



Birleşmiş Milletler  
Eğitim, Bilim ve  
Kültür Kurumu



UNESCO Uluslararası  
Göç Kursusu,  
Yaşar Üniversitesi

## Migration and Izmir: Urban and rural nexus

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*This presentation is based on the initial research findings of the “Wellbeing, Housing, and Infrastructure in Turkey (WHIT)” project funded by British Academy.*

# Research info

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## **Project: Wellbeing, Housing, and Infrastructure in Turkey (WHIT)**

- Institute of Development Studies
- Yaşar University (Faculty of Architecture, UNESCO Chair on International Migration)
- University of Brighton, School of Architecture
- TIAFI (NGO)
- Funded by British Academy



# Research design

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To investigate the socio-spatial experiences on housing and well-being in two locations: İzmir center (Konak/Basmane) and Torbali

1. GIS mapping of Torbalı (2014-2020)
2. Key informant interviews, Total: 34 in-depth, semi-structured interviews
3. 4 focus groups in Torbalı (2 more to be conducted in Izmir)
4. Well-being survey (to be conducted among 200 people)

*KIIs coded in Nvivo: Two coders, Overall Kappa coefficient: %72 (inter-coder reliability coding consensus)*

# Torbali

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- Secondary city, rural, inner and periphery urban districts?  
*UN-Habitat defines a secondary city as an urban area generally with a population of 100,000 to 500,000.*
- Current population of Torbali: 194.285  
Population growth rate: 44 %  
Syrians: 15.000-20.000  
*Number of Syrians in Izmir: 150.000 (3,5% of Izmir population)*
- Industrialization and rapid urbanisation
- Plotting urbanism
- Attractive destination: Availability of employment, proximity to Izmir, affordability of housing
- How does the the interplay between locals, domestic migrants and Syrians evolve concerning housing/shelter, settlement and livelihoods?



