

**A CASE STUDY OF THE PROCESSES
OF COUNTERURBANIZATION AND
RURAL GENTRIFICATION:
KUŞÇULAR NEIGHBORHOOD, URLA**

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ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY OF THE PROCESSES OF COUNTERURBANIZATION AND RURAL GENTRIFICATION: KUŞÇULAR NEIGHBORHOOD, URLA

This paper examines the changes that one rural neighborhood, Kuşçular neighborhood, undergoes with the influence of two phenomena at the same time, counter-urbanization and rural gentrification. Rurality's definition and characteristics changed and still changing alongside shifts in its social, economic, environmental, and spatial structures. The urban-rural distinction blurs as the definition of "rural" expands with development. Agriculture in rural areas is being replaced by housing and services, shifting from a productive agrarian to a consumer society. Local agricultural workers are displaced by emerging market demands, forcing them into other economic sectors. As a result, rural areas experience shifts in economy, society, space, and environment.

In this study, semi-structured interviews and secondary data like aerial photos and existing statistics are employed. As a result, the shifts in the social, economic and spatial spheres in Kuşçular neighborhood as a result of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification were evaluated, and their consequences were discussed. The spatial shifts contributing to these consequences were assessed in detail. It is seen that some of the most crucial consequences of these two phenomena were social segregation, displacement and dispossession.

Keywords: *Counter-urbanization, Rural Gentrification, Rural Development, Displacement*

ÖZET

KARŞI KENTLEŞME VE KIRSAL SOYLULAŞMA SÜREÇLERİNE BİR ÖRNEK ÇALIŞMA OLARAK URLA, KUŞÇULAR MAHALLESİ

Bu makale, aynı anda iki olgunun, karşı-kentleşme ve kırsal soylulaştırmanın etkisiyle kırsal özellikler gösteren bir mahalle olan Kuşçular mahallesinin geçirdiği değişimleri incelemektedir. Kırsallığın tanımı ve özellikleri, sosyal, ekonomik, çevresel ve mekansal yapılarındaki dönüşümlerle birlikte değişmiş ve değişmeye devam etmektedir. "Kırsal" tanımının gelişmesi ve genişlemesiyle birlikte kentsel-kırsal ayrımı bulanıklaşmaktadır. Kırsal alanlardaki tarım, üretken bir tarım toplumundan tüketici bir topluma doğru kayarak konut ve hizmetlerle yer değiştirmektedir. Yerel tarım işçileri, ortaya çıkan pazar talepleri tarafından yerlerinden edilmekte ve bu onları başka ekonomik sektörlere yönelmeye zorlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak, kırsal alanlar ekonomi, toplum, mekan ve çevrede değişimler yaşamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve hava fotoğrafları ve mevcut istatistikler gibi ikincil veriler kullanılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Kuşçular mahallesinde karşı-kentleşme ve kırsal soylulaştırmanın bir sonucu olarak sosyal, ekonomik ve mekansal alanlardaki değişimler değerlendirilmiş ve sonuçları tartışılmıştır. Bu sonuçlara katkıda bulunan mekansal değişimler ayrıntılı olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu iki olgunun en önemli sonuçlarından bazılarının toplumsal ayrışma, yerinden edilme ve mülksüzleşme olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Karşı-kentleşme, Kırsal Soylulaşma, Kırsal Gelişme, Yerinden Edilme*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Definition

Not for long but since a few decades, the development of rural areas and the processes that re-shape them have gained much needed attention by the scholars in the field. This development process is characterized by a variety of phenomena, two of the most important being counter-urbanization and rural gentrification. The two phenomena can be seen individually or simultaneously in different rural areas however, both individual and simultaneous, they play a critical role in the restructuring of these areas. The definition of rurality and its characteristics started to change as the social, economic, environmental and spatial structure of the 'rural' were changing at the same time. However, the characteristics that make a place rural is still considered unique, changing and shifting from one rural area to another. The difference between urban and rural is getting fuzzier and the definition of 'rural' changes and enlarges with the development in related areas. Agriculture, the originally considered dominant economic occupation in rural areas, have started to yield to service sector as the demographical structure changed and agricultural lands have given their place to buildings, generally housing, while the productive agrarian society leaves its place to a consumer one. The local people, who were occupied with agricultural production and its sub-fields for decades, started to be displaced or pushed into working in other economic sectors by the newly emerging market demands. The environmental features of rural areas also change with these changing spheres. Overall, rural areas start to shift in terms of economy, society, space, and environment. These shifts in the field emerges the need to re-search and redefine the concepts 'counter-urbanization, rural gentrification', that are considered to be the comprehensive phenomena to explain the shifts, and other relating concepts for an up-to-date understanding of these crucial subjects in the discipline of city planning.

However, still there are disagreements over the definitions, measurements and consequences about counter-urbanization -which is considered by many scholars as a

‘chaotic concept’- and rural gentrification, and little research about the processes of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification together as a re-shaping process of rural areas, as well as the factors and results of these mechanisms. Additionally, there is not enough research on the causality of these two phenomena in a particular rural area. Urla shows both urban and rural characteristics on varying neighborhoods. This makes Urla a district where tourism, agriculture, service and other economic sectors are seen, which contribute to the re-shaping processes. Kuşçular neighborhood is an example where both counter-urbanization and rural gentrification take place at the same time. The simultaneous restructuring of neighborhoods that are initially characterized as ‘rural’ by counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes should be investigated further. What is more, the causality between the two phenomena, or the inclusivity of one to another should be researched as there are few works on the subject.

1.2. Aim of the Study and Contribution to the Literature

The purpose of this research is to investigate the counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes that take place in Urla, Kuşçular neighborhood, a popular and touristic originally rural neighborhood with originally agrarian occupations, in detail and to determine how the two phenomena take place in a relation and individually, as well as exploring the effects of these processes in the area in social, economic and spatial context. In order to achieve these objectives, several research questions are determined as follows:

1. How do the counter-urbanization processes take place in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla?
2. How do the rural gentrification processes take place in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla?
3. How do counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes relate to each other in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla?
4. What are the socio-economic and spatial effects of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla?
5. How are the local people affected from counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla?

In the light of these questions, it is intended to further investigate counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes in a rural neighborhood, Kuşçular, which is expected to provide better understanding for the mechanisms of these processes and for the alterations in the socio-economic and spatial structures in the area. The reasons for selecting the research field in Kuşçular neighborhood are as follows:

1. Kuşçular neighborhood's unique experience in societal, economical and spatial change.
2. Urla has recently got attention in an international scale which causes a rapid change in these spheres.
3. The truth about the inadequacy of academical researches in the field of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification in a recently-got-popular rural area.

Additionally, the case study is unique in its own, for it searches the simultaneous appliance of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification as well as individual in a recently drawn attention internationally Aegean rural neighborhood with heavy in-migration gains.

1.3. The Reason for Selecting Kuşçular Neighborhood as Case

While being a popular, touristic destination with vast natural, historical, cultural and gastronomical values, Urla is a well-favored Aegean district for especially upper-middle and upper socio-economic classes' settlement. The district has become well known in Turkey and other countries mainly with International Urla Artichoke Festival, which started to be held in 2015 annually. The event brings Urla thousands of visitors from around Turkey and the world every year. The upper and middle-upper income groups generally prefer to settle on the once-agricultural lands, in gated communities with luxury single-family housing, in originally rural areas. The reason behind is that, with the overcrowdedness of the city center, the desire to buy into a more natural, quiet lifestyle has emerged which also brings a status to the owners-occupiers of the houses, while Urla itself became a brand that attributes a certain socio-economic status to its residents.

Kuşçular is a particularly popular rural neighborhood for these socio-economic classes because of its already gentrified (and continues to be gentrified rapidly) structure with wine routes, gated luxurious communities, its Michelin starred restaurants that grow in number each year, its preserved environment and its closeness to the İzmir-Çeşme highway. Kuşçular is a neighborhood with cross-cultural interaction with many immigrants from different cities with different backgrounds, with vast agricultural lands that are subject to majorly gated housing development for the exclusive part of the society. All of this and more make Urla and especially Kuşçular neighborhood a cardinal area for the research of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification, and their inner mechanisms that re-shape the subject area. On the other hand, the need to investigate rural gentrification with differentiating it from the urban context has recently come to attention, thus resulting in the shortage of this research combined with counter-urbanization in a rural neighborhood that not long ago became popular and caught the upper class's attention.

1.4. Methodology and Data

Counter-urbanization and rural gentrification phenomena are critical in order to analyze a place that shows the characteristics which are attributed to rurality, that is experiencing sociological, economic, and spatial changes. These phenomena help researchers of a particular rural area to better understand the socio-economic, spatial, and administrative processes that take place and foresee the next stage that society heads towards and the consequences that have come or may be coming. The agents that play a part in shaping that place can take precautions or/and use the processes in order to shape the society, the space and the local economy. Counter-urbanization portrays the movement patterns of socio-economic classes, as well as their emergence, while rural gentrification shows the shifts and the processes of re-structuring in a certain economy, society and governing of a rural area. In spite of the piled-up counter-urbanization and gentrification studies, there is a lack of research in the simultaneous ongoing of the two phenomena, as well as individually, especially in a rural area that has recently got popular and boomed with newly emerging luxurious, tourist appealing services and structures, shifting from a productive society to a consumer one. In order to address this gap in literature, the study aims to identify the dynamics of counter-urbanization and rural

gentrification processes in a unique rural area, taking their core concepts in hand by determining different agents that contribute to the restructuring of the area, as well as the consequences of said processes on the displaced or potentially will be displaced natives of that rural area.

In the thesis study, data collecting and assessment methods are employed including literature review, media research, document analysis, case study techniques, semi-structured interviews, and mapping. The study uses secondary data (e.g., real-estate web data, official statistics, and local media) as well as spatial analysis of satellite images.

According to the theoretical foundation from literature review, the structure of the thesis is built. During the literature research, the theoretical basis was established according to the subjects of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification which are the newcomers and the displacees who experience these phenomena at drastically different levels. Therefore, the repercussions of these dynamics and results of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification were tried to be understood.

The semi-structured interviews were carried out with native people, local people who came to Kuşçular many years ago, and producers and business owners in Kuşçular neighborhood with a total of twenty-eight people. Thorough questions were asked including their age, their previous place of residence, occupations, narratives and causes about their migration, their business, currently or previously owned lands, what they did with them and what they plan to do with them, their production outcomes as plants or goods, their employees and customers, their thoughts on changing dynamics in Kuşçular, and so on.

1.5. Structure of the Study

This paper of research comprises six chapters that are insightful of different aspects of the study object. The chapters are constructed according to the already existing literature and the information obtained in field research.

The first chapter of the study is introduction to the subject. The problem definition is made, the study's goals and its contribution to related literature are stated, why

Kuşçular neighborhood was selected as case study is explained, and the method of the thesis and other introductive data are given.

In the second chapter, researches about counter-urbanization and rural gentrification are examined. Detailed information about the ‘definition’ of the ‘rural’ is given, the significance of migration is emphasized and analyzed while discussing the dynamics of counter-urbanization. Literature review regarding gated communities and the people’s experiences of rural gentrification, especially being displaced from their neighborhoods, are given .

In the third chapter, methodology and case study is given in the form of analysis. General information about Urla and Kuşçular neighborhood, like their locations, socio-economic states, physical attributes and so, is mentioned in detail. Also, the spatial state of Kuşçular neighborhood is discussed parallel to the literature review.

In the fourth chapter, case study area analysis is given. Because semi-structured interviews are the basis of this research, detailed information about the demography and socio-economic state of the interviewees is given. In addition, the questions asked to the interviewees are given according to their socio-economic role in the area. Also, socio-spatial shifts in the neighborhood were discussed in the context of migration, economical changes and spatial changes in the area.

In the fifth part, and conclusion part, the thesis study's findings were assessed, and their contributions to the literature were debated.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. On Counter-Urbanization

2.1.1. Rurality

In order to understand one of the pillars of this thesis, the concept of counter-urbanization, one must obtain knowledge about other integral concepts such as the definition of ‘rurality’, and the changing conceptions of the ‘rural’.

Rurality can be defined as ‘a concept and a collective of measures’ (Nelson et al., 2021, p.356) to describe ‘the rural’ in a qualitative and/or quantitative manner within the framework of the dichotomy of the urban and the rural. It is simply a series of descriptive and quantitative criterion in order to understand the rural in its unique context. The uniqueness of rurality in every rural area comes from its one and only contextual series of properties, concerning the previously mentioned measures of rurality. These measures have multiplied, shifted and gained different importances and meanings in the history, starting from the 1970’s, the era in which studies of rurality began to receive much needed attention by scholars worldwide (Nelson et al., 2021). In addition, to better understand rurality, a brief explanation of the measures that define it and the shifts and broadenings of these measures through the brief history of scholar’s attention until this day should be mentioned.

Attempts to study and define rurality began in the 1970s by Paul Cloke, a professor of geography. Cloke (1977) added new measures to the concept of rurality and widened the quantitative measures that previously focused solely on population density and employment patterns. He drew attention to new measures like migration and commuting patterns, various demographic aspects and distance from different sized centers of population, setting a light on studies of geography and policy making such as the field of healthcare (Riddick and Leadley, 1978 in Nelson et al., 2021). Following, more research proved the need to add spatial measures and the use of statistics in 1980s

and 90s, with enhancing Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Until the 2010s, the measures of rurality did not affect policy making decisions however, with the understanding of every rural area in different locations have complete distinct characteristics and need different measures to be defined in the 2000s, the definitive and quantitative measures of non-urban areas gained importance in the political field (Nelson et al., 2021).

As of today, the National Rural Development Strategy (NRDS) 2021-2023 (Ulusal Kırsal Kalkınma Stratejisi (UKKS), 2021-2023) of Turkey defines ‘rural’ from the perspective of two indicators; first, administrative restrictions, and second, population threshold. The administrative definition is sets that all settlements outside the provincial and district centers are considered villages (including towns). According to this definition, statistics are produced by TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) on a village-city basis (NRDS, 2021-23, p.6). The population threshold definition is that the population of settlements showing minimum urban functions is accepted as 20 thousand. According to this definition, statistics have been produced by TÜİK on a rural-urban basis since 1988 (NRDS, 2021-23, p.6). Nonetheless, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which is an international and intergovernmental organization operating since 1661, has 38 member countries including Turkey, and aims to better the economy of its members and others, identifies rurality considering 20 parameters under 4 sub-criteria (OECD, 1994; 1996; in Gülümser et al. 2009)) (See table1.)

Table 1. Basic set of indicators and sub-criteria of rurality defined by OECD

(Retrieved from Akder, 2003 in Gülümser et al., 2009)

| Population and Migration | Social well-being and equity |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Density | Income |
| Change | Housing |
| Structure | Education |
| Households | Health |
| Communities | Safety |
| Economic structure and performance | Environment and sustainability |
| Labour force | Topography and climate |
| Employment | Land use changes |
| Sectoral shares | Habitats and species |
| Productivity | Soils and water |
| Investment | Air quality |

2.1.2. Definition and Inner Dynamics

Counter-urbanization, a term coined by sociologist Brian Berry, emerged in the post-war period of the mid-twentieth century. Berry defines it as a new form of urbanization where rural areas distant from capitals grow faster than those near capitals (Berry, 1976). The growth mentioned is generated by the increase of population in rural areas, with the movement of populations from urban areas to rural ones (Crankshaw & Borel-Saladin, 2019). This contrasts with the previous pattern of urbanization, which dominated until the 1960s and 70s when a reverse pattern began to appear. The phenomenon is driven by urban push factors and rural pull factors, reflecting changing societal needs (Nefedova et al., 2016). Initially, counter-urbanization was characterized by the slower growth or decline of large metropolitan cities (Sant & Simons, 1993). Research primarily focused on migration patterns from urban areas, neglecting the rural perspective. Defining urbanization involves various concepts and mechanisms, but counter-urbanization is harder to define because it does not simply represent the opposite of urbanization factors (Halliday & Coombes, 1995).

It is crucial to distinguish counter-urbanization from suburbanization, despite their similarities. Initially, scholars debated whether counter-urbanization was distinct from suburbanization or an extension of it, given the similarities in the deconcentration of urban populations (Champion, 2001). However, by the 2000s, the two phenomena were recognized as distinct, with suburbanization involving local migration to the immediate surroundings of large cities, while counter-urbanization represents a complete departure from previous population distribution patterns (Halliday & Coombes, 1995). In addition to all, Champion (2001) identifies three main conceptualizations of counter-urbanization: urban areas are defined functionally to include both core and ring; the process is viewed as system-wide; and larger places in the urban system lose out to smaller ones. These conceptualizations provide a framework for understanding the dynamics of counter-urbanization.

As it is seen, the traditional perspective on counter-urbanization explains the phenomenon reduced only into demographic shifts, while there are much more complex spheres to consider it in a contemporary angle such as lifestyle choices, economic changes and technological advancements. Another fact to consider is that the migration in the process of counter-urbanization is not only permanent relocation of households but also

seasonal and temporary movements. In addition, the policy makers must address the needs of both long-term residents and the new-comers who are members of different socio-economic classes, as well as the needs of rural areas in order to get ahead of potential inequalities, social exclusion, and a non-sustainable environment (Gkartzios & Halfacree, 2023). Another contemporary approach argues that, contradictory to the push-pull theory, in times of crisis, the pull factors of the city like job opportunities, better living conditions, and basic supplies turn into what pushes people away from the city. Economic downturns, increasing unemployment rates in the city, and restraint efforts in such times steer into crisis-led counter-urbanization where people seek lower living costs, options for achieving self-sufficiency, including farming or casual work. The rural offers the newcomers of crisis-led counter-urbanization economic relief, as well as psychological and social benefits (Remoundou et al., 2015). Moreover, Dilley et al. (2022) express that urban areas experiencing economic recession together with the entrepreneurial opportunities in rural areas are other reasons for relocation.

