



PATHWAYS TO
PROSPERITY
Promoting Welcoming Communities in Canada



No Home for Syrians: Reflections from Turkey

Secil E. Ertorer, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology & Centre for Refugee Studies

York University

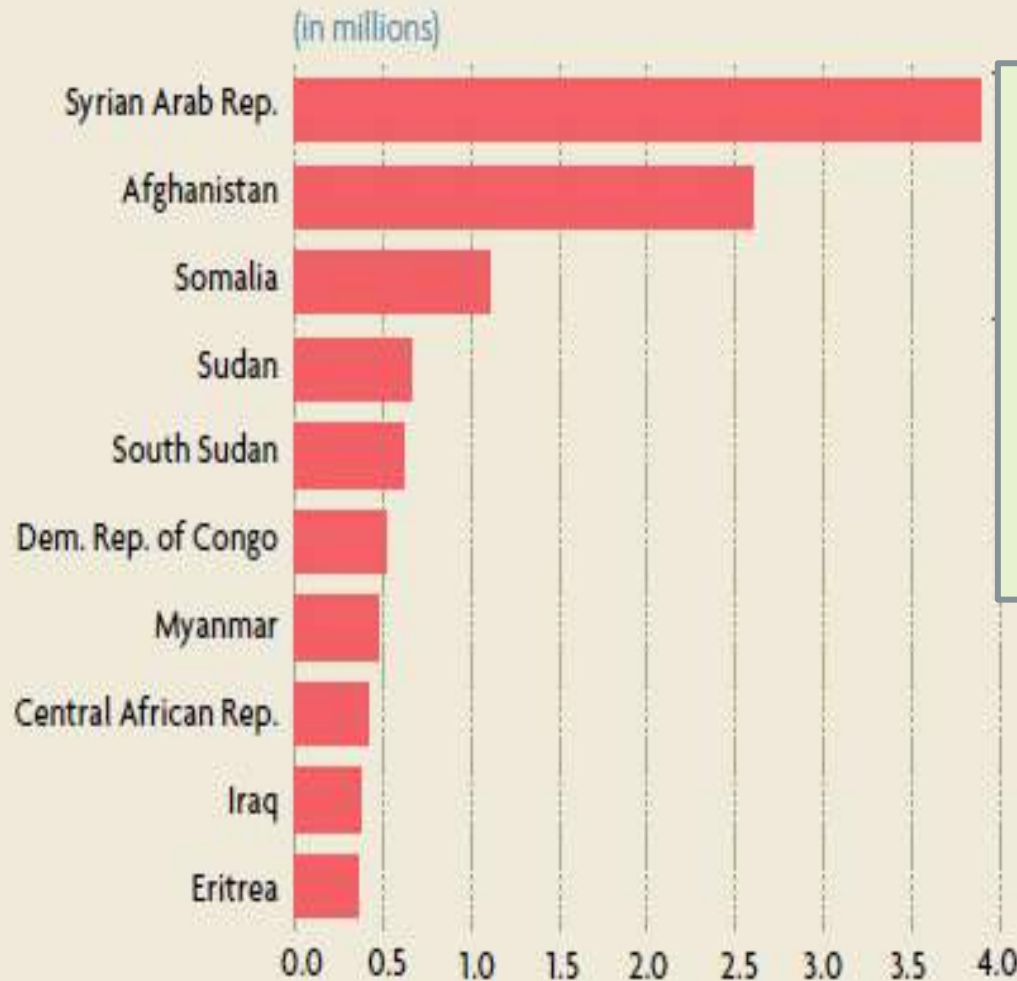
Pathways to Prosperity 2015 National Conference, November 30, 2015

Syrian Refugees in Numbers

...