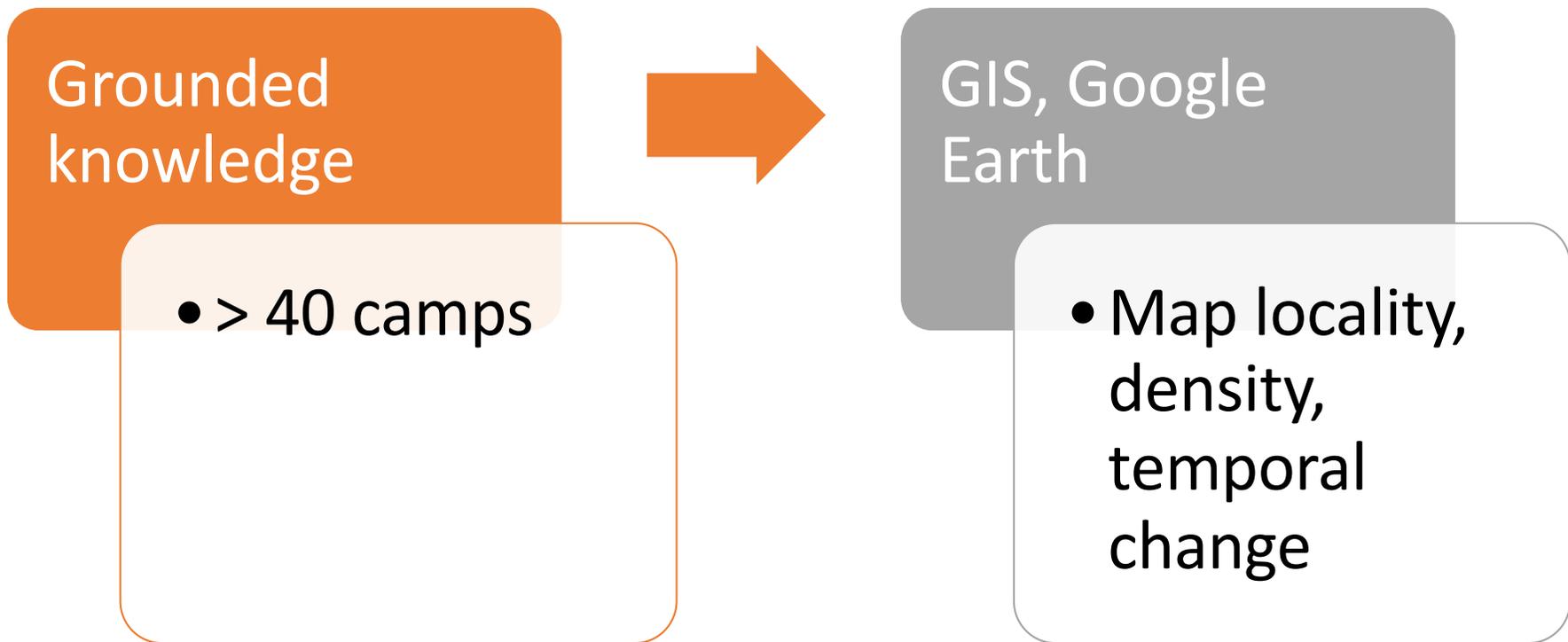
# Types of housing

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- Flats/shared by families
- Tented settlements
- Abandoned dwellings, occupation and adaptation of on-site buildings
- Backyard sheds.
- How they function?  
Infrastructure? Actors that organizes mobility? Informality?



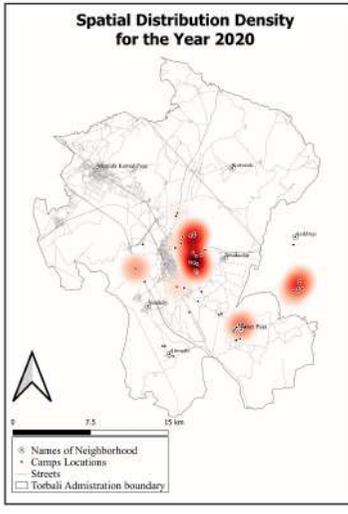
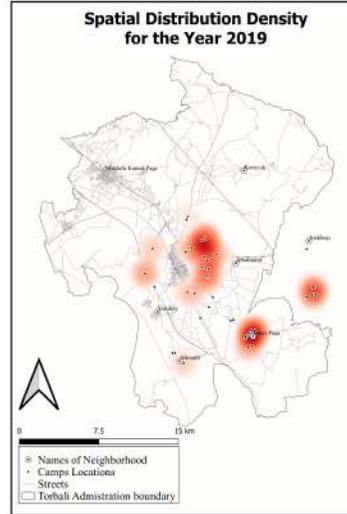
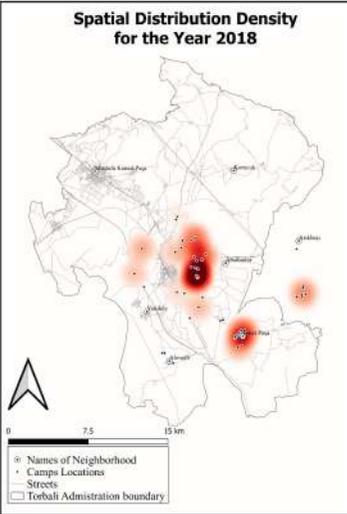
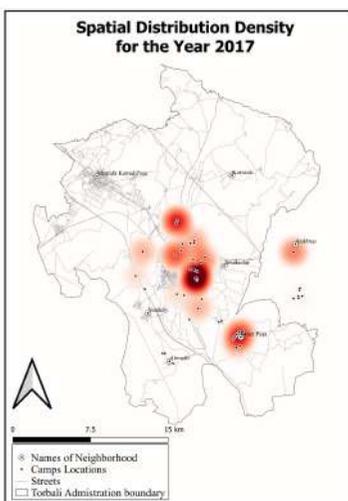
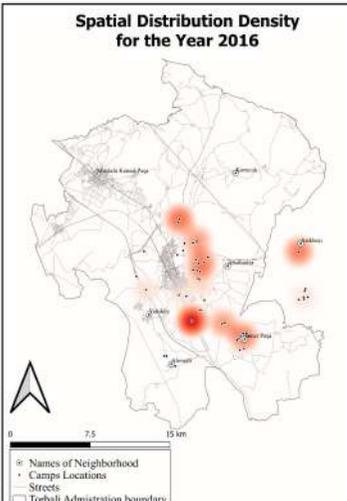
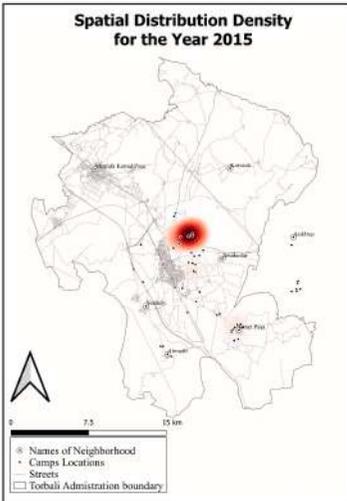
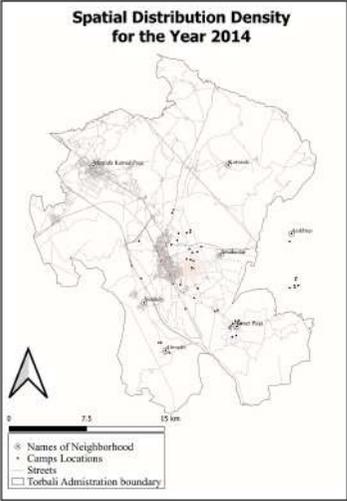
## Mapping the distribution, clustering and infrastructure provision of farm camps in peri-urban Torbali: an iterative method