It is also important that we consider the neoliberal policies of the post-modern world as one of the contributing forces of counter-urbanization. Neoliberalism is a political and economic state of regulation which advocates for deregulation of industry, limited government interference on the economy and service provision, and free-market capitalism. This ideology places a strong emphasis on the ideas that free markets are the most effective means of allocating resources and that economic development is the main route to human progress (Harvey, 2006). According to Tonts and Horsley (2019), neoliberal policies have undeniable impact on rural areas, the emphasis being on the changes brought about by market-oriented reforms in terms of the economy, society, and space. The authors argue that while neoliberal policies are the reason of innovations and efficiencies in rural areas, they are also responsible for aggravated inequalities and vulnerabilities. Neoliberalism frequently puts economic objectives ahead of social and environmental concerns, which results in unequal development and societal disintegration (Tonts & Horsley, 2019). Many people perceive rural places as more supportive and safer than metropolitan locations, which had strained social ties, especially in times of crisis (Anastasiou & Duquenne, 2020).

Managing and using rural land in a way that balances development requirements with the preservation of natural and cultural resources is known as rural planning (Gkartzios et al. 2022). In order to avoid unfavorable conditions that is happening or will

happen in the future in rural areas that are affected by counter-urbanization, along with policies, land-use planning in rural areas, rural planning, is necessary for sustainability. However, in rural regions, land-use planning often becomes a divisive topic driven by a range of parties with varying agendas. The key points of the issue involve local housing needs where planning decisions fail to prioritize, political influences by local politics, and rural amenity protection which can stand in the way of the need for housing development. So as to prevent the issues mentioned, land-use planning in rural areas must balance priorities, considering the perspectives of all stakeholders, conducting a transparent and inclusive planning process while prioritizing long-term community sustainability over short-term political gains (Gallent et al. 2019).

Counter-urbanization remains a significant and evolving phenomenon with profound implications for rural and urban areas alike. Understanding the complex interplay of mobilities, representations, power, and policies to address the challenges and opportunities presented by counter-urbanization is crucial (Gkartzios & Halfacree, 2023). By adopting a nuanced and holistic approach, policymakers and researchers can better navigate the changing landscape of rural-urban migration and contribute to more sustainable and inclusive rural development (Gallent et al. 2019).

2.1.3. Migration in Counter-Urbanization

Counter-urbanization is also referred as deurbanization, disurbanization or reverse migration from the city by scholars (Herrero-Jáuregui & Concepción, 2023). It is a phenomenon that enclaves multiple other phenomena such as resurgence and regeneration of rural areas, decentralization, depopulation and repopulation, which all remote around migration (Cloke, 1985). As discussed by Fielding (1989) in his paper, migration is related with counter-urbanization directly, in which he assesses the ongoing counter-urbanization in the cities of Europe by the relationship of net migration and settlement size, and the inverse slope formed by this relationship (Fielding, 1989). As can be seen from the figure below (see Figure 1.), the greater the size of the settlement, the greater the net migration rate is. This is applied to both urbanization, which the now-metropolitan cities have experienced until the 1970s, and to counter-urbanization, in which the net

migration rate the city cores experience in negative values, the value being smaller with the settlement size getting greater.

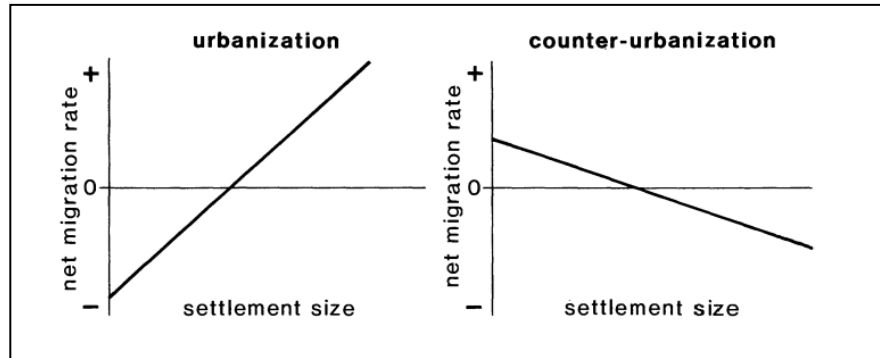


Figure 1. Urbanization and counter-urbanization schematic representations in Western Europe, 1950-present.

(Fielding, 1989: 62).

Champion (2001) describes the shift from urbanization to counter-urbanization as a ‘switch from the positive urbanization correlation’ (p.151). Geyer and Kontuy1 (1993) introduce ‘differential urbanization,’ (see Figure 2.) where cities go through six stages, including urbanization, polarization reversal, and counter-urbanization, where smaller cities eventually grow the fastest. Halliday and Coombes (1995) outline three counter-urbanization models based on migration motives: anti-metropolitan (driven by housing costs), anti-urban (pushed by urban issues like crime and pollution), and pro-rural (attracted by a healthier lifestyle). These models reflect a trend of ‘lifestyle migration’ (Benson & O’Reilly, 2009).

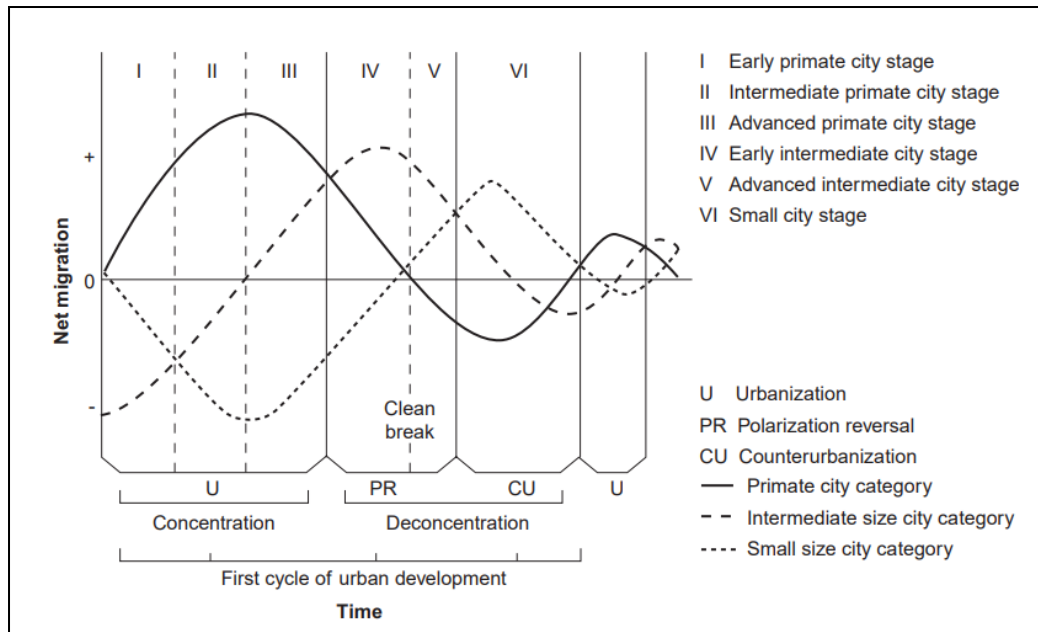


Figure 2. Temporal Characterization of Differential Urbanization

(Geyer and Kontuy1, 1993: 165)

Argent and Plummer (2022) evaluate counter-urbanization from a focus on the roles of positive and negative attributes (amenities and disamenities) of the city and the rural that effect the migration decisions of people. The authors describe amenities as the positive attributes of rural areas which draw the urban residents in, like natural splendors, reduced cost of living and tranquility. For the urban dwellers, the pastoral landscapes, quiet surroundings and recreational activity opportunities are important pull factors. Urban disamenities, on the other side, are outlined as the negative aspects of urban areas which drive the urban residents out of these areas, such as congestion, increased crime, pollution and higher living expenses. The push factors of the urban areas encourage people to migrate to the rural areas where they can live a life with a higher quality, with safer, healthier and more attractive surroundings, as well as a life in a more community-oriented space, where people have a higher sense of belonging (Argent & Plummer, 2022). Champion and Brown (2012) stress the economic drivers of urban-rural migration, pointing out the increasing unemployment rates in the urban areas and the economic policies that inspire people to migrate from the city. The authors highlight the significant demographic shifts the rural areas are going through, being the increase in population and a more diverse demographic composition, concluding that urban to rural migration is an undeniable component in the population redistribution (Champion & Brown, 2012).

2.1.4. Rural Angle on Counter-Urbanization

However, as Cloke (1985) argues, counter-urbanization has been looked at from the ‘urban’ viewpoint only, which put an excessive attention on high pressured rural areas and not enough attention on rural areas that are just starting to experience counter-urbanization or the ones that are yet to be discussed and researched (p.22). The terms that are mentioned above stresses the multi-dimensional structure of counter-urbanization and the two-sided viewpoint of discussion which are the ‘urban’ and the ‘rural’. Both the push factors of the urban and the pull factors of rural areas should be considered in order to correctly evaluate the counter-urbanization processes (p.14), as well as the conceptualization and discussion of rural areas within the social science literature. Gkartzios et al. (2020) introduce the term ‘Inclusive Rural Social Science’, a method that avoids limiting ‘rurality’ to stereotypes and takes into account the variety of rural experiences, unlike the traditional definition of ‘rural’ that suggests it is characterized with regions outside of cities that are distinguished by rural scenery and low population densities (Gkartzios, Toishi, & Woods, 2020).

In order to look at counter-urbanization from a ‘rural’ angle, one should investigate the idyllic representations of the rural areas in the eyes of the people who migrate to those areas and their motives in doing so. The two ‘collective of objects’, attractions and motivations, are variable in levels and/or in existence according to their ‘popularity for rural living’ (Woods, 2005 in Bijker & Haartsen, 2011, p.643). Argent et al. (2007) argues that the spatial benefits and services are the criteria for the popularity of a specific rural area to migrate. He defines three sub-heading for the spatial context: the local physical, situational, and economic environments of those rural areas. The landscape types such as forests, water resources and mountains, and their existence rate in a rural area determines the popularity in the sub-heading of physical environment. The situational environment consists of the ‘perceived attractiveness’ (Bijker & Haartsen, 2011, p.645) like accessibility of the particular rural area. At last, economic environment of a rural area can be explained in the recreational amenities -being employment opportunities in such amenities, and distance to a water body- and their concentration in it (Johnson & Beale, 1994 in Bijker & Haartsen, 2011). Elshof et al. (2017) argue that the points affecting the ‘village attractiveness’ (p.49) that cause urban dwellers to migrate to

rural areas contribute the enhancement of declining rural regions if only the appropriate policies are made (Elshof et al., 2017).

2.1.5. Results of Counter-Urbanization

Counter-urbanization, the migration from bustling cities to serene rural areas, casts a profound influence on the landscapes and lives within these rural regions. This mainly demographic shift, driven by the pursuit of tranquility, affordability, and a connection with nature, results in effects that can be categorized under four headings: economic restructuring, social transformation, spatial reconfiguration, and policy reformation. In term of economic restructuring, counter-urbanization stimulates rural economies by increasing demand for housing and services. The migration from urban to rural boosts regional economies, promoting business endeavors and broadening the range of economic activity by introducing new skills, businesses and economic activities (Herrero-Jáuregui & Concepción, 2023). However, there are negative effects as well, like economic disparities. The economic stimulation opens the door for increasing real estate costs, which would overwhelm long-term residents' finances, calling for equitable economic policy making to avoid the original residents' displacement and guarantee that the riches are shared (Karsten 2020).

In terms of social transformation, while there are positive outcomes like cultural enrichment and renewed vibrancy that can be brought by the newcomers, their integration to the rural areas is not absent challenges. One crucial challenge is on the social cohesion. Tensions and disputes can arise from differences in expectations, attitudes, and lifestyles between long-term inhabitants and newcomers (Mitchell, 2004). The arrival of newcomers effects the spatial balance of the rural areas as well. One result of this is the increase in home constructions and infrastructure enhancement, which results in the changed appearance of the rural landscape. Although this development has the potential of breathing new life to the dead, stagnant areas, it also faces to be the means to splintering natural habitats and depleting local resources (Herrero-Jáuregui & Concepción, 2023). The changing needs in the light of counter-urbanization effects require for reformed policies and effective governance. Policies that assist in rural development, such as funding for local businesses and infrastructure enhancements, can make it easier for

newcomers to integrate and encourage long-term growth (Anastasiou & Duquenne, 2020). The shifts in the rural areas call for inclusive decision-making processes in order to eliminate social tension and reinforce engagement among residents, as well as considering all stakeholders' different needs and perspectives (Dilley et al. 2022).

2.2. On Rural Gentrification

2.2.1. Defining Gentrification

Gentrification as a term is first coined by Ruth Glass, an urban geographer, in 1960s (Glass, 1964). She defined the process as ‘...working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes- upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages- two rooms up and two down- have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have [now] become elegant, expensive residences’ (Glass, 1964, p. xviii-xix). Historically, gentrification is identified as a cultural phenomenon that has been looked at from a geographical point of view which broadly affects political decision-making processes (Pacione, 1984). While there are varying definitions at the moment, one of the most inclusive ones are the increasing socio-economic status of poorer, lower social-status neighborhoods as a result of the migration of upper income social groups to these neighborhoods (Atkinson & Wulff, 2009), resulting in increased property values and higher cost of living (Zuk et al. 2015). The newcomers or ‘in-migrants’ are called gentrifiers which are relatively wealthy, and the ‘out-migrants’ that have lower income are called displacees (Rérat, et. al. 2009). It is possible to see demographic patterns in gentrifiers and displacees from various places. Gentrifiers are typically aged 25 to 45, with owners older than renters, and are usually upper-middle class, childless couples employed in professional, technical, and managerial roles (Gale, 1985). Gentrification involves the influx of these groups into less expensive areas and reinvestment in housing quality (Atkinson, 2003). Displacement disproportionately affects minority groups and the poor, including blacks, Hispanics, and Muslims in the U.S. (Gale, 1985). Migration theories explaining this include Ravenstein’s (1885) push-pull theory and Smith’s (1987) rent gap theory, highlighting economic and social dynamics behind gentrification and displacement (Atkinson, 2003).

Starting from the late 50s, gentrification literature has experienced certain waves in which the agents of the phenomenon differ and with each wave, became more complex. Aalbers (2019), especially compares the Third Wave (Commercial Gentrification -1990s) Gentrification to the Fifth Wave (Global Gentrification- 2010s to present) Gentrification with a highlight on the urban development, its increasing complexity and global nature. Aalbers compares the two waves in several key arguments. These are the increased influence of both global financial investments and the state's strategical involvement in the process; the grown severity and scale of physical and cultural displacement as a result of large-scaled projects of redevelopment often spearheaded by global investors; the increased inequality by socio-spatial polarization; the integrated processes of commercial and residential gentrification; and the more noticeable usage of data analytics and technology by planners and developers in order to foresee market trends and locate possible investment areas (Aalbers, 2019).

Shaw (2008) describes gentrification as a staged process that has evolved over 50 years, significantly transforming cities in advanced market economies. This began with the disinvestment of the 1950s and 1960s and deindustrialization in the 1970s, followed by reinvestment in core neighborhoods, often involving the displacement of low-income residents and the renovation of old houses. The process also included converting industrial spaces into residential ones and enhancing urban environments with greenery and public art. Shaw notes that contemporary gentrification reflects a cultural consumption trend, where designer shops, art galleries, and upscale eateries dominate (Shaw, 2008). Consumption, rather than production, now drives urban economic growth, making gentrification a key aspect of urban transformation (Zukin, 1995 in Shaw, 2008). Through time, the trajectory of gentrification was shaped by different economic, social and political factors however, despite its evolving nature, gentrification's outcomes remain consistent. It has led to the displacement of low-income residents, the original settlers, in varying intensity and scale across different periods of time bringing vivid social changes and leading to homogenized, less diverse neighborhoods (Verlaan & Hochstenbach, 2022).

Helbrecht (2018) interprets the inner dynamics of gentrification by tackling the factors forcing urban change, mainly the role of policy and governance, economic drivers, and social factors. She argues that planning decisions and government regulations such as redevelopment initiatives, tax incentives, and zoning regulations are important drivers

in deepening or lessening gentrification outcomes. Economic factors including real estate speculation, investment opportunities, and market demand for urban living are the drivers of gentrification, as well as the social motivations such as lifestyle choices. The forces mentioned together change neighborhoods, generally costing existing residents their place (Helbrecht, 2018). Public investment policies such as infrastructure, amenities and services, particularly exacerbate gentrification processes. Provision of parks, transportation, schools and such, increase a neighborhood's attractiveness which lead into gentrification. These improvements play a critical role in attracting high-income residents and developers, increasing the values of property and costs of living. As a result, both direct and indirect mechanisms can proceed in the displacement case. Residents can either be removed physically due to redevelopment activities, or they can be indirectly displaced resultant unaffordable costs of living (Zuk et al., 2015).

Displacement is an argued outcome of gentrification processes of which politics have divided opinions about. According to Atkinson and Wulff (2009), some have positive views where gentrification is beneficial in terms of 'revitalization of the built environment' and economical enhancement of the inner-city. These lead to the invitation of more investment to the area and shift settled ideas of the area's social nature, while increasing tax revenues to the local state, Atkinson (2004) argues. On the social justice an equity end, it is not possible to see any other than negative impacts like the displacees' continuous moving, displacement and other social costs (p. 7) through rent increases, decrease in affordable housing in such areas, and social exclusion as the place becomes more and more homogeneous in terms of socio-economic status of the new residents (Atkinson, 2004). There are extended social costs (see Table 2.) that are on the displacees as they are forced to move, the challenge to move back into the inner city comes next (Atkinson, 2003), added to the psychological costs of displacement, conflict and resentment in the community, loss of social networks, increased commuting time, homogenization of neighborhoods, reduced cultural diversity, and socio-economic inequalities. It is important to look at the consequences of gentrification from the working-class perspective, argues Paton (2016), for it significantly impacts that socio-economic stratum of the community as the space shifts to the tastes and economic capabilities of the new residents. However, in case where physical displacement does not occur, it is still possible to talk about the 'loss of place' (p.325) for the lower-income

residents whose neighborhood goes through social and cultural identity erosion via class transition (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015).