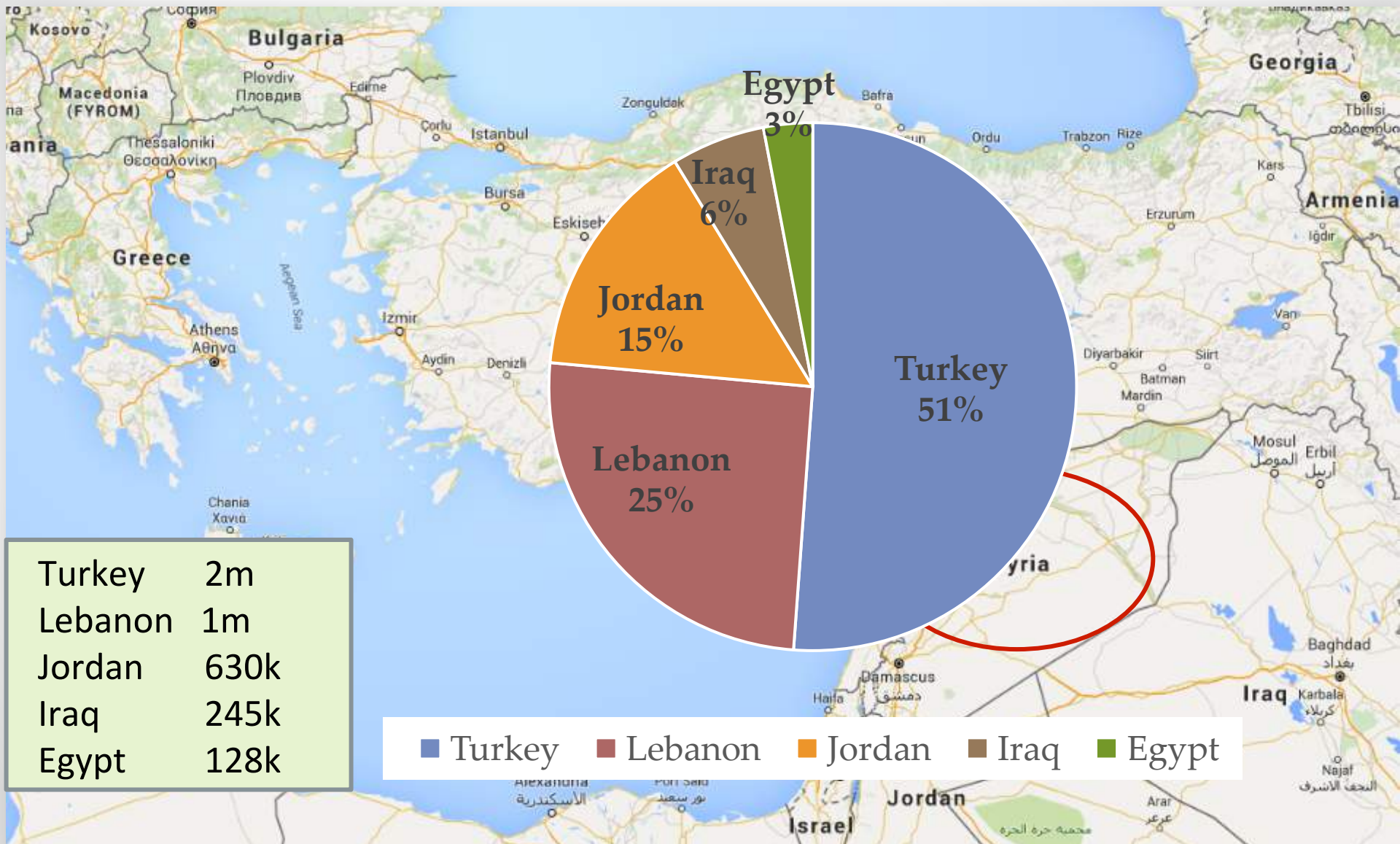


Major source countries of refugees



- Syria is the top source country of refugees
- Largest displaced population worldwide
- 1 in 4 refugees is Syrian

Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries



Syrian Refugees in Turkey

...



Arriving Turkey

- “Open border” policy (?)
 - Wait times vary
 - Human smugglers
- Passport
 - High cost
 - Long processing time



*“If you have a Free Syrian Army ID, they would let you cross the border without checking your bags or anything...”
(Yasir, 25)*

Legal status

- “Guests” (2011)
- Law on Foreigners and International Protection (2014)
- Temporary protection
- Mass migration