*Developed by Sadaf Khan and Mohammed Nacar (WHIT researchers)*

Key finding:  
evidence of spatial  
clustering of farm  
campsand mobility

Torbali District  
2014 - 2020



**Key findings—  
Seasonal changes  
show different  
kinds of housing  
and associated  
infra-structures  
emerge,  
2018 - 2019**



Jul 2018



Sep 2018



Feb 2019



Jul 2019

A layout submitted by Mohamed NAJAR to the WHIT p  
The maps are created using the ArcGIS® software by E



Jul 2018



Sep 2018



Feb 2019



Oct 2019

van Torbali

# Abandoned dwellings

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- Isolated community life but connected by ethnicity in the neighbourhood. Connection with city center and Turkish community is weak. Not existing public transport opportunities. No Turkish.
- Actors: Çavuş/dayıbaşı
- Problems: water-supply, garbage collection, education, no toilets at all. Fake residential addresses to access services.
- Employed (available daily jobs)-preferred by the employer. Rural background in Syria.



# Inner/center of Torbalı

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- Shared rents
- Sectors: Agriculture, construction, daily jobs
- Replaced the domestic migrants from Eastern and Southeasterns parts of Turkey.
- Transfer of registration problem-access to services. The need for a permanent address
- Share of limited sources, availability of public services. Both locals and Syrians are vulnerable in terms of poverty. In specific districts no regular public transportation is available. One health center with high number of beneficiaries.
- Ignoring the degree of VULNERABILITY- Locals, domestic migrants, Syrians---CHALLENGE for co-living.

The Turkish citizens lived under the same spatial conditions as the Syrians, and when they saw that their neighbors got all the aid and they didn't, a seriously xenophobic attitude started to develop toward Syrians based on financial reasons. Generally speaking, Syrians were more disadvantaged, but the Turkish people were disturbed by, for instance, Syrians' receiving free healthcare services

*NGO, Izmir*

## Syrians as seasonal workers in agriculture. Torbalı is dependent to Syrian workers in the farms

“We need Syrians in our farms, in agriculture sector. If we do not have them, we would have serious difficulty in harvesting the products. No one would do it. Thanks to Syrians. They are able to, capable of working well in the agriculture”

*Public officer*

“I am not informed about any obvious conflict between Syrians and Turkish people living in the tents... We see that Syrians substitute for Turkish workers. We cannot deny that this situation leads to hidden competition between Turkish and Syrian workers. When pandemic emerged, most of Syrians went to work regardless of the outbreak of COVID. Besides, they were also willing to work more and for lower wage”.

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*Mukhtar in Torbalı*

One family doctor is not able to give service more than 8.000 people. Thus, the people have to travel to other districts. People are poor they do not have money to travel to other districts.