The disagreement lies within the political viewpoint, Atkinson (2003) stresses, where for the right, the social costs of gentrification are negligible for the sake of the incline of the city and improved neighborhoods, and for the left, they have always viewed the process as a deceptive vanguard, with segments of the middle and upper-middle class displacing both "problem" individuals and social issues. For that, more forgiving terms like 'renaissance' and 'neighborhood revitalization' are used to address gentrification. According to some scholars, gentrification is becoming a more common tactic used by housing, conservation, and urban planning policies that view the recolonization of the middle-income social groups as a crucial component of future economic and urban success. In the end, communities with lower incomes have been split apart and uprooted as an outcome of gentrification, which has been mostly a detrimental procedure motivated by the accumulation of capital (Atkinson, 2004).

While the outcomes are the same, the processes of urban change are much derived, expanded, and became much more comprehensive compared to the 1960s. This has led to the simultaneous upgrading of the definition of gentrification, which was always challenging to scholars, which now embed in itself different types of socio-economic upgrading, different types of actors, with shifting motivations and desires, and spaces (Rérat, et. al. 2009). One example to that would be the changed aesthetic concerns, and street furniture gaining importance leading to the change in social status of the neighborhood and the former users of these spaces can no longer be included (Zukin, 1995). However, in the past, the concerns and needs of people were much different, therefore making the process, agents, and places of gentrification different from today. Particularly, the shifts occurred as well as the means to control economic and urban triumph. As a result, today, gentrification is viewed by planners, contractors and constructors, and governments worldwide as a 'global urban strategy.' (Herrera et al. 2007).

Table 2. Summary of neighborhood impacts of gentrification

(Retrieved from Atkinson, 2004)

| <i>Positive</i> | <i>Negative</i> |
|--|--|
| Stabilization of declining areas | Community resentment and conflict |
| Increased property values | Loss of affordable housing |
| Reduced vacancy rates | Unsustainable speculative property price increases |
| | Homelessness |
| Increased local fiscal revenues | Greater draw on local spending through lobbying by middle-class groups |
| Encouragement and increased viability of further development | Commercial/industrial displacement |
| Reduction of suburban sprawl | Increased cost and changes to local services |
| Increased social mix | Loss of social diversity (from socially disparate to affluent ghettos) |
| Decreased crime | Increased crime |
| Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship | Under-occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas |
| | Displacement through rent/price increases |
| | Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas |
| | Secondary psychological costs of displacement |

2.2.2. Defining Rural Gentrification

Comparative approaches are needed in order to fully grasp the complexities of gentrification. There are various forms of gentrification of which the actors, the place, the process and the definition of the term differs from each other. Namely, green gentrification (also referred as environmental and ecological gentrification) is a much-researched form of gentrification nowadays as it discusses the negative social, environmental and economic outcomes of urban greening projects that initially meant for coping with the effects of climate crisis, but ends up contributing to the displacement of the original occupiers and urban environmental injustice (Anguelovski, et. al. 2022). Another form of gentrification, which came to attention, and was first recognized and defined as a concept by Kevin Fox Gotham (2005) was ‘tourism gentrification’. He defines the concept as ‘the transformation of a middle-class neighborhood into a relatively affluent and exclusive enclave marked by a proliferation of corporate entertainment and tourism venues’ (p.1102) while drawing attention to the combined dynamics of localization as well as globalization that characterize contemporary urbanization and redevelopment, and the difference of the concept from conventional theories of

gentrification, which presume that the development is driven by production or demand-side forces.

While not being the last, yet another form of gentrification which is crucial in terms of contributing to this paper, is rural gentrification, which has not been differentiated from the urban context until 1990s and only gained attention in the last decades (Phillips, 1993). It is important for the literature to look into the gentrification study from a rural point of view because as Phillips (2002) argues, there has been little attention on the processes of gentrification other than the urbanized ones, as the phenomenon tends to be seen to occur mainly in urban areas. Regardless, rural gentrification is crucial in terms of providing insightful observations which challenge the conventional gentrification perspective, the urban-centric one. The concept of "rural gentrification" is generally linked to a "back to the country movement" in which there has been a growth in rural populations that has been both directly and indirectly, linked to a decrease of large city populations (Phillips, 2002). The process of rural gentrification is generally explained as 'urban middle class migrating to rural settlements, for living and recreational space, thus causing the change in the rural social class structure, and leading to the shortage of rural housing and the relocation of indigenous people' (Cloe et. al. 1995, cited in Lu et. al. 2022, p. 2).

As it is with urban gentrification, rural gentrification is also looked from an angle where it is a material activity linked to the renovation of the housing inventory and the creation of economic marginalization, that comes with these classes' being economically incapable of buying into certain residential districts. Moreover, rural gentrification is frequently linked to migration and class colonization processes or invasion, as Glass' (1964) choice of term, like urban gentrification (Phillips, 2002). It is possible to recognize diverse drivers between urban and rural gentrification, where rural gentrification is more affected by factors related to quality of life than urban gentrification, which is generally influenced by closeness to economic possibilities. While they are different in context, by looking at rural gentrification, one may learn more about the broader processes and impacts of gentrification. The classic urban-centric understanding of gentrification is challenged by rural environments, which highlight the significance of considering a variety of factors and consequences (Phillips & Smith, 2018). However, while the agents, the places and the context of rural gentrification is different from urban gentrification, it

cannot completely be segregated from the urban counterpart of gentrification (Gocer, et. al. 2021).

For its differences, Phillips (1993) argues that unlike the process in the urban, the gentrifiers come from a variety of places with different cultures and history, they themselves restore their houses in the rural which points out to the not-so-strict replacement of the working class with the middle class. Furthermore, urban gentrification generally takes place in poor, devaluated neighborhoods when in rural gentrification, it is not necessarily the case (Guimond and Simard, 2010 cited in Balaban et. al. 2022). Cloke and Thrift (1987,1990) reinforce this argument by stressing the difference of the conflicting parts in the rural and urban gentrification processes. They state that in the rural, the conflict is between two different middle-class fractions, which they call intra-class conflicts, and in the urban it is between one middle class and one working class, which they call inter-class conflicts (Cloke & Thrift, 1987, 1990).

With rural gentrification gaining importance, three key points where it differs from the urban context are defined by geographer scholars as well as the explanation of its process. The first one is the ‘manifestation of the uneven circulation of capital’ (Darling, 2005), in which one out of four types of gentrifiers, the owner-occupiers, are responsible for the evolution of the local economy, caused by the new capital flow into the community. These gentrifiers change the demand structure of the area as the new local economy takes shape. The second factor is that this newly formed economy causes a decrease in the reproductive occupation and labor, which is defined as decreased agricultural production in the context of rurality, and an increase in labor in the service field. The third and the last point that differentiates rural gentrification from the urban is that the newcomers are driven by purchasing the so-called ‘natural, rural idyllic lifestyle’ that is supposed to exist in rural areas (Darling, 2005). Yet, Smith et al. (2019) points out to the demographic shifts that occur in gentrified rural areas as a result of the frequent moving of older individuals to such places, who alter the age structure and increase the average age there. This presents unique opportunities and challenges as older newcomers may demand different services and infrastructure, such as social assistance and healthcare systems, affecting local planning and policies (Smith et al., 2019).

The rural gentrifiers, which are the agents of rural gentrification are defined in more detail in Phillips’ (2002, cited in Balaban et. al, 2022) paper, are classified in four

types: (i) ‘professional developers’ buy properties in rural areas, improve the property and sell it in order to make profit, (ii) ‘landlord developers’ rent the renewed properties, (iii) ‘sweat-equity owner-occupier developers’ which soon-to-be owners-occupiers purchase a property and privately finance its renewal and repairs and work in the process, and lastly, (iv) ‘unmediated owner-occupier developers’ in which a newly bought property is renewed and repaired by an employed developer (Balaban et. al. 2022). Thus, as there are four types of gentrifiers, there also are multiple reasons for investing in and migrating to rural areas and related properties. Blasius et al. (2016) analyzes the agents in gentrification in by the time they come to rural areas. The authors portray two types of newcomers, pioneers and gentrifiers. The pioneers are defined the earlier movers into underdeveloped areas who generally are young professionals, artists, or bohemians looking for inexpensive housing and an alternative lifestyle; and the gentrifiers are the settlers who move into neighborhoods after the pioneers who are frequently richer, more established professionals contributing to substantial cultural and socio-economic changes. In other words, the pioneers are the initiators of revitalization through social and cultural investment, while the gentrifiers drive economic development and bring forth further change (Blasius et al., 2016).

The displacees, by any means, face various challenges. Lorenzen (2021) argues the impacts of rural gentrification on the displaced and dispossessed people under five headings. He underlines the economic displacement those people experience by the increased property values, higher costs of living, and their lack of financial resources to compete with more affluent newcomers or investors. Also, the cultural displacement that comes with the new residents results in the disruption of community dynamics and the cultural landscape in the area because, according to Zhang and He (2018), the displacees frequently come from ethnic and cultural minorities. Vulnerability, marginalization and the loss of political voice are other important outcomes of rural gentrification. The dispersion of displaced communities results in losing their political influence as this makes it harder for them to advocate for their interests and requirements, inevitably leading to marginalization and vulnerability. The authors additionally refer to the loss of livelihoods -generally farming or local artisanal work-, housing insecurity, and the negative impacts on mental and physical health (Lorenzen, 2021; Zhang & He, 2018).

2.2.3. Land and Occupational Dispossession in Rural Gentrification

In the case of rural gentrification, the dispossession comes in the form of land. Land dispossession is viewed as a crucial requirement for modern capital accumulation in rural areas (Kan, 2019a). The government and policies play a crucial role in this case. Yang and Loopmans (2023) identify a number of key state initiatives and policies that contribute to rural gentrification and land dispossession (see Figure 3.). First, land acquisition policies permit the transformation of rural lands into urban areas. This generally entails taking local farmers' farmland by force, with compensation which is frequently less than market value, resulting in the reclassification of agricultural property to the urban one. Second, state-led rural development projects such as new town building, infrastructure upgrades, and construction of industrial parks drive wealthier residents and investments into rural areas, resulting in the relocation of long-term rural residents. Third, the commodification of rural landscapes is a result of policies aimed to boost rural tourism under the name of strategy for economic development, translating into the influx of investors and visitors, and the increase in property values, thus the displacement of local inhabitants. The authors define the process as blurring between rural and urban areas in ways of modifying socio-cultural practices and economic life, hybridizing rural residential architecture and landscape, and promoting a more urban form of land governance (Yang & Loopmans, 2023).

Kan (2021) examines how land markets develop as a means of rural revitalization, paying attention to the implications of gentrification, property rights, and land transfer. He argues that the creation of land markets and the transfer of land rights are crucial in terms of economic development stimulation in rural areas, risking the leading to gentrification (Kan, 2021). The evolving dynamics of farmland ownership in rural areas usually comes in the form of land grabbing and land concentration, causing land and occupational dispossession. Desmarais et al. (2015) focus on this growing tendency, in which large-scale organizations acquire substantial tracts of land, negatively affecting local farming communities with its evident changes in land ownership patterns. The authors present several arguments related to land grabbing and land concentration, from economic motivations and trends to policy implications and responses, highlighting the current policies favoring large-scale investments and corporate ownership (Desmarais et al., 2015).

It is possible to see the significant rural unrest that has been brought on by land dispossession and displacement by urban governments (He et al., 2009). However, more covert methods of eviction that involve value-grabbing or the outright commercialization of property without the involvement of local governments have also been challenged. While rural settlers are able to profit financially from private company rents and have access to increased quality services in concentrated settlements (Liu et al., 2018), these advantages are not shared fairly across the rural area's populace. This brings to mind the socio-economic inequities that come with gentrification practices.

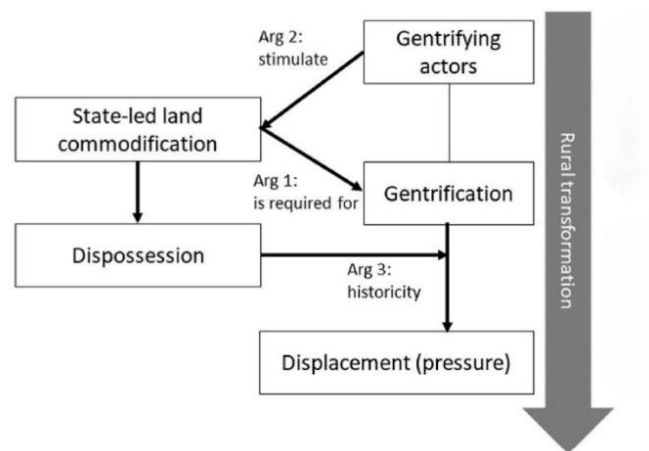


Figure 3. Theoretical framework

(Retrieved from: Yang & Loopmans, 2023)

2.2.4. Gated Communities

The world has started to witness the spreading of gated communities in the 1990s and since, the phenomenon has grasped the attention of scholars. Since it has political aspects, the policy makers are also interested in this subject of study. There are different perspectives on the point whether it is beneficial or disadvantageous and there are several definitions that has added up over time and according to the collective of researches. These differences of opinion have also brought different usage of concepts such as 'condominiums' and 'gated residential developments' (Roitman, 2010) and 'proprietary urban communities' (Webster, 2001, p.149). The first definition of gated communities, in which the focus of subject is just that concept, is made by Blakely and Snyder (1997), and the concept is defined as residential neighborhoods with restricted access that typically privatize public areas. These are developments in safety with controlled

entrances and specified perimeters -typically walls or fences- designed to keep outsiders away. They may be encountered everywhere from the city center to the outlying regions, in the wealthiest neighborhoods and the poorest, and they contain both new construction and older places that have been renovated with gates and walls.

However, this definition lacks referring to some crucial aspects such as the social homogeneity of the populace, the availability of facilities and services to be utilized by the residents, and the degree of independence that these areas might offer due to their ability to be "self-contained." (Roitman, 2010). One critique is that the emphasis is on the physical elements of these residential developments ignoring the residents' socio-economic backgrounds, the locations of these developments and so. Roitman (2008) makes a comprehensive definition of gated communities considering all aspects, arguing 'Closed urban residential settlements voluntarily occupied by a homogeneous social group, where public space has been privatized by restricting access through the implementation of security devices. Gated communities are conceived as closed settlements from their inception and are designed with the intention of providing security to their residents and prevent penetration by non-residents; their houses are of high quality and have services and amenities that can be used only by their residents, who pay regular compulsory maintenance fees. They have a private governing body that enforces internal rules concerning behavior and construction.' (p.8).

The structural reasons of the rise of gated communities are considered being the change in governance patterns. Paired with the effects of globalization, the decreased influence of the state on the basic service provision points finger to the number one reason considered for moving to gated communities, security. The state fails to provide security, job opportunities, housing units, in other words the basic services, and citizens that belong to the upper economic status are capable of forming new answers to these problems by privatizing them opens the way of gated residential developments (Caldeira, 2000).

As mentioned in previous chapters, locational movements of particular groups of the society also have subjective causes that are forged by the person's goals, passions, perspectives, and chances. These are mentioned in the literature as 'increased fear of crime, search for a better lifestyle, desire for a sense of community, search for social homogeneity, and aspirations for higher social status and social distinction within particular social groups' (Roitman, 2010, p.34). While the first two points are related with

the political differentiations, the desire for a sense of community and social homogeneity are the outcomes of the globalizing world with ethnic groups living together more and more and an increase in individualism. Additionally, search for higher status and social distinction are linked to psychology of climbing the social ladder and the advertisement of the means to do so, which match the attributes of gated communities.

The driving forces of this phenomenon prepare a base for understanding the consequences of it. The effects can be gathered under four main headings: Spatial, Political, Economic and Social impacts, all with positive and negative sides. Spatially, while some researchers point out to the positive effects such as enhanced service provision where the state falls inadequate, and better environmental status (Cabrales et al. 2001 in Roitman, 2010), the negative effects seem to have a broader and deeper set of consequences on the society, and could be elaborated within the social impacts as well. Vesselinos et al. (2007) uses the spatialized sociology of inequality (see Figure 4.), which revolves around the sociological and political-economic frameworks for the spaces of inequality, arguing one of the most important negative spatial effects of gated communities, spatial segregation, which draws attention to the privatization of space, the public goods, and the public amenities that originally belong to everyone in the society. With privatization of space, using physical barricades, comes the social exclusion and classification, the outsiders legally left out from these homogeneous places, society becoming unable to share experiences and interact each other at the once-public spaces. The researchers also make inferences about the impacts of gated communities such as their contribution in creating ‘occupationally segregated spaces’ (p.118), and their negative effects on housing prices in the adjoining non-gated districts.

Positive political effects of gated communities are considered by various scholars as the decreased burden on local governments, and ‘the exercise of political participation and civil engagement within the gated community’ (Lang and Danielsen, 1997 in Vesselinos et al. 2007, p.35), while again, the negative effects are much more deeply constituted and reinforce inequality. In contrast with the idea of gated communities increasing political participation, some scholars argue that it is not always the case, pointing at the main goal of some ‘homeowner associations function as corporations run by managers’ (Roitman, 2010, p.35) is keeping the housing prices stable and high and underpinning restrictions and terms as exclusive regulations for their residents. This, also, has to do with the economic impacts of gated communities. As mentioned before, gated

communities play an important role on the increase in property values of the neighborhoods near them, which contributes to the local economy. In addition, creating job opportunities for lower skilled workers, and ‘increasing tax revenues for local governments’ (Le Goix, 2005 in Roitman, 2010, p.35) are considered as the positive economic effects of gated communities. Negative effects are the substantial monthly fees residents have to pay that are needed to maintain the dynamics in these areas, and potential decreased profits for the local government because the residents pay these monthly fees in order to access amenities and gain services (Roitman, 2010).