Application for asylum

- ASAM - UNHCR partner
- min. 2 years



Lost generation



149k
was born in Turkey



400k
out of school

Stateless,
uneducated
children

Syrians in Turkey

- 1) Camp refugees (13%)
- 2) Urban refugees (87%)
- 3) Refugees in Transit

Camp Refugees



Camp refugees



25 refugee camps in 11 cities
6 container, 19 tent cities

275.000
refugees

Urban Refugees

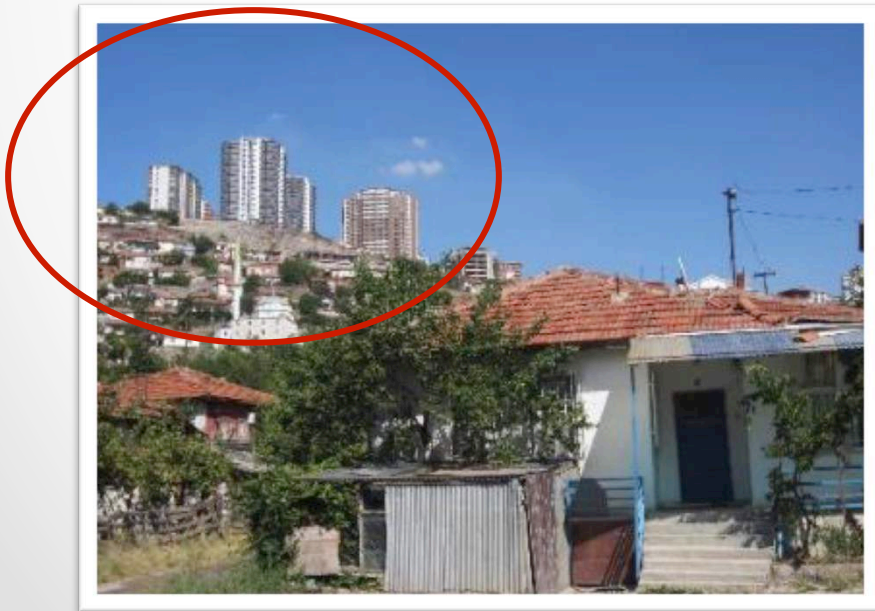
(1.7 million)

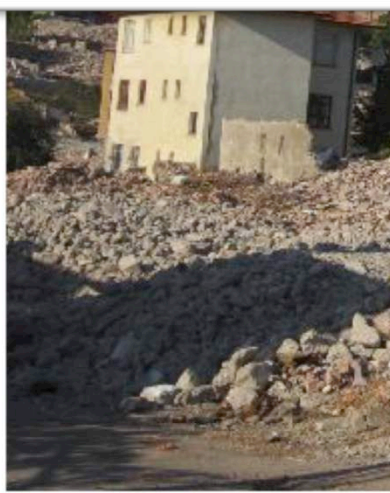


Observations in Ankara

Housing

- No housing allowance
 - Homeless refugees
- Önder district, Ankara
 - Industrial area
 - Urban transformation project





