could follow the sessions as passive participants free of charge via links shared in the program.

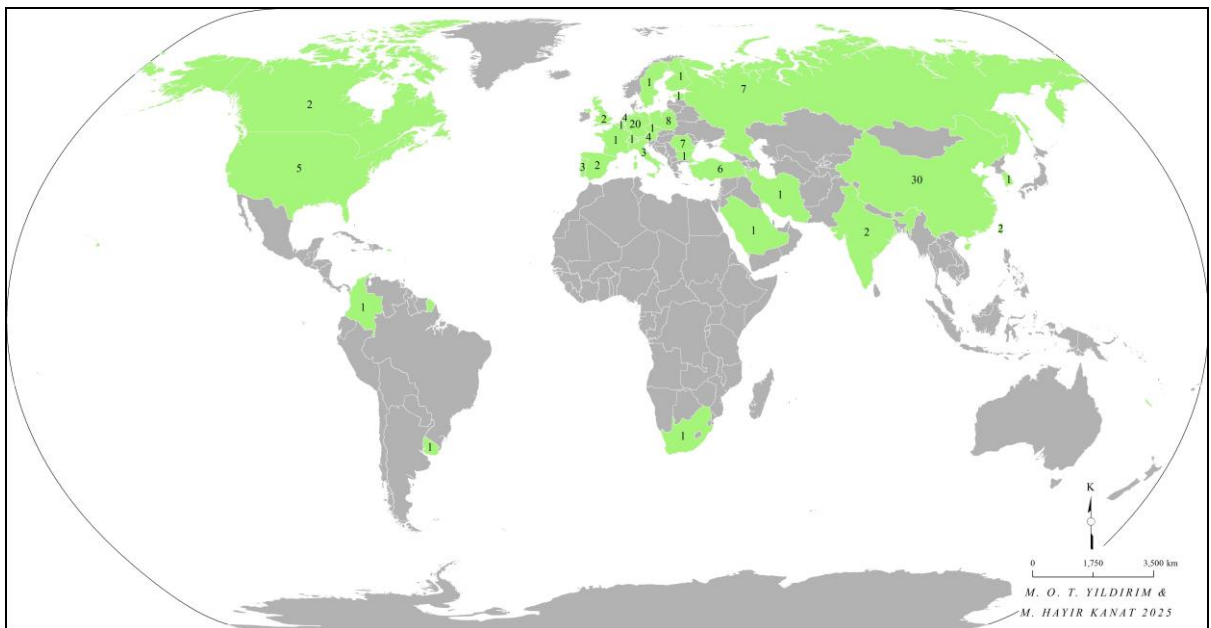


Figure 2. Country Breakdown of Registered Participants Who Delivered Presentations at the Conference (Paid Paper Presenters)

Opening Reception

On the evening of the first day, the opening reception was held with a large turnout. Scientists from various countries gathered in a friendly and dynamic setting where they exchanged ideas not only socially but also scientifically. The event provided a valuable opportunity for networking, and many participants engaged in discussions about potential future collaborations, brainstorming project ideas shaped by interdisciplinary approaches (Photo 1).



Photo 1: From the Opening Reception of the 4th SURE World Conference (©Gizem Anayol)

SURE General Assembly Meeting

At the end of the second day of the conference, the SURE General Assembly Meeting was held. During the meeting, Prof. Dr. Jürgen Breuste (President), Prof. Dr. Martina Artmann (Secretary General), and Prof. Dr. Cristian Ioja (Treasurer) presented recent activities of the association and provided an overview of the work carried out over the past four years.

It was highlighted that SURE actively encourages the participation of young people by offering free membership to students and supporting their attendance at conferences.

Regional representatives reported that SURE's sections in China, Iran, Southeastern Europe, and Central Europe are actively involved in various initiatives. Among these, regional conferences and summer schools stand out as key activities.



Photo 2: Participants of the SURE General Assembly (©Gizem Anayol)

Dinner with Conference Members and Volunteers

On the third day of the conference, prominent figures of the 4th SURE World Conference and the dedicated volunteers who worked diligently to organize the event shared a dinner together at AĞA Restaurant located on the Yıldız Technical University campus (Photo 3).



Photo 3: Dinner attended by professors including SURE Honorary Member Prof. Dr. Andrzej Mizgajski, Keynote Speaker Prof. Dr. Ebru Ozer, SURE President Prof. Dr. Jürgen Breuste, Prof. Dr. Jing Gan, and Prof. Dr. Martin Sauerwein(©Hayır Kanat)



Photo 4: A group of professors and conference volunteers, including Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Coşkun Hepcan, Prof. Dr. Şerif Hepcan, Prof. Dr. Iwona Zwierzchowska, Prof. Dr. Angela Hof, Prof. Dr. Cristian Ioja, Prof. Dr. Aslı Görgülü, and Prof. Dr. Hakan Akçay (©Hayır Kanat)

Excursion Day

On the fourth day of the conference, participants had the opportunity to experience one of the world's most significant straits — the Bosphorus — which separates Asia and Europe. As part of the technical tour, they observed the city's skyline and urban development along the route from Eminönü to Anadolu Kavağı.

SURE Sino-European Workshop

A highlight of the conference was the [SURE Sino-European Workshop](#) and the co-creation of the Istanbul Charter for Conservation and Perception of Urban Nature, which emphasizes collaborative and inclusive strategies for protecting urban ecosystems.



Foto: SURE Sino-European Workshop Team (©Tao Wu)

The SURE Executive Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to Prof. Dr. Meryem Hayir Kanat, Prof. Dr. Cigdem Coskun Hepcan, and all members of the Organizing Committee, including the dedicated teams from Yildiz Technical University and other supporting universities. Their commitment and hospitality throughout the conference were truly appreciated. The event once again highlighted the global significance of urban ecology in building more just, healthy, and resilient cities.

We are already looking forward to the **5th SURE World Conference** in 2028 – stay tuned!