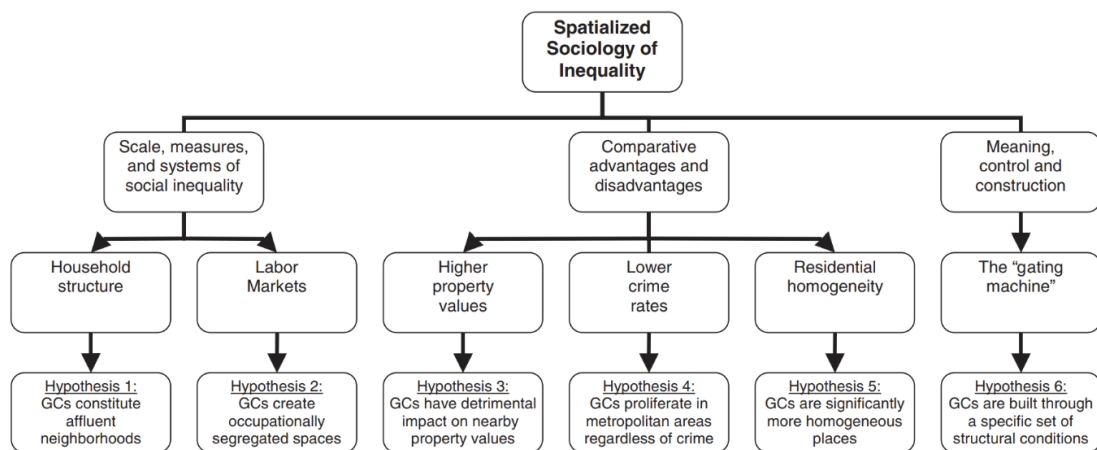


Figure 4. Conceptual Outline of the Spatialized Sociology of Inequality Theoretical Framework

(Retrieved from Vesselinos et al., 2007)

To summarize, as Webster (2001) underlines, in the center of all the debates about the public and the private, lies the dichotomies of ‘public provision versus private provision of civic goods and services; planning versus the market; efficiency versus equity in service delivery; private space versus shared space; local neighborhood cohesion versus fragmented social cohesion; micro-level local government versus municipal government; government by consensus versus government by imposition’ (p.153), highlighting political, economic, and social aspects of gated communities.

2.3. Counter-Urbanization-led Rural Gentrification

Counter-urbanization can be identified as an agent of rural gentrification. As mentioned earlier, in summary, the phenomenon describes the tendency of people moving

to rural areas, especially those with metropolitan origins. A higher standard of living is frequently the driving force behind this move. Usually, it entails the relocation of highly educated and wealthy people to outlying areas. Because of this, the inflow of wealthy people into rural regions alters local economies and cultures and frequently leads in the displacement of long-term inhabitants owing to growing property values and living expenses. This, as described before, is called rural gentrification.

Counter-urbanization and rural gentrification have been perceived as closely linked phenomena, maybe even synonymous or at the very least substantially commensurable. Some other researchers have proposed that there are notable variations in the emphasis of these words. Phillips (2009) underlines that by demonstrating both Murdoch and Marsden's (1994) claim that rural studies have a long-standing "aversion to notions of class" and Neil Smith's (1996: 32) claim that gentrification processes are frequently described using "anodyne terminology" that obscures critical connotations of the term gentrification. Another argument about the two phenomena is that counter-urbanization is more than rural gentrification, assuming gentrification is a reductionist term that in its haste to relate everything to class, misses several facets of social diversity, identity, and action. The fourth and last argument is about the two phenomena being problematic, in a way that both ideas have comparable epistemological issues and characteristics (see Figure 5.) (Phillips, 2009).

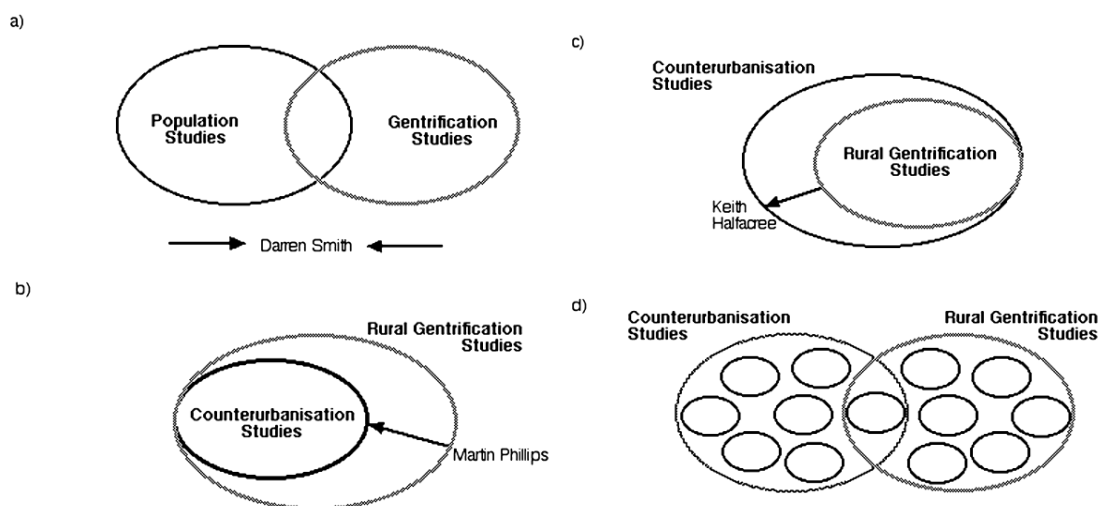


Figure 5. Perspectives on Counter-urbanization and Rural Gentrification

(Retrieved from Phillips, 2009, p.540)

It is possible to approach these ideas from numerous interpretative angles. In order to build an interpretative viewpoint on counterurbanization and rural gentrification, one must draw on Latour's (1999) idea of circulatory sociologies of translation (see Figure 6.). As social actors, concepts, and items move through different networks, they translate and change. This method emphasizes how meanings and behaviors change as a result of encounters in various settings, arguing that social dynamics are not static but rather flexible and dependent on these translations. Latour draws attention to his theory that concepts are created in relation to four circulatory loops: public representation, alliance building, mobilization, and autonomization. These illustrate how social dynamics unfold in networks. The public representation loop involves how ideas and entities are portrayed in public discourse, influencing perceptions and shaping social realities. In alliance building, actors form partnerships and coalitions, facilitating collective action and reinforcing the power of shared interests. Mobilization loop refers to the process of organizing resources and people to support a cause or action, demonstrating how social movements gain momentum. Autonomization loop highlights how actors or entities gain independence and self-regulation over time, solidifying their influence within a network (Latour, 1999).

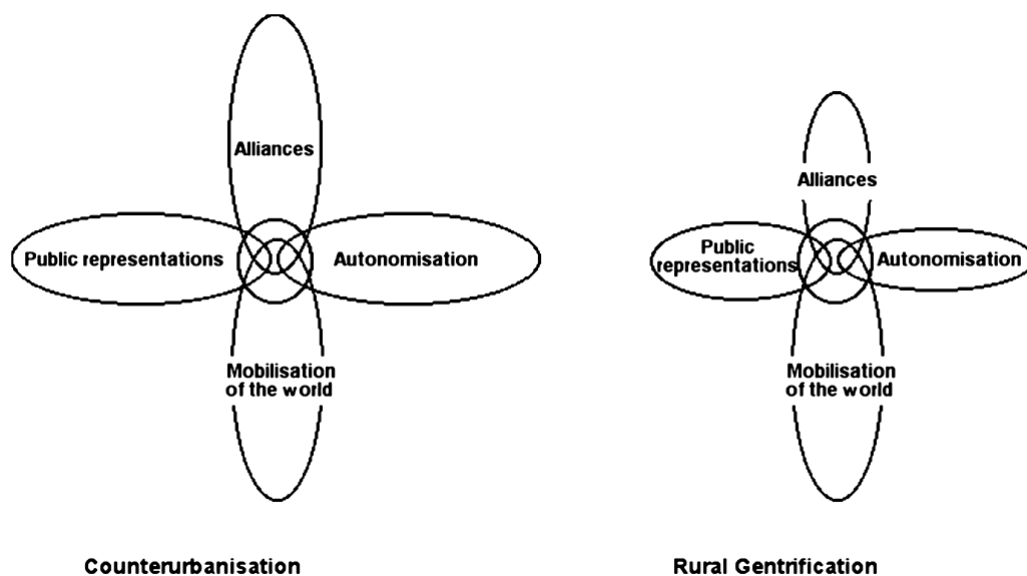


Figure 6. Circulatory sociologies of translation for counterurbanisation and rural gentrification

(Retrieved from Phillips, 2009, p.554)

The circulatory sociologies of translation of rural gentrification and counterurbanization can be brought together, highlighting the parallels between the latter concept's autonomization, alliance-building, and public representation, and the circulatory loops of mobilization (see Figure 6.). It highlights the relative scope of the circulatory sociologies of translation, with rural gentrification appearing to be a weaker term than counterurbanization, which is, if one believes Latour's (1999) theories, somewhat more widely related. However it is possible to say there are positive and negative impacts of counter-urbanization, the latter can be identified as 'rural gentrification' (Phillips, 2009).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY & GENERAL ANALYSIS OF URLA AND KUŞÇULAR NEIGHBORHOOD

3.1. Data Sources

In this research study, the data collection methods of media research, document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and map generation and analysis were implemented. Additionally, a number of visualizations were created for the counter-urbanization and rural gentrification criteria, the business photos, and the plans that were looked over from the municipality and a private planning office in Urla were gathered. Data from TURKSAT, and reports from governmental institutions were reviewed as documents. Aerial photographs from the years 2002 and 2024 of Kuşçular neighborhood were obtained through Google Earth.

3.1.1. Interviews

The main data source used in this research study is interviews. A total of 28 people and 5 business owners/businesses participated in the semi-structured interviews that has been conducted in Kuşçular neighborhood. To better understand the participants, a total of fifty-one questions were posed under four topics. Table 3 lists the names of the semi-structured interviews as well as information on the questions. The researcher was able to see the environment directly and gain insight into the businesses' and people's daily activities, therefore the qualitative interviews were conducted right away on spot. Additionally, on site visits, pictures were taken for a better understanding of businesses and people there.

Table 3. Semi structured interview titles and contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Biography | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name, date of birth, occupation before, current occupation, place of residence |
| Migration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Date of migration, reasons for migration - Reasons for moving business - Consideration of migrating to urban areas |
| Land & Economy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Income, production then, production now - Ownership of land, usage of land, consideration of selling land, future plans of land/business/production - Business structure (employees, customers, etc.) |
| Social & Environmental Relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observations about local/native people - Observations about new-comers - Observations about spatial shifts - Observations about new businesses - Personal socio-economic experience through time |

3.1.2. Secondary Data

Secondary data are used in this research study. Aerial photos were obtained from the years 2002 and 2024 from Google Earth in order to assess the spatial shifts happened between those years. Using Arcmap software, the aerial photographs were colored creating land uses regarding the two dates in question. This process was executed parallel to the site visits and also double-checking from <https://parselsorgu.tkgm.gov.tr>, a governmental website created to gain information about the parcel's identification status.

Additionally, existing statistics from TURKSTAT (TUIK), Turkish Statistical Institute were obtained regarding the demographic characteristics of Urla, its neighborhoods, and especially Kuşçular neighborhood. Also, photography on the site was used as a data collection method, as well as personal notes.

3.2. Overview of Urla

3.2.1. Location

Urla is a coastal town in İzmir, Turkey which is located in Urla Peninsula, the largest peninsula of İzmir. It has a total of 728 km² surface area and is located 65 m above the sea level (T.C. Urla Kaymakamlığı, urla.gov.tr). It is connected to the city center with a 38 km long motorway and additionally, the İzmir-Çeşme highway that was built in 1993. Urla is surrounded by several towns, including Güzelbahçe and Seferihisar on the east, Çeşme on the west, and Karaburun on the northwest. On the south and north lies the Aegean Sea (Emekli & Zoğal, 2018). There are 12 islands on the north shore of Urla, where it faces the Gulf of İzmir, one of them being the Karantina Island, which is the most known among all (Urla Analitik Etüt Raporu, 2010). Its geographical location has an effective role in urban development and population movements as it is close to the city center and international tourism centers such as Çeşme, Kuşadası and Selçuk (Ephesus).

Urla is located in the Mediterranean climate zone and thus has mild climate characteristics all year long. It is only 38 kilometers far from İzmir city center, however the overcrowdedness and the heat island effect in the center causes the temperature to appear higher compared to Urla. Its dominant vegetation types are Arbutus tree, Bay tree, Olive tree, Oleaster tree, myrtle and maquis. It has many plains and bays as a result of its geographical features of hills and mountains (Urla Analitik Etüt Raporu, 2010). It is also located in a highly active tectonic zone, thus experiencing earthquakes and other related natural activities frequently (Emekli, 2004).

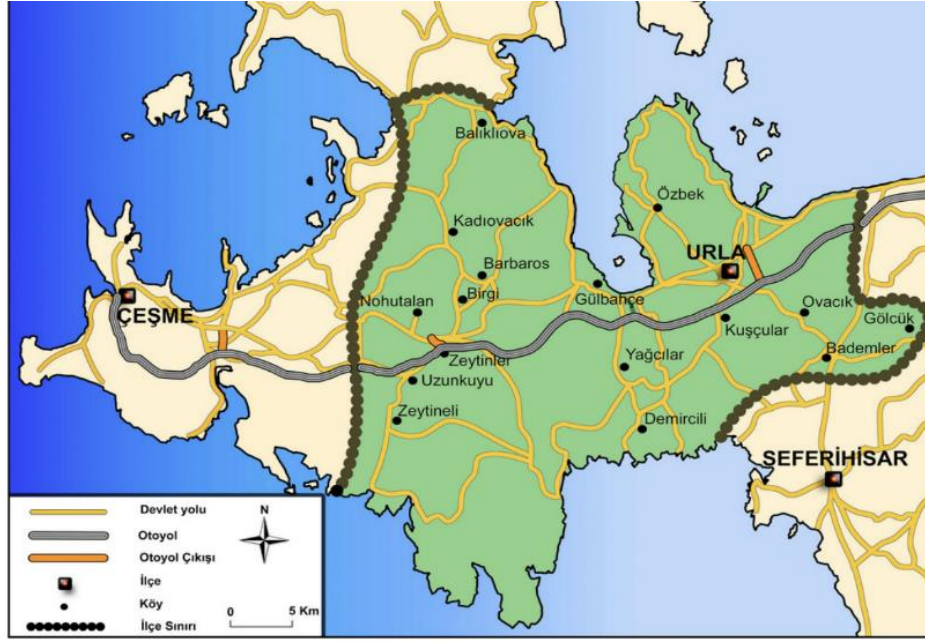


Figure 7. Administrative borders of Urla

(Source: GÜDÜCÜLER, 2012)

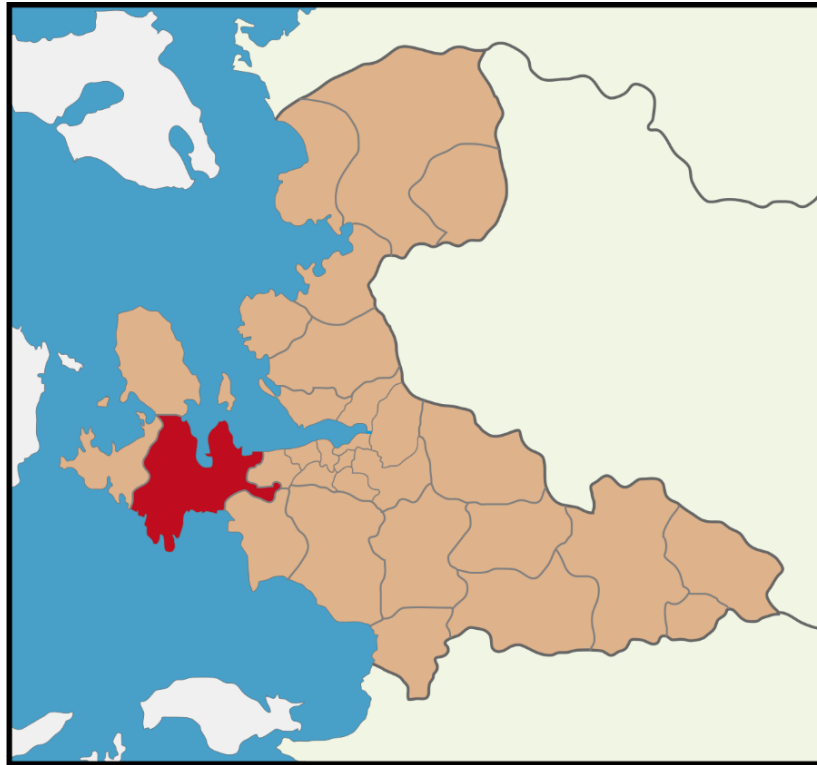


Figure 8. Location of Urla District

(Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urla,_İzmir)

Urla has first attained its title of ‘district’ in 1867. Overall, it includes 37 neighborhoods, being Altıntaş, Atatürk, Bademler, Balıklıova, Barbaros, Birgi, Camiatik, Çamlıçay, Demircili, Denizli, Gülbahçe, Güvendik, Hacıisa, İçmeler, İskele, Kadiovacık, Kalabak, Kuşçular, M.Fevzi, Naipli, Nohutalan, Ovacık, Özbek, Rüstem, Sıra, Şirinkent, Torasan, Uzunkuyu, Yağcılar, Yaka, Yelaltı, Yeni, Yenice, Yenikent, Zeytinalanı, Zeytineli and Zeytinler Neighborhood (Urla.gov.tr). 14 of these neighborhoods were qualified as villages until 2012, when the law of metropolis was accepted and they were retitled as ‘rural neighborhoods’. These are Bademler, Balıklıova, Demircili, Gölcük, **Kuşçular**, Ovacık, Yağcılar, Uzunkuyu, Barbaros, Birgi, Kadiovacık, Nahutalan, Zeytineli and Zeytinler neighborhoods (Urla Analitik Etüt Raporu, 2010).