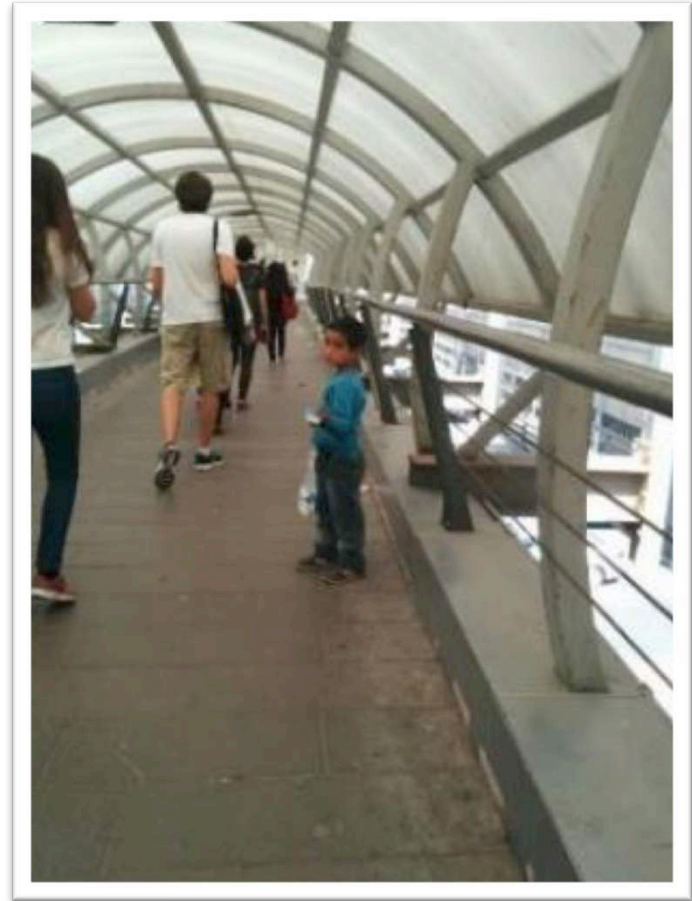
Households

- 2-3 families
- Basic furniture



Survival

- Informal labour market
- Begging
- Help of neighbours
- Starvation
- Prostitution
- Child marriage



Employment

- Cheap labour, child labour
- Main sectors: Construction, agriculture, manufacturing
- 10-14 hours a day/ 6 to 7 days a week

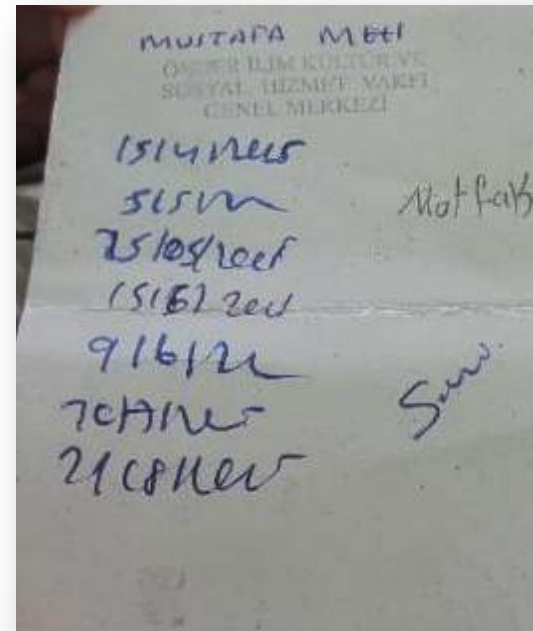


"I am paid 40 tl per day and consider myself one of the luckiest. I get exhausted everyday, working 12 hours, carrying heavy loads..." (Amed, 32)