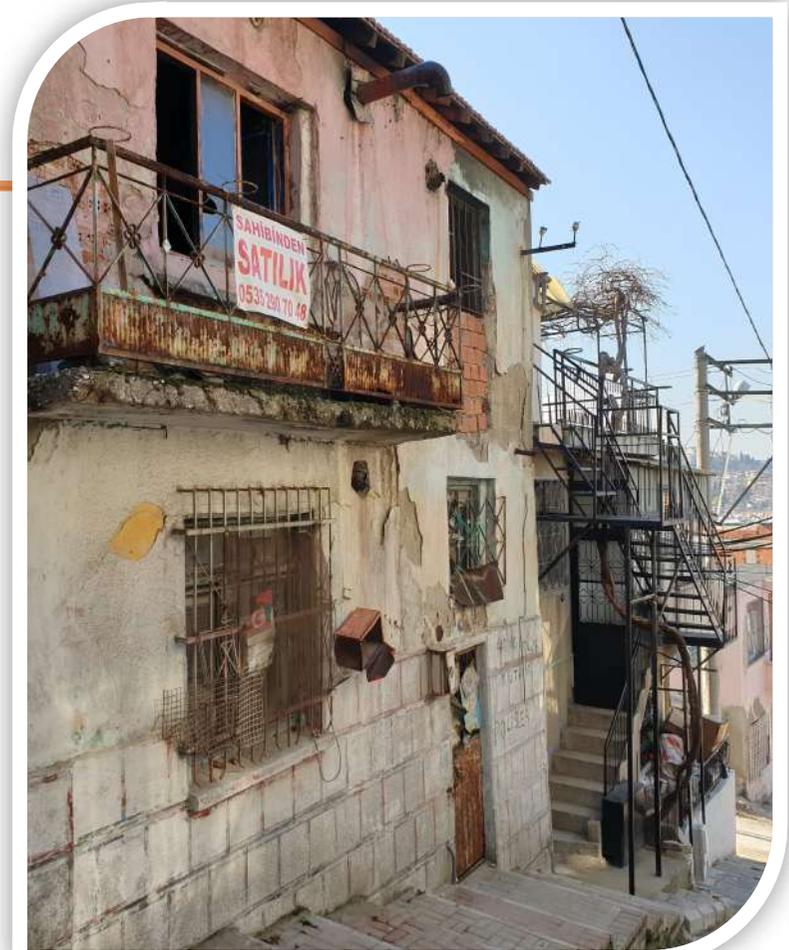
*Mukhtar in Torbali*

Hygiene is the main issue. Rain, mud...There is no water channel system. Living conditions are horrible. There is a need to improve their awareness. We give them hygiene and soap training, but they don't have a proper place where they can wash their hands and put their soap. They have to use water very carefully in places where water comes through tankage. Not being able to wash hands, brushing teeth... No sufficient resources... *NGO active in Torbali*

# Izmir

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- Migration-receiving city
- Number of Syrians in Izmir: 150.000 (3,5% of Izmir population)
- Share of resources: low-income Turkish citizens (Romans, Kurds, Turks), domestic migrants and Syrian refugees –competing poverty
- Vulnerable groups living together  
Space: Living in shared poor districts
- Time: More than 20 years of domestic migrants and 10 years of Syrians
- Challenges:
  - High unemployment and informality
  - Lack of local authorities/municipalities competence in migration governance.
  - Being registered in different cities
  - Frequent change of house
- Political polarization is high, however market economy functions irrespective of politics (landlord relations, cheap labour, informal employment)



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- Historical sites
  - Legislation prevents any repairs on the houses.



- Local community does not identify themselves as discriminating Syrians. However, discourse towards Syrians: noisy, crowded families, not caring about hygienic rules.
- Syrians claim no serious discrimination towards them but address low social interaction with the locals.
- Remarkably, discriminative discourses are observed against Roman people rather than Syrians.

“You cannot bring two troubled cultures side by side and expect that friendship and brotherhood will come out of it. One group identify themselves as the actual citizens of Turkey and somehow they’ve heard about that (and I’m not sure of its accuracy, either) the other group is sometimes tax exempt, and that they receive (governmental) aid”.

When they first come, the residents, locals of this district, we met and decided to kick them out of this district. The locals said "we do not want Syrians here". However, we were not successful, they remained. Now we all accepted that they will not return, we understood we have to live together. So, all we accepted this fact. Actually, they do not create any tension or problem. They are silent. I observed no competition with the locals, everyone finds their own way. *Mukhtar in Torbali*

# Informal employment

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- Informal employment among low-income Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees is common. More than 30%
- Pandemic Impact: Loss of income, daily jobs mainly in textile, construction and service sector. Low skilled profile. No benefit could be received.

Frequent move to cheaper housing  
Residential address required for access to state aids

- Competing poverty between locals and refugees.
- Most coded nodes are Poverty and Cost-rent.
- Government's limited social aid to citizens- International organizations' limited aid to refugees
- While talking about integration and resilience strategies after 10 years, still there is the need for livelihood support.

- Migration continues via social networks and market needs.
- Segregated communities, no communication at all.
- Collective identity and community based communication.
- Short visits to Syria back and forth continues. Detached to Syria.
- Competing vulnerabilities needs to be carefully examined and intervened.

# Q&A Session

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