Figure 9. Neighborhoods of Urla

(Retrieved from: <https://atlasbig.com.tr/izmir-urlanin-mahalleleri>)

3.2.2. Demography

Urla has a total of 77.599 population registered in year 2023. It has been one of the districts with the fastest rate of population growth – 44,9 (44.9 per thousand) percent annually (TUIK, 2022) and with a constant increase every year. As it is shown in Figure 11. among other districts in Karaburun Peninsula, Urla has the highest number of population. Population change of Urla is shown in Figure 10. from the year 2010 to 2023. 15,30 percent of people reside in rural regions, according to the address-based census conducted in 2012 (TUIK, 2012) (After this year, data about the districts' rural-urban population is not shared with public.)

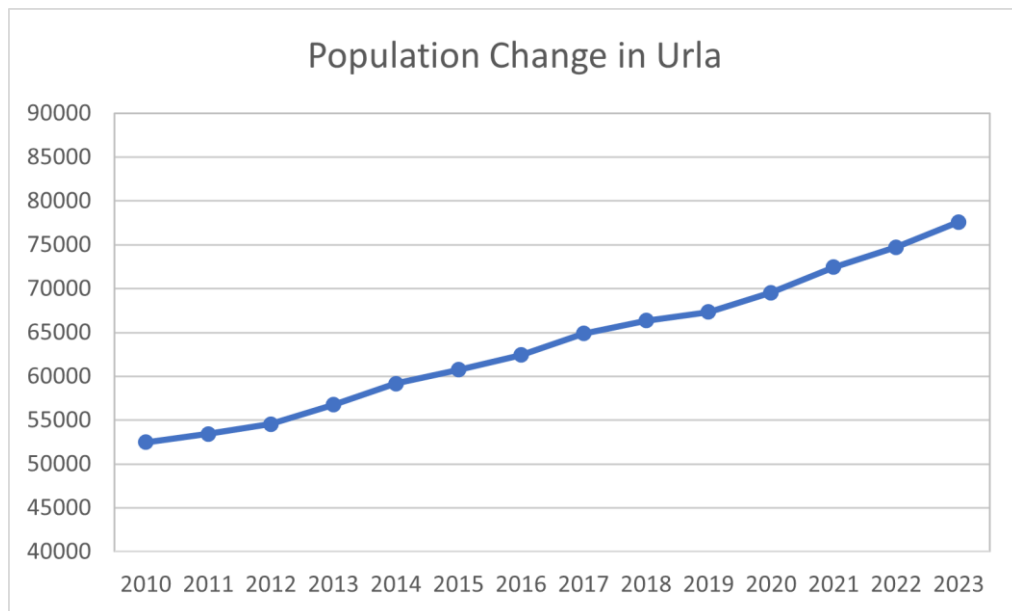


Figure 10. Population changes of Urla between the years 2010-2023

(Source: TUIK)

The population's geographic distribution was impacted by the 1990s completion of the İzmir-Urla section of the İzmir-Çeşme Highway, which reduced the travel time and distance between the district and İzmir and allowed for a rise in population mobility (Emekli, 2014). Urla's population started to increase as large housing cooperatives were built all around the highway. New neighbors were constructed near the motorway as a result of the population growth. However, due to the lack of industrial activity in Urla,

which is because of the agriculture, service and husbandry sectors are vanguard, the population is distributed sparsely.

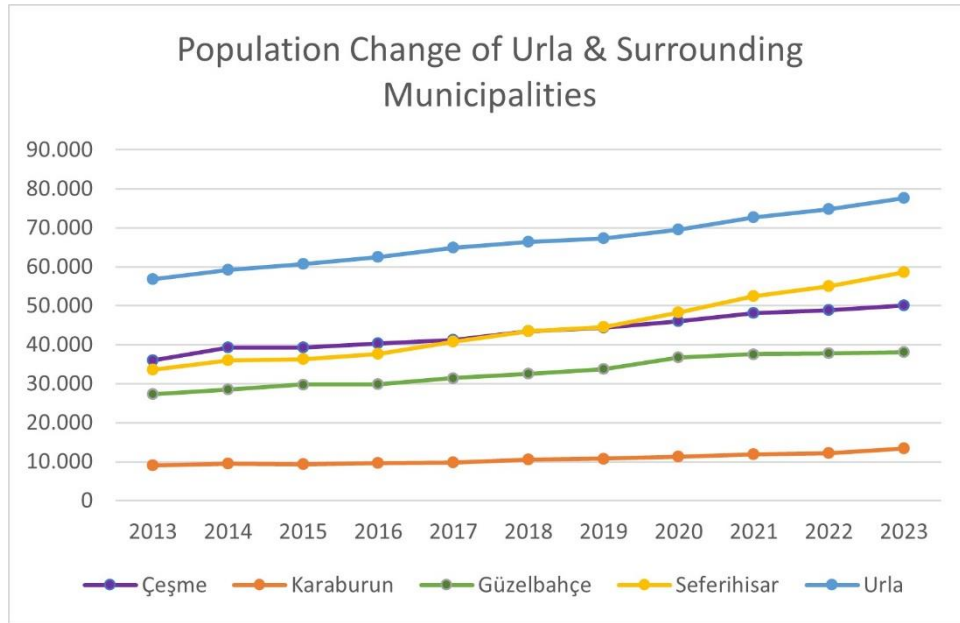


Figure 11. Population changes of Urla and its surrounding municipalities between the years 2013-2023

(Source: TUIK)

Summer houses are important for understanding population movements in Urla. These houses, which have been there for the past 50 years and still growing in number, have caused a steady shift in Urla's population. While they were being used from season to season, the residents started to reside there all the time. These gated communities were first concentrated on the coast line, nevertheless they are now built in inner parts of Urla, like Kuşçular neighborhood, drawing upper-middle income families and individuals in.

Another important improvement that attracted and changed the demographic dynamics of Urla is the facilitation of Izmir Institute of Technology (IZTECH). While the percentage of young adults are increasing, new establishments and improvements for those people are expanding and drawing in more people like such.

3.2.3. Economy

Since 1950s, the dominant economical occupation in Urla has been agriculture (Varol, 2022), albeit the increasing tourism activities in the district. %12,2 of the total of 70.400 hectares of land, 8.600 hectares, are used for agriculture. In addition, greenhouse cultivation, olive cultivation, vegetable production, viticulture and floriculture are the types of agriculture in Urla. On 94,134 decares of agricultural land in the village, olives (58.2%), vegetables (16.8%), and field crops (12%) are farmed. Animal husbandry in the form of sheep, goats and cattle is actively made.

Also, Traditional Artichoke Festival, Grape Harvesting Festival, the bays of Urla, and its wide forests are some of the important touristic attractions (T.C. Urla Kaymakamlığı, n.d). The coasts and bays draw in people from İzmir city center especially in summer (Tunçağ, 2003). Given the district's vineyards and growing popularity in winemaking since the early 2000s, agrotourism in the area is also quite likely. As can be seen in Table 4., the industries of forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture employ 35.01 percent of the district's labor force. Its share is 24% in the sectors of gas, water, and electricity; 7.22% in construction; 13.34% in the retail and wholesale trade; 27.32% in the restaurant and hotel industry; and 27.56% in social and personal services (İZKA, 2014, as cited in Güçü, 2022).

Table 4. Sectoral workforce distribution of Urla

(Retrieved from Güçü, 2022)

| Sector | Number of Employees |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Agriculture | 7.041 |
| Manufacturing Industry | 1654 |
| Mining | 23 |
| Electricity, Gas and Water | 48 |
| Construction | 1452 |
| Commerce, Restaurant, Hotels | 2683 |
| Financial Services | 958 |
| Transport, Communication | 682 |
| Community Services | 5555 |
| Other | 14 |
| Total | 20.110 |



Figure 12. 3rd Traditional Urla Artichoke Festival

(www.ntv.com.tr , 2017)

3.2.4. History and Culture

As for cultural and historical assets, Urla is home to old civilizations, which makes it a valuable historical and cultural settlement. It includes Klazomenai, thought to be built by Ionians, the remains of which are still located on İskele Neighborhood and Karantina Island (Urla Analitik Etüt Raporu, 2010). Liman Tepe is another historical settlement that was formed in the Neolithic age, 6000 B.C. with the oldest port facilities, of which export activities were made to overseas. Its remains are located on a peninsula across Karantina Island and it shows characteristics of ‘höyük’, which was piece by piece lost by the new agricultural lands and secondary houses built on the area. The ancient settlements were mentioned as centers of olive, olive oil, grapes, soap, grain, ceramic and flour production at that time. In addition to these, Urla has many historically registered buildings including mosques, bathhouses, shrines, etc. (Urla Analitik Etüt Raporu, 2010).

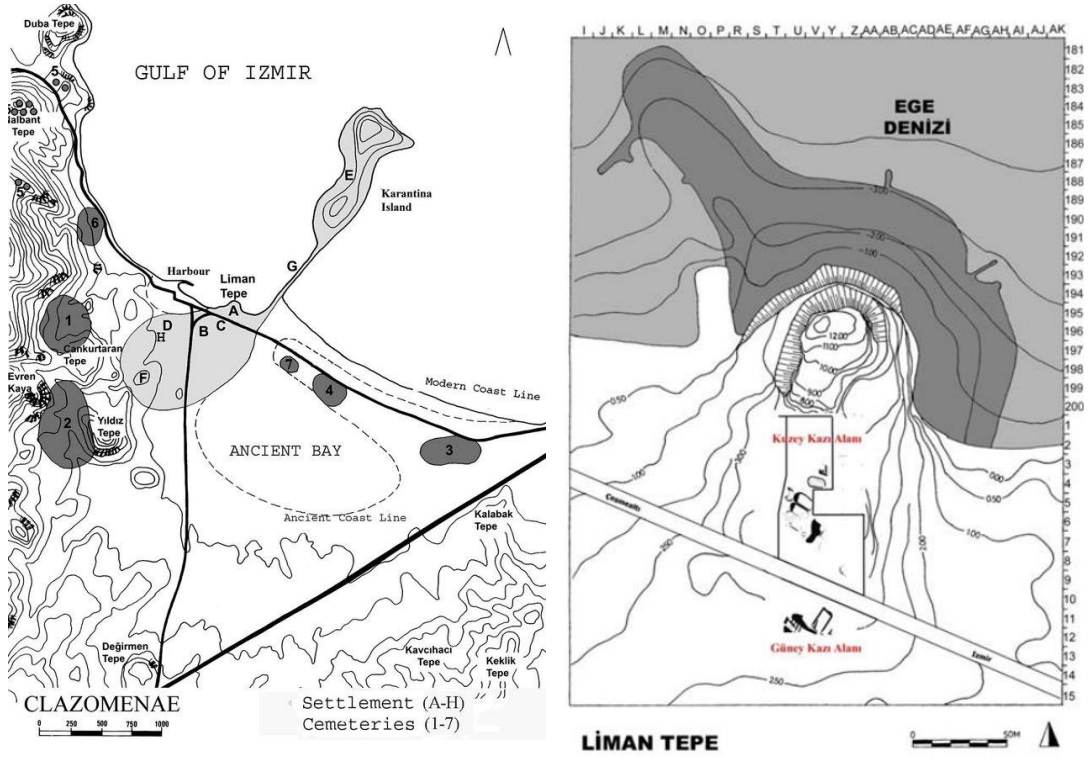


Figure 13. Topographical Plan of Klazomenai and Liman Tepe

(Hürmüzlü 2005: 63 and Tuğcu, 2019: 430)

3.2.5. Spatial Assets

The emergence of Urla is strongly relevant to the urban growth pattern of İzmir, which is the third largest metropolitan city in Turkey with a population of 4.4 million (<http://www.tuik.gov.tr>). The urban growth pattern of Mediterranean cities, which İzmir is a part of, are characterized as a ‘diffused urban sprawl’ (Munoz, 2003, p. 382) in which the location and growth of housing direction is chosen according to the landscapes and territories, with consideration of the strength of connections to the city center (Munoz, 2003). In order to connect İzmir city center to Çeşme, a crucial town in tourism, an economic imperative was made, which intended to build a highway between the two areas.

İzmir-Çeşme highway was built in 1993, increasing the mobility of the middle-upper classes who owned secondary houses in Urla. Together with the advertisement of 'health' of Urla compared to the 'polluted' İzmir and many other dualisms, the highway caused many 'high-end gated developments' (Datta, 2014, p.1370) to be built for these classes' permanent settlement (Datta, 2014). Therefore, once mainly characterized as summer houses concentrated on the coastal line, the general housing typology of Urla has become permanent houses (Emekli & Zoğal, 2018) and spread all the way to the highway evading the saturated coastal line (Sonmez, 2009).



Figure 14. Geographical distribution of secondary homes in the historical development process in Urla
(Emekli & Zoğal, 2018: 192)

3.3. Overview of Kuşçular Neighborhood, Urla

3.3.1. Location

Kuşçular neighborhood is located in the southwest part of Urla, connecting all the way to Sığacık Bay. It is approximately 4 kilometers away from Urla's center neighborhoods. It was characterized as a plain village before 2012, before it became a neighborhood with the Metropolis law. The reason for it to be considered as a plain village (or in this case, neighborhood) is that Kuşçular has plain fields on the north and middle parts (T.C. Kültür Ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019). İzmir-Çeşme highway passes through the

north of Kuşçular, making it a highly accessible neighborhood of Urla. It also has a coast to the Aegean Sea on the south, making it a critical touristic area with popular bays (Güçü, Çıkış, 2021). Kuşçular neighborhood consists of vast amount of forest areas of approximately 50%, and agricultural lands of approximately 44% formerly used for mainly tobacco production.

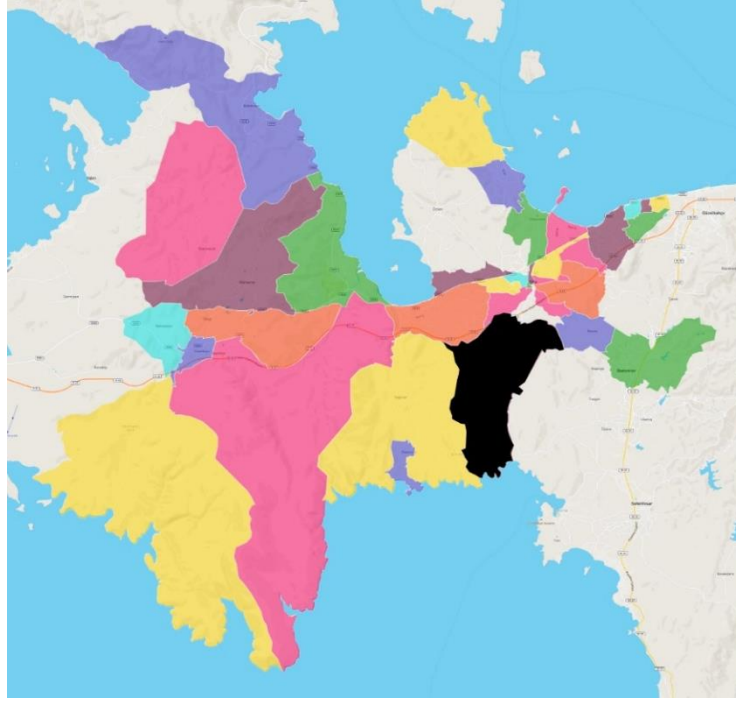


Figure 15. Kuşçular neighborhood's location in Urla

(Retrieved from: <https://atlasbig.com.tr/izmir-urulanin-mahalleleri>)

Additionally, combined with the termination of greenhouse cultivation activities in İzmir city center, the passing of the highway caused an increase in migration to two former villages, especially Kuşçular, making it one of the most populated former villages of Urla, two times more than the population in 1990s (based on registered population, excludes informal population in the area) (Emekli, 2004).

3.3.2. Demography

Kuşçular neighborhood is one of the largest neighborhoods of Urla district, with an increase in population every year. According to TUIK (2023), it has a population of 3748, while it had 2214 population in 2013, ten years ago. As mentioned before, Kuşçular

neighborhood, like other neighborhoods with a ‘village’ characteristic, was considered formerly as a neighborhood. From then, it has grown 41% in population. Annual population growth rate of the neighborhood for these ten years is 69% which is considered a high rate for population growth. Population change of Kuşçular neighborhood is shown in Figure 16 from 2013 to 2023. Additionally, Figure 17 shows that among the former villages that are now titled as neighborhoods, Kuşçular neighborhood is by far the most populated neighborhood in Urla.

Kuşçular has been a neighborhood that continued to gain migrations from a variety of regions and other countries starting from the years of population exchange. Between years of 1940-1950, it gained migration from the Balkan countries; 1950-1960 were the years it gained migration from East and Southeast regions; and after 1985 the migrations were mainly from the Black Sea region (Interview with Kuşçular neighborhood’s Mukhtar, Mehmet Doğan, September 2024). After 2000’s, the neighborhood gained immigrants with increased tourism activities and from secondary houses it received seasonal migrations from İzmir city center.