Social assistance

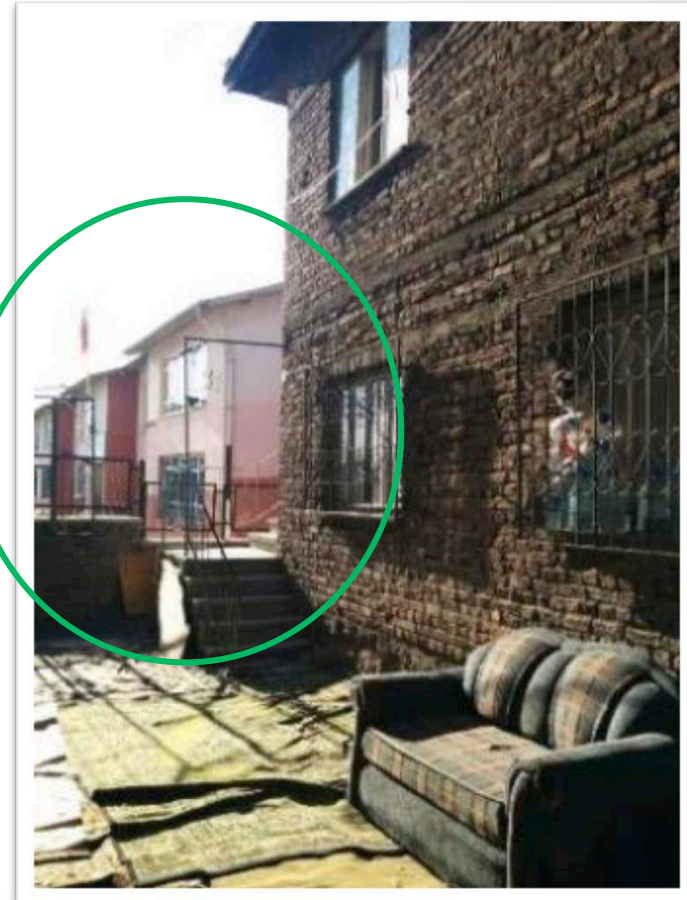


- No systematic assistance by local or national authorities



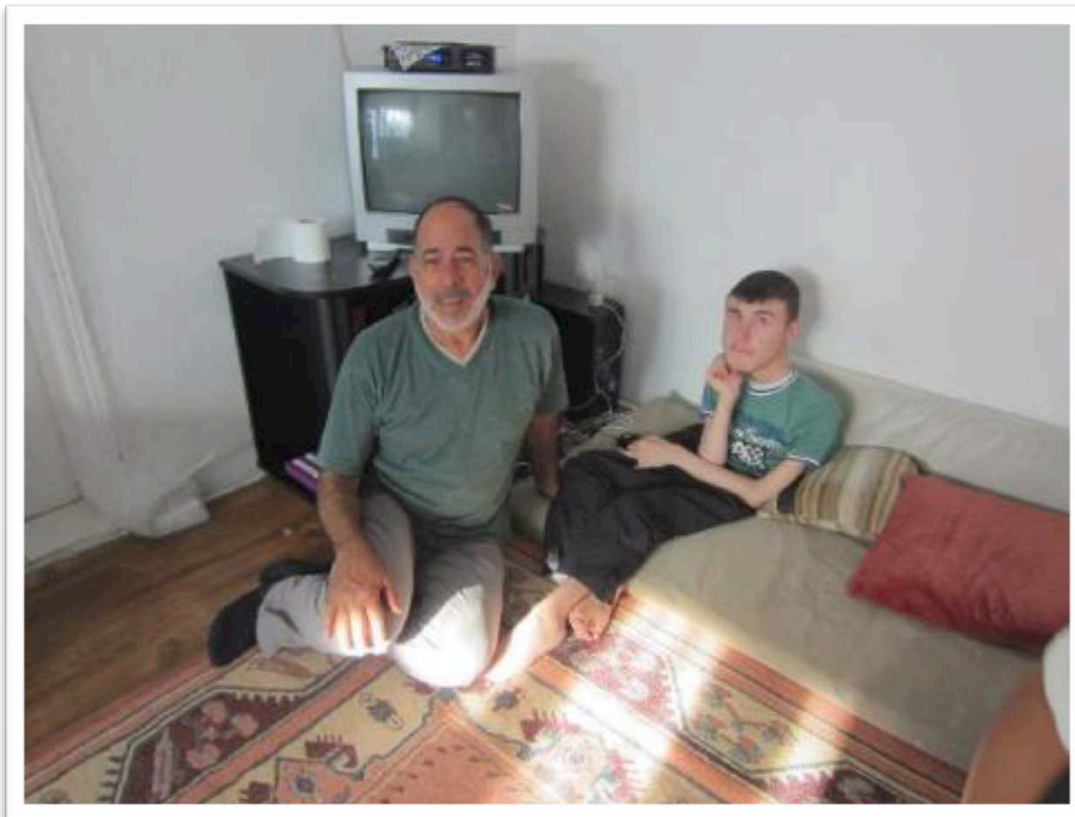
Schooling

- Access to education
- 20% attended school in 2014
- Limited access to information and registration



Health care

- Access to basic health care
- Limited access to information and registration



Social integration

- Host society:
 - Social tensions
 - Myths about government spendings
 - Cheap labour → unemployment among host population → hostility against Syrians
- Administrative:
 - Lack of integration programs (employment, housing, language courses, etc.)

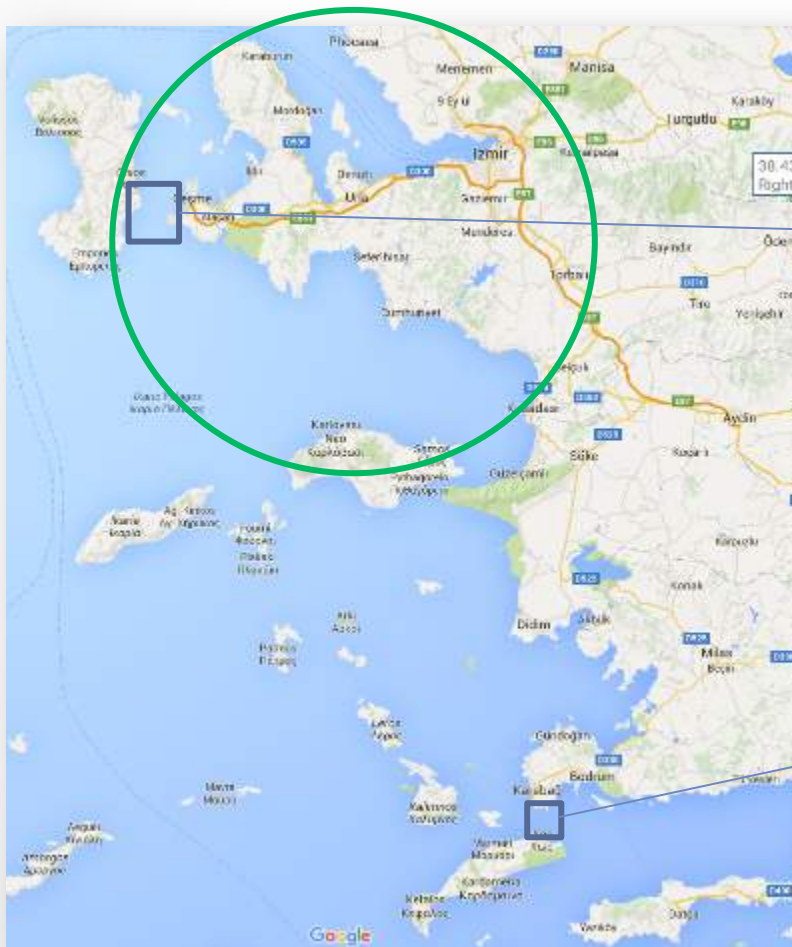
Transit Refugees



...