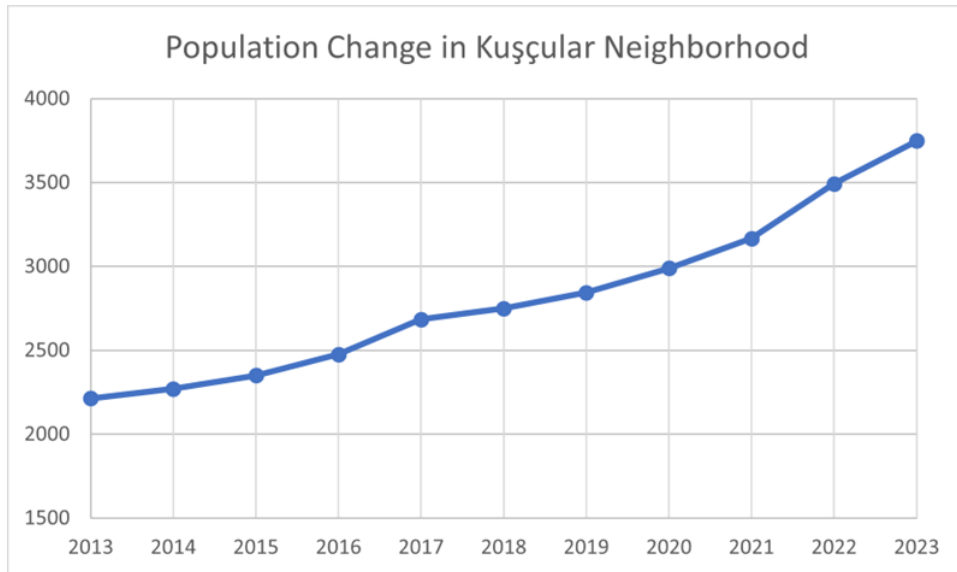


Figure 16. Population change in Kuşçular neighborhood 2007-2023

(Source: TUIK)

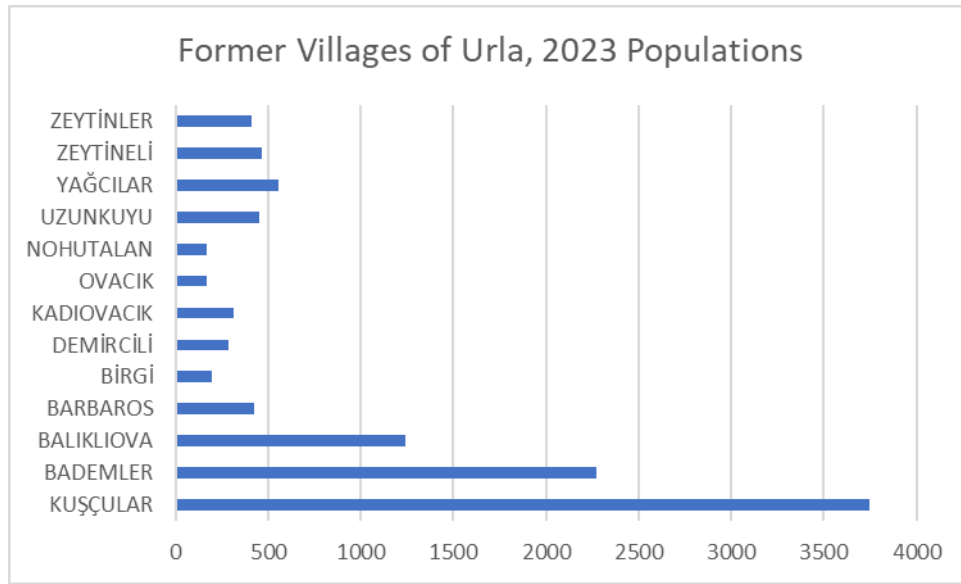


Figure 17. 2022 populations of 13 former villages (now rural neighborhoods) of Urla

(Source: TUIK)

3.3.3. Economy

Kuşçular neighborhood has the largest lands that are available for cultivation and agriculture in all neighborhoods with an approximate of 300 ha of land (Güçü, Çıkış, 2021). As formerly mentioned, 44% of the neighborhood's lands are used for agricultural production. Agriculture has been the main economic occupation of Kuşçular until the 2000s with a variety of crop types like tobacco, olives, grapes, greenhouse cultivation and flower cultivation (Interview with local people, December 2022). Until 1990s, tobacco was the dominant agricultural product and it was being produced largely. Nowadays, olive, grape and greenhouse cultivation are the most widespread agricultural products in the area (Güçü, Çıkış, 2021). This has to do with the changing socio-economic profile of Kuşçular. Being a heavily immigrant receiving town, Kuşçular has a diverse demographic structure mostly from Eastern and Southeastern cities, Black Sea region, Balkans, İstanbul (Interview with local people, December 2021).



Figure 18. Uzbař Arboretum from bird's eye-view

(Retrieved from uzbas.com)

Kuřçular neighborhood has a variety of touristic attractions in different economic sectors such as agricultural tourism, gastronomy, nature tourism, historical tourism and more. Uzbař Arboretum, one of the outdoor plant cultivation facilities in Urla which was founded in 1996, is also located in Kuřçular neighborhood. It is an important facility for it covers an area of 2000 acres and is an important touristic attraction. The facility hosts over 250.000 tropical and sub-tropical outdoor plants as well as the endemic species and plants from all around the world titled as 'special genus' in its 5000 m² greenhouse. Entrance fees apply to all visitors and 'premium tours' with golf carts are offered for extra fees. The facility's vision is 'To leave a green legacy for generations to come by working persistently in the light of expertise and technology.' (<https://uzbas.com/arboretum/>).

Another important touristic destination and one of the most 'elevating' features of Kuřçular neighborhood is Urla-Kuřçular-Yağcılar Vineyard Route, which is a part of the Aegean Vineyard Route, one of the three wine routes in Turkey. Five out of nine vineyards of Urla-Kuřçular-Yağcılar Route are located in Kuřçular being Urla Winery (located in Uzbař Arboretum), Usca Winery, Mozaik Winery, Hus Wines and Çakır Winery. Some of these boutique wineries have restaurants and even luxury rooms for accommodation that appeal to upper-middle and upper socio-economic classes and

mainly foreign tourists. They offer a unique and luxurious gastronomic experience to their guests with their wine tasting, their cellar tours at which the wine production process is explained, and their natural amenities in the facility. Wine tourism is an important economic field for its contribution to the region's development and recognition in the world. Also, celebrations and festivals are held every year when the grape harvesting season comes (Yıldız, 2009).



Figure 19. Urla-Kuşçular-Yağcılar Vineyard Route

(Retrieved from <https://slowtravelguide.net/wineroutes-tr>, 2023)

Gastronomy is a crucial part of Urla in terms of tourism potential, which is becoming more and more highlighted. Gastronomy tourism, according to Wolf (2006, cited in Kargilioglu & Kabacik, 2007), is defined as “the cuisine and drinks of a place to visit in order to explore and sample, to savor unique and memorable culinary experiences’. Gastronomy tourism not only exhibits the cultural identity and heritage of the place in its cuisine, but also, is a useful instrument that gives regional destinations a competitive edge (Çalışkan, 2013). Kuşçular neighborhood possesses various luxury restaurants in its constitution, adding to its overall attractiveness to certain socio-economic groups as well as its attractiveness as a tourist destination. Combined with the vineyards that are mentioned earlier, gastronomy tourism in Kuşçular is enhanced,

making it one of the few districts in Turkey to include many tourism potentials. There are restaurants, all of which offering a unique and luxurious cuisine experience together with the foods that are particularly produced in Urla like artichoke. Two of these restaurants obtained several Michelin stars in 2024, making Kuşçular a more attractive place to tourists.



Figure 20. A Michelin starred restaurant in Kuşçular Neighborhood

(Source: <https://www.urlavinolocale.com/anasayfa.html>)

3.3.4. Spatial Assets

The main housing type in Kuşçular neighborhood is gated communities. Gated communities are defined as ‘walled or fenced housing developments, to which public access is restricted, characterized by legal agreements which tie the residents to a common code of conduct and (usually) collective responsibility for management’ by Atkinson and Blandy (2005, p.178). Gated communities are now seen as a marker for nations pursuing assertions of modernization and an essential indication of both economic and political strength, according to King (2004).

Urla is a particular district in which one can observe a sea of gated developments. Unlike other cities like Ankara or İstanbul, the gated developments in Urla, İzmir were essentially residential, which pushed the residents to commute to İzmir city center in order to run basic errands like shopping, or participating in leisure activities. With the expressway being built, a larger number of people started to move permanently

to Urla, which also opened up the way for gated luxury residential development in Kuşçular neighborhood, which are referred as ‘rich squatters’ by the local people (Datta, 2014). Kuşçular neighborhood is now becoming more and more infested with luxury separate housing and luxury gated site developments that are built over formerly agricultural lands, contributing to the shift in economic, social, spatial and environmental spheres. A luxury gated housing project in Kuşçular, contains five twin ultra luxury villas in its borders, which is stated to be 11.600 m2. The company advertises the project as luxurious, comfortable, green, modern, and privileged (Gencer İnşaat, (n.d.)).



Figure 21. A housing project in Kuşçular Neighborhood

(Source: <https://gencerinsaat.net/elegant-urla-deluxe>)

CHAPTER 4.

COUNTER-URBANIZATION & COUNTER- URBANIZATION-LED RURAL GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES IN KUŞÇULAR NEIGHBORHOOD

4.1. Case Study Area Analysis

After structuring a base according to the literature review and identifying general information about Kuşçular neighborhood, people from different socio-economic backgrounds were interviewed. Among them are native people, local people of Kuşçular, producers and business owners, and local coffee shop customers.

The content of the semi-structured interviews is listed below;

Semi-Structured Questions (Local People)

1. Where are you from originally?
2. What are the reasons of your migration to Kuşçular, Urla?
3. When did you/ your family migrate in to Kuşçular, Urla?
4. What are you occupied with in Kuşçular, Urla?
5. What was your former occupation?
6. Do you own any land in Kuşçular, Urla?
7. Does the land you occupy belong to you or is it rental?
8. Do you consider selling your agricultural land (for residential development)?
9. Do you consider moving to urban areas?
10. Where do other people you know here come from originally?
11. What are other people who live here occupied with?
12. Do you have any housing that you rented out?
13. What do your tenants do for a living?
14. What is your income?

15. How are the land types changing in Kuşçular at the moment?
16. What are your observations about the local people's socio-economic situation?
17. What are your observations about the new businesses in the area?

Interviews with local people are conducted as they are one of the first-hand subjects to counter-urbanization and rural gentrification in Kuşçular neighborhood. A total of fifteen people were interviewed. These people are not native to the neighborhood, however they have migrated into Kuşçular between 1950-1995, and have been living there for at least thirty years, for not less than two generations. The people are participants in Kuşçular's economy by producing agricultural outputs. The interviews were made in order to learn about their reasons for migrating in to Kuşçular, what their occupations are, if they own land/s in Kuşçular and how they make use of them, their plans about their life and lands. After, interviews with producers and business owners were conducted. The content of the interviews is listed below;

Semi-Structured Questions (Producers & Business Owners)

1. Where are you from originally?
2. What was your former occupation?
3. Why did you move your business into Kuşçular, Urla?
4. What are your customers' socio-economic level?
5. Do the upper socio-economic class' people come to your business?
6. Which socio-economic class do your employees belong to?
7. How important knowing foreign languages are in your business for your employees?
8. Do you own your business place or is it rental?
9. What agricultural products do you produce, if you do?
10. Do you own the agricultural land that you produce in?
11. What do the people you know in Kuşçular produce?
12. Do you consider selling your agricultural land?

Interviews with producers and business owners were conducted within 5 different places. It includes five local restaurants. The owners of local restaurants are native to Kuşçular or they are local. The reason for interviewing these businesses is to assess their contribution to local economy, to whom they give their services and their business structures. After, interviews with local coffeshop customers were conducted. The content of the interviews is listed below;

Semi-Structured Questions (Local Coffeshop Customers)

1. Where are you from originally?
2. When did you move in to Kuşçular, Urla?
3. What was your former occupation?
4. What is your current occupation?
5. What are the reasons you moved in to Kuşçular, Urla?
6. Do you own any land in Kuşçular, Urla?
7. Do you own the land you occupy at the moment?
8. How are the land types changing in Kuşçular at the moment?
9. What are your observations about the local people's socio-economic situation?
10. What are your observations about the new-comers' socio-economic situation?
11. What are your observations about the spatial shifts in Kuşçular?
12. Do any further areas' activities in İzmir affect the agricultural production in Kuşçular?
13. What are your observations about the new businesses (vineyards, restaurants, Uzbaş, etc.)?

Local coffeshops are where a specific demographic group gathers, namely retired male people that are local in an area, which makes those places important as it gives collective insight about their experiences at the neighborhood. A total of eight people were interviewed in the local coffeshop 'Ova Kahve', the oldest coffeshop in Kuşçular, dating back to the time when first settlements were being built in the neighborhood. The reason for interviewing these people is to understand their perception of spatial, economic, and sociological change in Kuşçular. After that, native people of Kuşçular were interviewed. The content of the interviews is listed below;

Semi-Structured Questions (Native People)

1. When were you born?
2. Do you own any land in Kuşçular, Urla?
3. Do you own the land you occupy at the moment?
4. What is your main occupation?
5. Do you have any other occupations?
6. If it did, how did your production/business change in time?
7. Do you consider selling your land(s)?
8. What are your future plans about your land(s)/business/production?
9. How are the land types changing in Kuşçular at the moment?
10. What are your observations about the native people's socio-economic situation?
11. What are your observations about the new-comers' socio-economic situation?
12. What are your observations about the spatial shifts in Kuşçular?
13. Do native people work/visit the newly opened business places (vineyards, restaurants, agricultural/touristic places)?
14. How do you define your socio-economic experience for the last 20 years?

The interviews with native people to Kuşçular were conducted with five people in total. Because the native people are the ones who experience displacement at the highest level, the group and their answers are crucial in this study. The interviews are made in order to understand their perspective on the counter-urbanization and rural gentrification processes in Kuşçular and their impacts on people that are native here. Also, the aim is to assess their actions in the face of the two phenomena.

4.2. Socio-Spatial Changes in Kuşçular Neighborhood

There has been and currently is, a lot of changes happening in Kuşçular neighborhood due to counter-urbanization and rural gentrification. These changes can be classified as sociological, economic, and spatial in context. The sociological consequences of rural gentrification and counter-urbanization acts as a mirror for the shifts in social dynamics within Kuşçular neighborhood's rural community. These processes result in demographic shifts because urban immigrants bring with them

different expectations, attitudes, and lifestyles, which lead to conflict between the wealthier, freshly arrived population and those who are more established locals. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with the Mukhtar, Mehmet Doğan, in September 2024, the new-comers do not want to hear the sounds of chicken, trucks and other sounds that are related to agricultural production. They do not want to smell the things that are related with agricultural production too. This is a striking example of the different expectations and attitudes the newcomers bring with them that cause conflict. Since the inflow of wealthy people frequently modifies cultural practices, social hierarchies, and community structures, this migration is not simply about physical move but also about the reinvention of local identities. Existing inhabitants are displaced when wealthier people move in, dividing classes and escalating social injustices.

Moreover, the transformation of the rural landscape changes the way people interact with the environment and each other. The high walls of gated communities in Kuşçular neighborhood leads to both opportunities and challenges in terms of community cohesion, local governance, and social integration. The resulting class divisions manifest in both economic and social terms. Socially, in Kuşçular, these distinctions show up as cultural conflicts since the newcomers want to change the community to fit their own beliefs, which can occasionally conflict with the customs and identities of long-time inhabitants. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with the local coffeeshop customers in March 2023, one customer said that they missed the old people of Kuşçular neighborhood, and the old social environment where everyone knew everyone. Since there are two opposite desires of the new-comers and native people, within the community, this may result in social disintegration, animosity, and a sense of alienation.

Furthermore, rural gentrification reinforces broader structural inequalities, as access to resources like education, healthcare, and social services may become more difficult for long-term residents, who are often economically disadvantaged. The arrival of wealthier individuals may prioritize amenities and services that cater to their own needs, further marginalizing the local population. There, currently, is one public school in Kuşçular neighborhood (see Figure 22.) which is only at elementary education level and there are seven teachers (MEB, n.d.). On the other hand, there is Deutsche Schule (German School) that offers education on elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The school (see Figure 22.) is highly exclusive in terms of annual fees and the acceptance of students (Deutsche Schule Izmir, 2021).

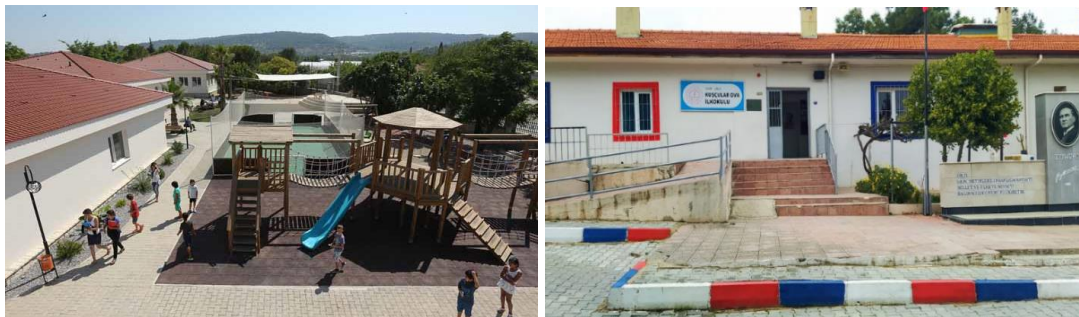


Figure 22. Deutsche Schule and Kuşçular Ova Elementary School

(Retrieved from: <https://www.ds-izmir.com> and <https://kuscularovailkokulu.meb.k12.tr>)

4.2.1. Migration Dynamics and Economic shifts in Kuşçular

Migration dynamics are, in the case of Kuşçular neighborhood, directly linked to the occupational atmosphere, therefore is closely related with the economic activities of the area. In addition, it is also associated with the lifestyle preferences of the people who decide to migrate. These people introduce new occupations, new social links and hence, transform the area spatially, socially and economically.

Migration dynamics is an important subject to assess in order to understand more about the socio-spatial shifts in Kuşçular neighborhood. According to the semi-structured interviews conducted with the Mukhtar of Kuşçular neighborhood, Mehmet Doğan (September, 2024), the migrations into Kuşçular has started between the years 1939 and 1943. Between these years, there is a Turkish population coming from Crete, Chios, Thrace, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This procedure was taken place in the name of ‘goods exchange’ and the people that came to Kuşçular were given land for agricultural purposes until 1958. Among the people who migrated were kosovars, albanians, and thessalonians. The majority of migrants were from Bulgaria.