Observations in Izmir

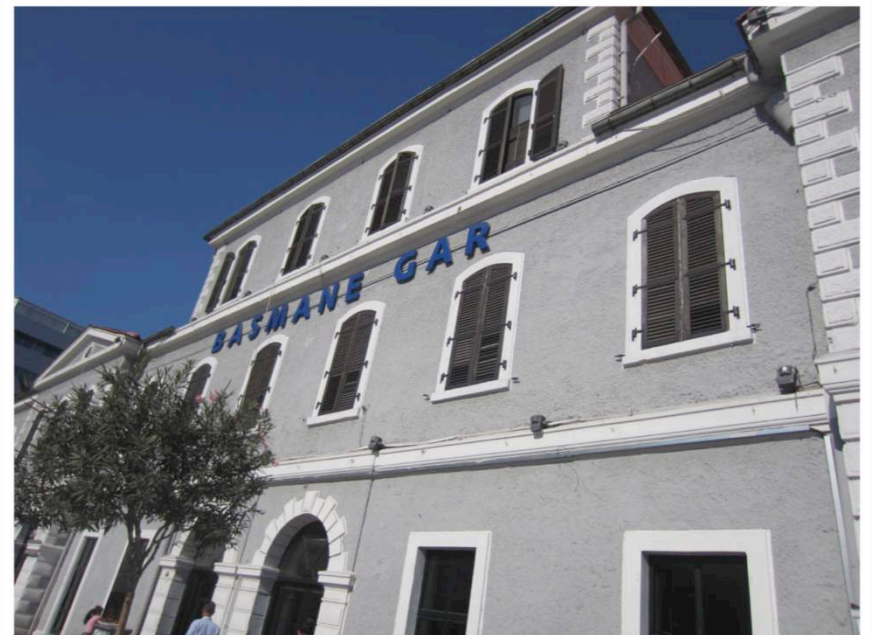
Gate to Europe



Basmane district



- Point of arrival & departure



Streets of Basmane

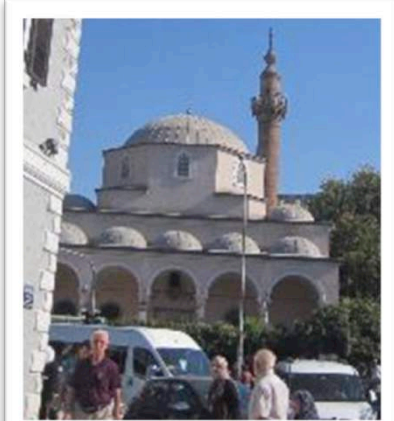
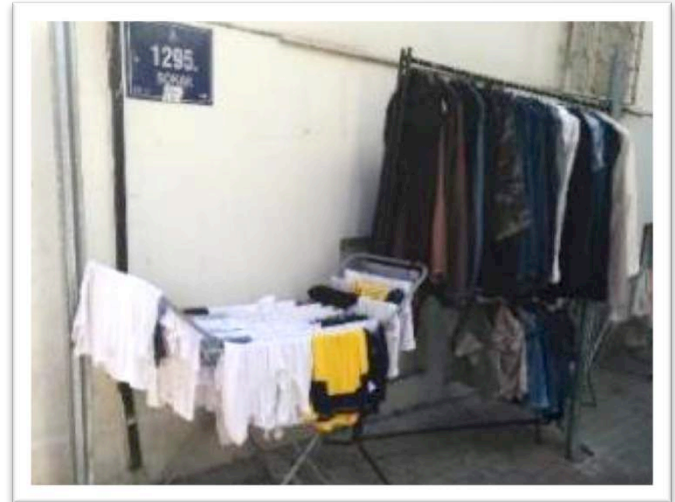
- Hotel district – no vacancy, not affordable for many
- Need money for smugglers



Streets of Basmane



Sanitation



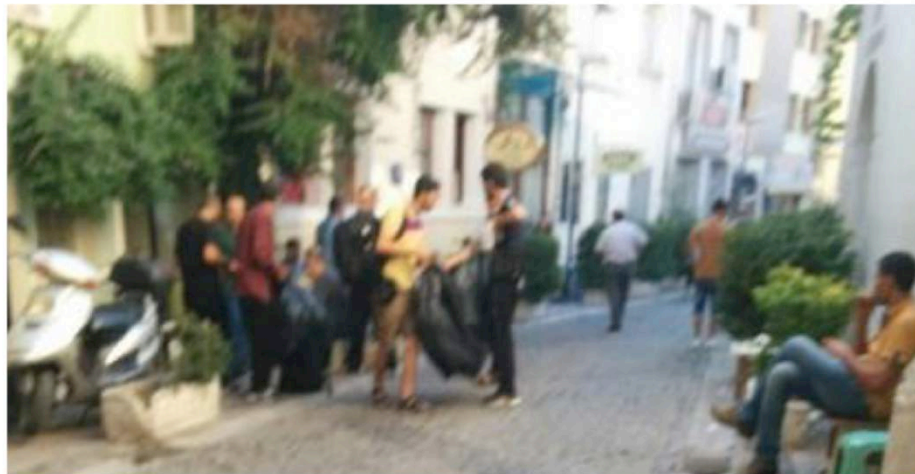
Stores

- Life-jacket & rubber ring capital



Packing for Europe

- Life jacket
- A change of clothes
- Lemon/sea-sickness tablets
- Passports, IDs, documents
- Laser pen
- Bandages
- Dates



"We have a reality that's forced upon us" (Ali, 19)

Passage? to Europe

- Human smugglers

“They take their money, put them on boats, and send them to death” (Cem, activist, 52)

- Died/killed: 3K (in 2015)
- People reached the European destination: over 300K...



Conclusion - Main issues

- No realistic future in Turkey
 - Legal refugee status
 - Uncertainty and mistrust
 - Employment
 - Schooling
 - Housing
 - Social assistance
 - Social tensions in the society
- Risk lives to build a new life in Europe

“Nobody would like to stay here under these conditions because legally, you are a nobody.” Fathi, 32

Recommendations

- Urban refugees
 - Rights and status
 - Measures for integration (housing, health and employment)
- Refugees in transit
 - Abolish reliance on illegal means
 - Safe passage - URGENT!
 - Increased regional policy and protection
- International community
 - Financial support to host countries
 - Policies for welcoming Syrians and save lives

- QUESTIONS& COMMENTS: serdogan@yorku.ca

THANKS

- Victoria Esses and Jean McRae, Pathways to Prosperity
- York University & SSHRC (research funding)
- Research participants, assistants, interpreters.
- All of you for being here today.