Among the migrations from other countries, Kuşçular has gained migrations from Turkey as well. People from the eastern regions migrated to Kuşçular at the time of Atatürk. They were occupied with farming and olive production (Semi-structured

interview with local people, March, 2023). In 1950s, people from Kütahya came to Kuşçular. Between the years 1958 and 1965, Kurdish population from Batman migrated to Kuşçular. This was a time when no agricultural products were grown except tobacco. Then, between 1982 and 1990s, people from Black Sea region, especially from Ordu, migrated to Kuşçular. People that came from Ordu introduced greenhouse cultivation to the area, and since it has become a vastly preferred agricultural production type in Kuşçular. According to the semi-structured interview with business owners and local people on March 2023, the reason for people from Ordu to come to Kuşçular is that there were no job opportunities there and that all their family members were in Kuşçular. Starting from 2005, people from İstanbul and Ankara began to migrate to the area. Changing lifestyle choices, the desire to live away from the crowd, noise, smell and pace of the city and wanting to live a quieter, healthier, slower life was at the center of this migration. However, these people were not coming to the area for agricultural production, but they pioneered in the luxury businesses, carrying their life standards into the rural. These people started to run racehorse breeding farms in the region. They opened businesses specializing in wine and gastronomy. This led to a decrease in agricultural production and greenhouse cultivation practices starting from 2013 (semi-structured interview with the Mukhtar of Kuşçular neighborhood Mehmet Doğan, September, 2024).

4.2.2. Spatial Changes in Kuşçular

In addition to the spatial dislocation of native and local people, sociological changes, shifting lifestyle preferences and economic changes in Kuşçular neighborhood, the space itself has been and is still in the process of change. In order to understand the full scope of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification, spatial assessment must be made. Prior literature has demonstrated that spatial processes are crucial for understanding the results of these two phenomena, that are categorized under different sub-titles. Furthermore, gentrification does not only occur in the gated developments or in the luxurious businesses, but it affects occurring nearby in the whole neighborhood. As Boggess and Hipp (2016) argues, some areas are closer to these spaces of gentrification, some are further away. This can mean that the latter are still undergoing

the process of gentrification, but that may (or may not) present lower levels of gentrification consequences.

Land use maps of 2002 (a date before 2012, when the Metropolitan Law No. 6360 was accepted) and 2024 are given below (see Figure 23. and Figure 24.). According to the land use maps, there is approximately a total of 37700000 m² land in Kuşçular. In the land use map of 2002 (see Table 5.), residential areas cover 405480 m² of land; housing development areas cover 107107 m²; trade usage cover 28242 m²; industrial lands are 8400 m²; education covers 6918 m²; forests cover 21032996 m²; agricultural lands cover 16058283 m²; and olive groves cover 80284 m². In the land use map of 2024 (see Table 6.) residential areas cover 878612 m² of land; housing development areas cover 509908 m²; tourism areas cover 80917 m²; trade usage cover 156054 m²; industrial lands are 26271 m²; education covers 10642 m²; forests cover 20060254 m²; agricultural lands cover 15808795 m²; olive groves cover 75174 m²; and wind power plants cover an area of 103375 m².

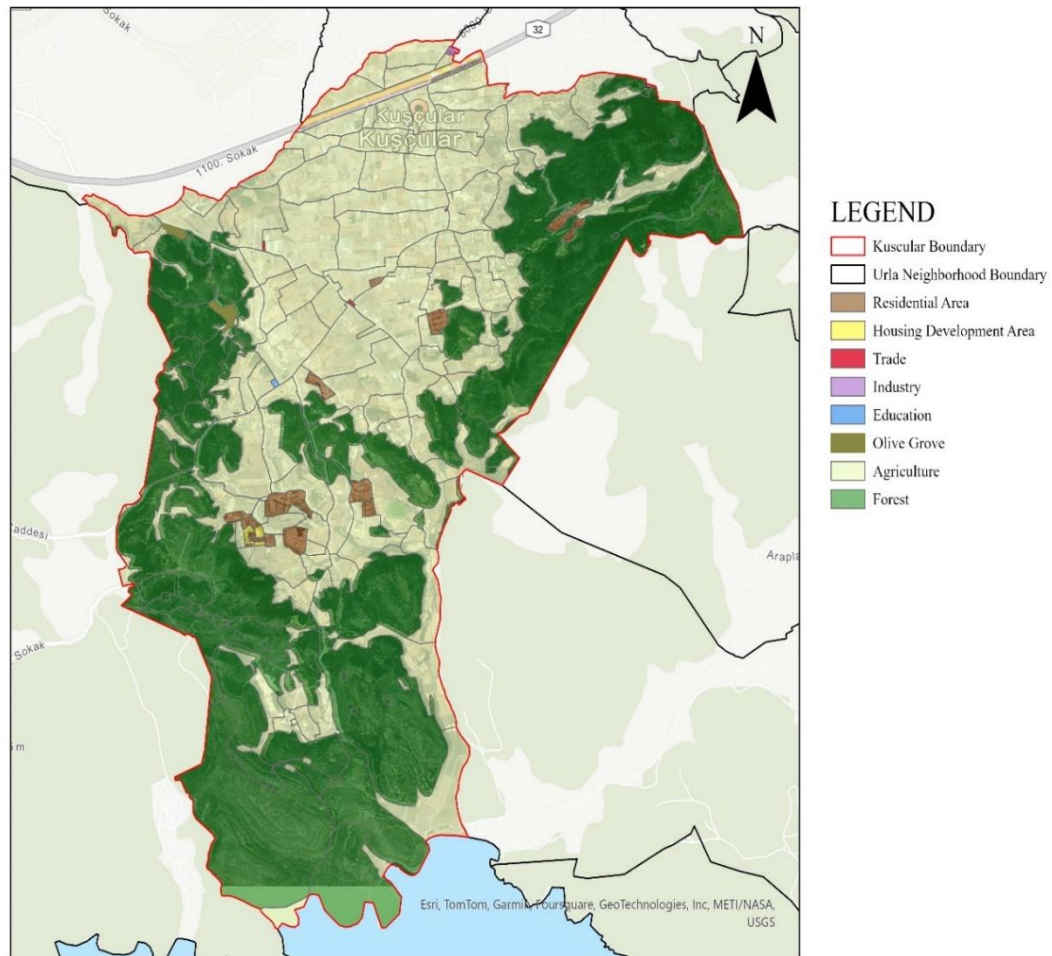


Figure 23. Land use map of 2002

Table 5. Square meters of different land uses and their percentages in 2002

| Name 2002 | Total | Area (m ²) | Percentage |
|-------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Residential Area | 37727710 | 405480 | 1,075 |
| Housing Dev. Area | | 107107 | 0,284 |
| Trade | | 28242 | 0,075 |
| Industry | | 8400 | 0,022 |
| Education | | 6918 | 0,018 |
| Forest | | 21032996 | 55,749 |
| Agricultural Area | | 16058283 | 42,564 |
| Olive Grove | | 80284 | 0,213 |

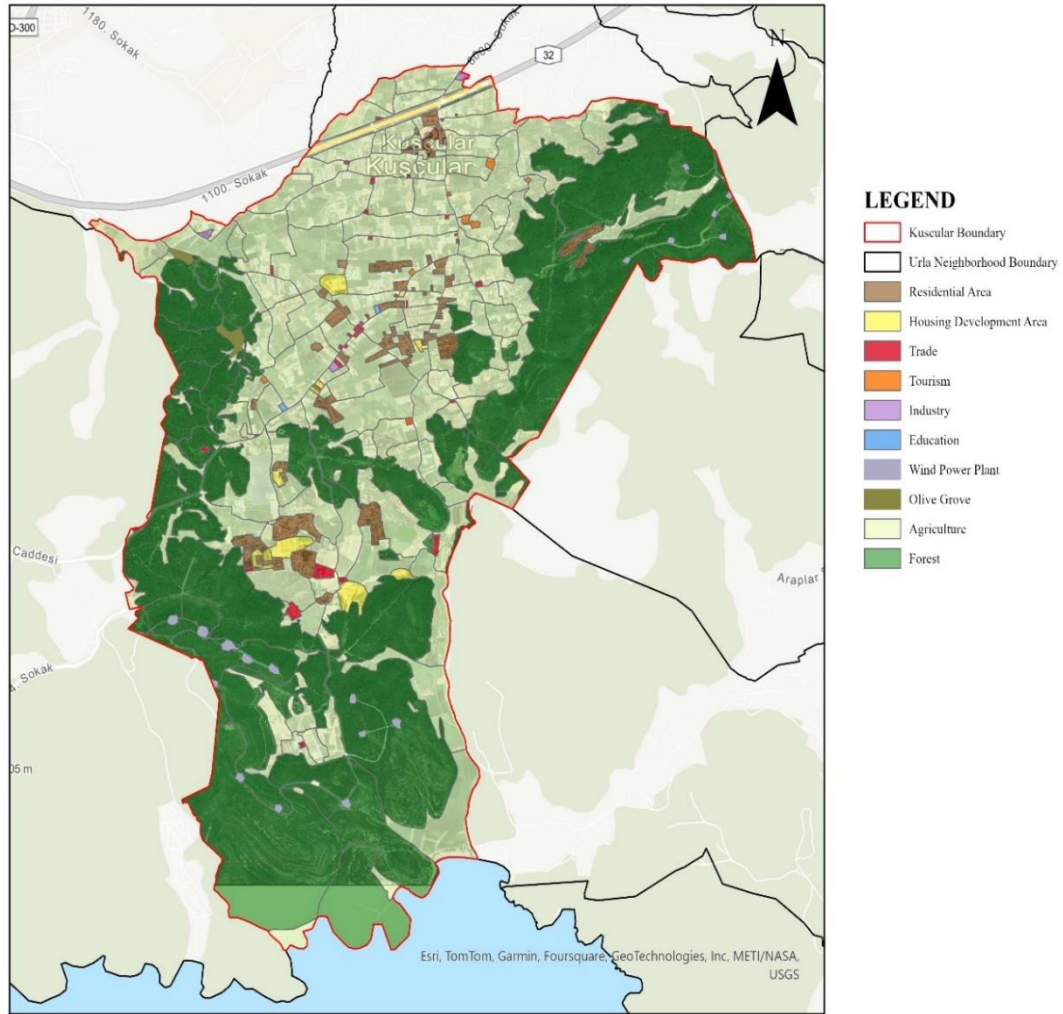


Figure 24. Land use map of 2024

Table 6. Square meters of different land uses and their percentages in 2024

| Name 2024 | Total | Area (m ²) | Percentage |
|-------------------|----------|------------------------|------------|
| Residential Area | 37710002 | 878612 | 2,330 |
| Housing Dev. Area | | 509908 | 1,352 |
| Tourism | | 80917 | 0,215 |
| Trade | | 156054 | 0,414 |
| Industry | | 26271 | 0,070 |
| Education | | 10642 | 0,028 |
| Forest | | 20060254 | 53,196 |
| Agricultural Area | | 15808795 | 41,922 |
| Olive Grove | | 75174 | 0,199 |
| Wind Power Plant | | 103375 | 0,274 |

Both in 2002 and 2024, forests and agricultural land cover majority (94-97%) of the total land in Kuşçular. In order to see the land coverage percentage of other types of usages, forest and agricultural land were removed from the Figure 25. and Figure 26. According to both graphs, in 2002 and 2024, the major type of land use is residential usage. After that, come housing development areas with a percentage of 17% in 2002, and 28% in 2024, which is more than two times growth in size. The third biggest land cover type in 2002 is olive groves with 13%, however with the enlargement of housing development areas, and the addition of tourism and wind power plants it has dropped to 1% in 2024.

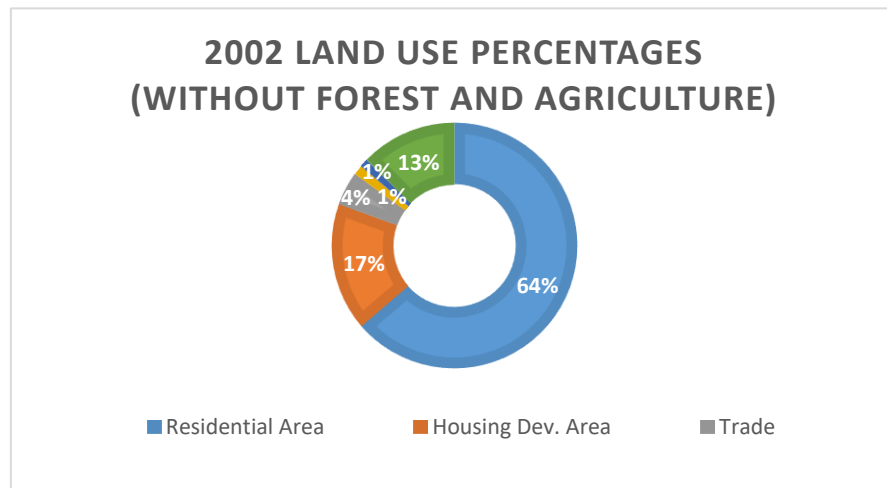


Figure 25. Land use percentages graph excluding forests and agricultural areas in 2002

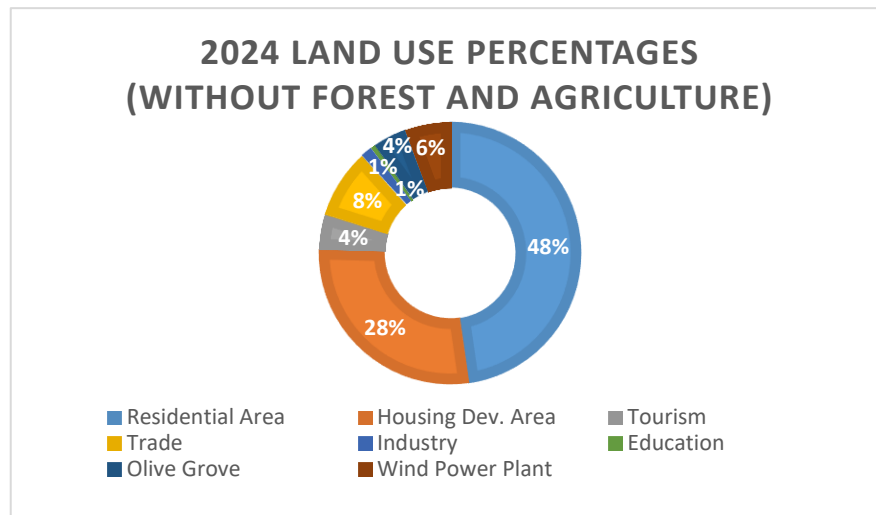


Figure 26. Land use percentages graph excluding forests and agricultural areas in 2024

| Name | Area 2002 (m ²) | Area 2024 (m ²) | Percentage Change (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Residential Area | 405480 | 878612 | 116,68 |
| Housing Dev. Area | 107107 | 509908 | 376,07 |
| Tourism | 0 | 80917 | - |
| Trade | 28242 | 156054 | 452,56 |
| Industry | 8400 | 26271 | 212,75 |
| Education | 6918 | 10642 | 53,83 |
| Forest | 21032996 | 20060254 | -4,62 |
| Agricultural Area | 16058283 | 15808795 | -1,55 |
| Olive Grove | 80284 | 75174 | -6,36 |
| Wind Power Plant | 0 | 103375 | - |

Table 7. Growth and decline rates of all types of land cover

For a better understanding, Table 7 has been prepared that demonstrates the growth and decline rates of all types of land cover. According to the table, trade has the highest percentage change with a score of 452,56%. This has to do with the openings of vineyards, winehouses, luxurious restaurants, restaurants with horse farms, etc. Secondly, housing development areas have increased 376,07% in size. This shows the popularity of Kuşçular neighborhood as a settlement, with its wide areas for gated housing developments. After industrial areas, comes residential areas with a doubled percentage compared to 2002. In exchange of these increases in size, it is possible to see a decrease in forests about 4,6% and a decrease in agricultural lands about 1,5% percent. Because forests and agricultural areas cover 97% in 2002 and 94% in 2024, these percentages equal a vast amount of land. Table.. shows us that 972742 m² of forests and 249488 m²

of agricultural lands were lost between the two years. Also, about 6% of olive groves were lost which equals 5110 m². In addition, two new land cover types were added to Kuşçular neighborhood in 2024, which are tourism with nearly 81000 m², and wind power plants with an area of 103375 m².

Figure 27. shows the luxury land uses in Kuşçular neighborhood. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with the Mukhtar in September 2024 and the field research at the area, it can be seen that there are twenty-five gated residential sites in the area. The sites concentrate on the north, the center and the south parts of Kuşçular neighborhood. There are five horse farms in the area and ten luxury restaurants. These restaurants include luxury breakfast places, Michelin-starred businesses and luxury sea-food diners. There are six wineries with their exclusive vineyards in the area.

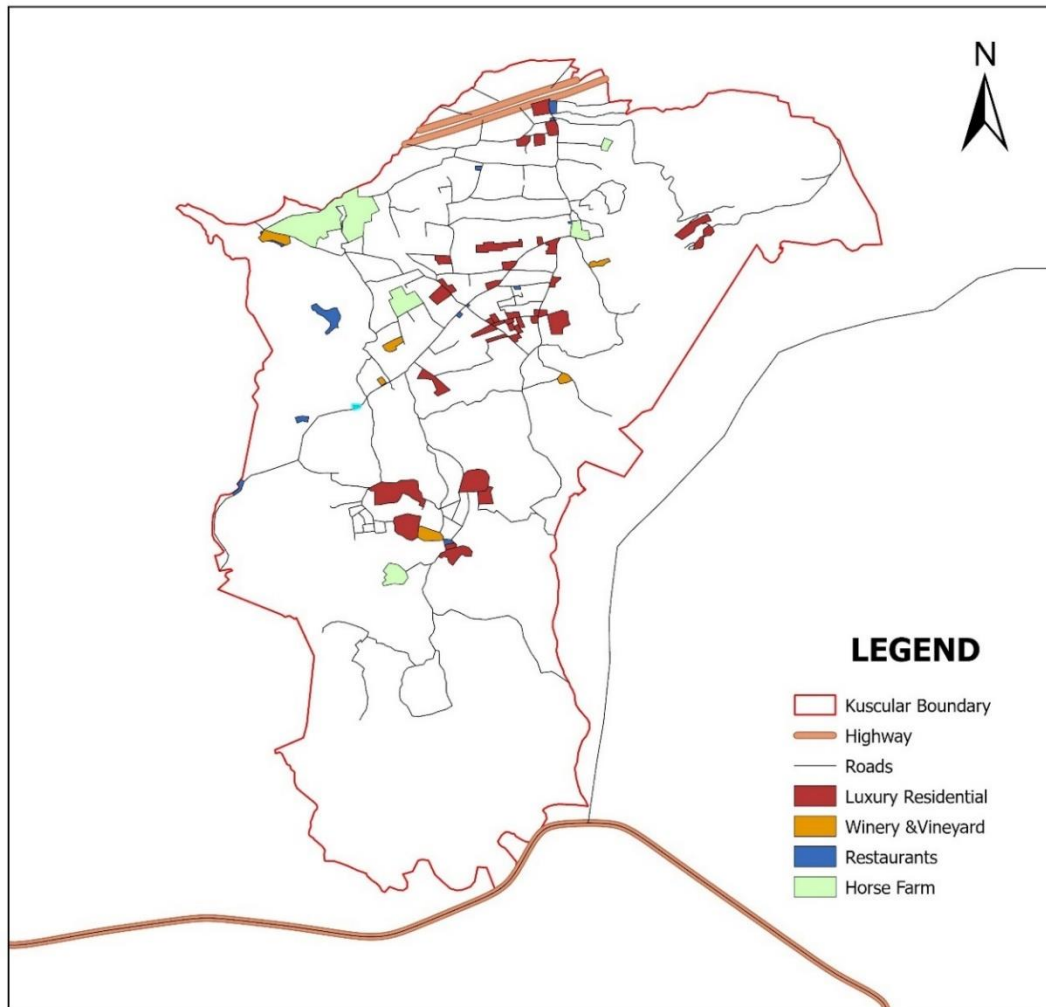


Figure 27. Luxury land uses map of 2024

4.3. Results of Counter-Urbanization and Rural Gentrification Processes in Kuşçular

There are many results of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification in Kuşçular neighborhood. The results vary and they are positive and negative. One of the most crucial outcomes of these two phenomena is the displacement of local and native people by the activities and changes caused by the new-comers to the neighborhood. Displacement in Kuşçular has many reasons which are also generated by counter-urbanization and rural gentrification dynamics (see Figure 31). According to the semi-structured interviews conducted with native people in September 2024, the new-comers who live in gated residential developments are disturbed by farming activities, particularly their sound, smell and appearance. This is an example for the different values and lifestyle expectations the new-comers bring with them. This leads to resentment between the new-comers and local people and deepens the class division and highlights the social stratification in the area. The social distinction comes up as a cultural conflict in this situation since the new-comers want to change the community to fit their own beliefs, which is strongly in contrast with the identities and customs of the established residents in Kuşçular neighborhood.



Figure 28. Agricultural activities

(Source: Personal archive, 2024)

In addition, these perceived negativities cause the new-comers to not go to the neighborhood center, where there are still some businesses which are characterized as

rural. However, there are more and more new-comers but less native and local people in the area everyday so, this means that there are less people contributing to these businesses and they cannot stay open for long. This leads to the people who own the businesses, local and native people, to experience difficulty earning money, eventually selling their land, and being displaced.

Another activity that provides to the displacement of local and native people is that the tourists not going to local restaurants and other businesses. Because gastronomy is the leading touristic attraction in Kuşçular neighborhood, the subject is very important. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with local business owners in September 2024, tourists prefer to go to luxury restaurants, horse farms and wineries in the area. The new-comer who live in luxurious sites only order home from the local restaurants. This causes social and economic segregation and again, it causes the closing of local restaurants and businesses while another luxury business opens in the area. The owners of local restaurants lose their businesses and are therefore, forced to sell their lands and are displaced from the neighborhood.

In addition, according to the semi-structured interviews made with local coffeshop customers in March 2023, who are local to the area, a majority of them work in jobs that pay low. They work in the luxury business as doorman, guard, driver, etc. This means that they cannot do their former occupations, which is agricultural production, but they work in the luxury businesses that the new-comers own. It also means that their low-paying jobs do not afford to be a customer at those places. Because there more and more luxury businesses and less businesses for them to afford, these people are affected negatively socially and economically. This leads to them not being able to live in Kuşçular neighborhood anymore, they sell their lands for a considerable amount of money and are displaced.

Furthermore, people who come from İstanbul and Ankara with a different lifestyle desire live in gated residential developments in Kuşçular neighborhood. They do not want to live in rural characteristic houses in agricultural lands (semi-structured interviews with local, native people, September 2024, and coffeshop customers, March 2023). As mentioned earlier, the new-comers do not want to engage in agricultural activities, they do not prefer to go to local businesses, therefore they do not engage with local and native people. Besides the ones that are currently being built, it was specified that there are

twenty-five gated residential developments. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with the Mukhtar of Kuşçular neighborhood on September 2024, local and native people give their lands and the farm houses on these lands to outside contractors in exchange for flats. They then rent out these flats for steady income. This leads to the occupational loss of agriculture in the area, and a neighborhood-wide spatial shift in residential characteristics while forcing the previous owners of those agricultural lands to be displaced.



Figure 29. Gated residential developments

(Source: Personal Archive, 2024)

Besides the socio-spatial shift in residential characteristics, commercial characteristics are also in change. According to the semi-structured interview conducted with the Mukhtar of Kuşçular neighborhood on September 2024, the coffeeshop of Kuşçular neighborhood which has been there since 1950s, was demolished and instead, a modern building with offices were built. The rural characteristic land uses like farmhouses, local coffeeshops where native and local people use every day are disappearing while more offices, luxury business buildings and gated residential developments are being built which are not built for local and native people but for the new-comers.



Figure 30. Rural characteristic businesses and new office building

(Source: Personal Archive, 2024)

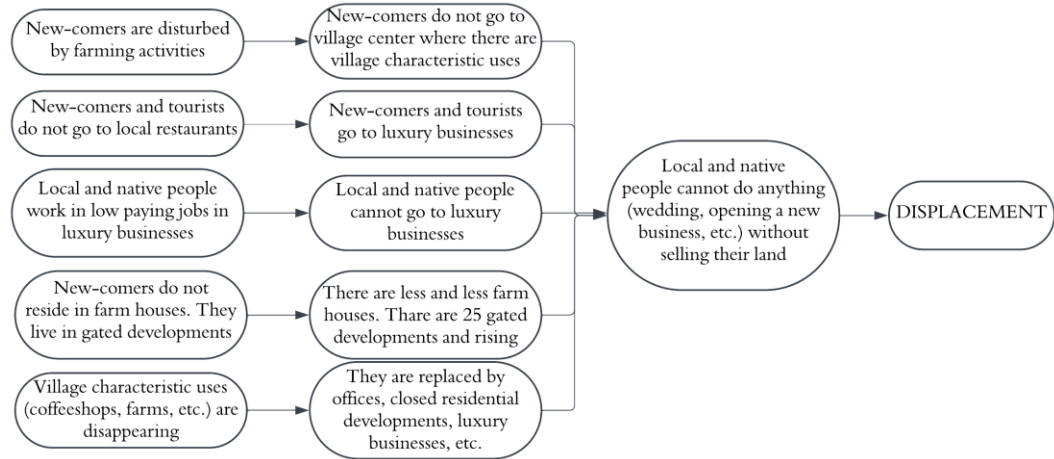


Figure 31. Factors contributing to displacement in Kuşçular neighborhood

On the other hand, one of the positive outcomes of these socio-spatial and economic shifts in the area is that there has been infrastructural upgrade in the places where local and native people live. However, still, these upgrades are found inadequate for the new-comers (semi-structured interviews with local and native people, September 2024). Also, these services are not provided equally for the new-comers and established residents. Another positive outcome according to the Mukhtar, Mehmet Doğan, is that the lands do not remain idle and are reclaimed.

CHAPTER 5.

CONCLUSION

The re-shaping of rural areas has been a widely investigated topic in history, and it is now. However, the context of that re-shaping is in a shifting state. Not long ago, the scholars were investigating the dynamics of urbanization, the migration from rural areas to urban areas, their effects in the social, economic and spatial context. Yet, now the main topic about rural areas is counter-urbanization, and if there is, counter-urbanization-led rural gentrification. Counter-urbanization and rural gentrification dynamics and activities have crucial socio-spatial and economic impacts in rural areas individually or at the same time, especially in Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla. The re-structuring of this once categorized as a village neighborhood socially, spatially and economically with the dynamics of these two phenomena leads to problematic outcomes for especially, the native and local people of the neighborhood. The negative results of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification can be observed with all its dimensions in Kuşçular neighborhood.

In this study, in which the dynamics, activities of the agents and consequences of counter-urbanization and counter-urbanization-led rural gentrification are deeply investigated, assessments were made on the neighborhood Kuşçular, Urla. Beginning the investigation, the changes as a result of these two phenomena and their inner dynamics from countries around the world and from Turkey were investigated and tried to be reasoned. Nevertheless, as in urbanization era, counter-urbanization is a phenomenon that was experienced by Turkey much later than its foreign examples. Up until recently, the topic has not received enough attention in the literature. In addition, the disputes on the definitions, metrics, and outcomes of rural gentrification and counter-urbanization have led to a shortage of researches over these two phenomena taking place individually or together. Rural gentrification that is led by counter-urbanization and their simultaneous happening in a rural area needs to be added to the literature, especially in the context of Urla, Kuşçular neighborhood.

Since the 1980s, rural restructuring has been linked to a well-known demographic trend known as counter-urbanization, or the reverse movement from the city to the countryside. In the Mediterranean that have a long history of human land use, counter-

urbanization is especially pertinent. However, especially in this area, little is known about the magnitude and effects of this phenomena. Counter-urbanization can be defined shortly as the opposite of urbanization. However, it is a very inadequate definition considering its inner dynamics and their results in different spheres. When a lot of individuals relocate from metropolitan regions to nearby rural areas, this is known as counter-urbanization. In addition to being a social and demographic phenomenon (driven by the people), it has also entailed the transfer of some enterprises and economic activity, so it also is a spatial phenomenon. Although the term "counter-urbanization" refers to the general redistribution of people from metropolitan areas to rural areas, it is challenging to define, establish, and develop consensus on the concept due to a number of factors, including the lack of cumulative evidence, the inability to reveal the process based on objective data, the wide range of factors influencing the decision to relocate the population, and the differentiation of the process at the national, regional, and even city scale.

Because it is defined as the movement of people, migration has an important place in counter-urbanization processes. This phenomenon encompasses a number of different phenomena that are all related to migration, including decentralization, rural area regeneration and revival, depopulation, and repopulation. In addition, the meaning of 'rurality' should also be investigated because it is different for all rural areas. To comprehend the countryside in its particular setting, a set of descriptive and quantitative criteria is required. Regarding the metrics of rurality, each non-urban area's distinctiveness stems from its singular contextual set of characteristics. This also requires to abandon the strict urban point of view to the subject.

In this research, rural gentrification is led by counter-urbanization and its consequences. Rural gentrification can be defined as follows: Due to the urban middle class's migration to rural areas for housing and leisure, the rural social class structure has changed, resulting in a lack of rural housing and the eviction of native and local people. The main reason for the migration of the urban middle class is the desire to live a rural, natural, idyllic lifestyle which are supposed to be in rural areas. Hinting to the urbanization era, it is also addressed as 'back to the country movement'. It is very important to differentiate rural gentrification from the urban one, which has not been the case until 1990s, a very near past. Compared to urban gentrification, which is typically impacted by proximity to economic opportunities, rural gentrification is more impacted by variables pertaining to quality of life. In the spatial context, while urban gentrification takes place

in deprived and poor neighborhoods of the city, for rural gentrification this is not necessary. Also, in rural areas, gentrification causes a conflict between two middle classes, which is called the 'intra-class conflict, however in urban areas gentrification processes cause a conflict between the middle class and the working class, which is called the 'inter-class conflict'.

Both in rural and urban gentrification, there are the new-comers who come from city life to rural areas, and the displacees, who are displaced and dispossessed of their own lands and occupations. Land and occupational dispossession is a very important subject in the case of this research, because the dispossession is in the form of land. The establishment of land-based markets as a strategy for rural regeneration results in changes in the patterns of land ownership in rural areas and the acquisition of vast tracts of land by huge corporations, which comes in the form of land grabbing and land concentration.

While there are various effects of rural gentrification, the most obvious evidence of it is the spatial ones, in this case, gated residential developments. The concept needs an inclusive definition in order to address the social, spatial and administrative contexts, without neglecting the socioeconomic backgrounds of its inhabitants and the location of the gated development. They are closed urban residential settlements that are voluntarily occupied by a uniform social group and in which public space has been privatized by limiting access through the use of security devices. Residents pay monthly fees to a private governing body in order to receive security and exclusive amenities. Desires for greater social rank and social difference within certain social groupings, heightened fear of crime, a desire for a better lifestyle, a sense of community, and social homogeneity are the reasons for the inhabitants to reside in gated residential developments.

The inner Dynamics and the effects of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification that is led by counter-urbanization in the social, spatial and economic spheres were examined in the case of Kuşçular neighborhood, Urla. Twenty-eight people were selected from various socio-economic backgrounds who reside in the neighborhood and semi-structured interviews were conducted.

When all the answers were examined, combined with the field research, it is seen that the changes happening in the neighborhood was in three major categories. These are socio-spatial changes, migrative and economic changes, and spatial changes. For the sociological changes, demographic shifts can be seen throughout the neighborhood.

These shifts cause conflicts between the new-comers and the natives/locals. For example, the new-comers are disturbed by the look, smell and sound of rural occupations, which is agriculture. This leads to the modification in original cultural practices in the area.

Furthermore, the changes in the rural environment such as the gated residential developments and businesses that are exclusive for the new-comers lead to shifts in the ways of interaction between people, especially between new-comers and local/native people. Gated residential developments include gated communities. With their high walls, exclusive services for their residents only, the closure of once public areas like roads and parks, they are another world in an originally rural area. This leads to cultural conflicts and deepens the class divisions in the area, creating resentment between those people which causes further social conflicts. One example for that is the local/native people missing the old sociological structure of the neighborhood. Also, the inequality for accessing public services exceeds the borders of gated residential developments. There are schools for the wealthier, healthcare and social services for the new-comers, as well as restaurants, recreational areas and shops for the new-comers who are at a higher income range.

Looking at the migration Dynamics of Kuşçular neighborhood, which strongly altered the economical structure of the area, it can be seen that the neighborhood had gained migration from outside of Turkey and inside as well. Among the foreign migrations are the Turkish population from Crete, Chios, Thrace, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and most of all, from Bulgaria. In addition, among the people who migrated to Kuşçular are kosovars, albanians and thessalonians.

Starting from the 1950's, Kuşçular has started to gain migration from inside of Turkey and started to alter in its economic structure. First, people from Kütahya and Batman migrated to Kuşçular neighborhood. At that time the only agricultural product in the area was tobacco. People could buy more than one house with this occupation only. After that, people from Black Sea Region, especially from Ordu, started to migrate to the area, bringing with them a whole new economic activity, greenhouse cultivation. From 2005 and forward, middle and upper-middle income people from İstanbul and Ankara started to migrate, who changed the social, spatial and economic structure of the neighborhood entirely.

There is substantial spatial change in Kuşçular neighborhood throughout history. However, 2005 was a breaking point for the deep shifts in spatial, structure of the area. Therefore, a comparison of spatial structure was conducted for the years 2002 and 2024. It is seen that there is approximately 37700000 m² land in Kuşçular neighborhood. In both years, forests cover more than half of the total land. According to the land use maps in both years, trade areas have increased by 452,56%; housing development areas have increased by 376%; and residential areas have doubled in size. On the other hand, forests have declined by 4,6% which is a massive amount of land compared to its total m². In addition, agricultural lands have also decreased by 1,5% which is also a vast amount of m² because in both years, agricultural lands cover at least 41% of the whole neighborhood.

The results of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification can be seen as both negative and positive. One of the most crucial negative outcomes is the displacement of the local/native people. There are many other outcomes of these two phenomena that contribute to displacement. One of the reasons contributing is that the newcomers bringing with them different values and expectations. This leads to resentment between certain social classes and provide to the stratification and segregation between these two classes in the area. Furthermore, the negative perceptions of the 'rural' get in the way of the area's circulation of the local economy. The newcomers do not prefer to go to the local businesses because of these perceived negativities. Local business owners lose their businesses because they cannot afford to stay open.

In addition to the newcomers, tourists in Kuşçular also prefer luxury establishments, bypassing local restaurants, which leads to economic segregation. As local businesses close, their owners are forced to sell property and leave, resulting in social and economic displacement for native residents, while luxury businesses continue to thrive in the area. Local residents in Kuşçular, mostly employed in low-paying jobs at luxury businesses, can no longer pursue their previous agricultural work. With fewer affordable businesses and rising costs, they are economically and socially marginalized, leading them to sell their land and be displaced from the neighborhood.

In Kuşçular neighborhood, newcomers from Istanbul and Ankara, with different lifestyles, prefer living in gated residential developments and avoid engaging in agricultural activities or local businesses. As a result, local residents sell their land to contractors in exchange for flats, which they rent out for steady income. This leads to the

loss of agricultural occupations and a shift in both residential and commercial characteristics of the area. Traditional rural spaces, such as farmhouses and local coffee shops, are being replaced by luxury developments, offices, and businesses catering to newcomers. This socio-spatial and commercial transformation forces long-time residents to be displaced.

Overall, class divisions and social inequalities in rural gentrification and counter-urbanization present significant challenges to the social fabric of rural communities. The spatial and economic shifts rural areas face make it essential for policymakers to consider these dynamics when implementing strategies for rural development. This study, in which counter-urbanization and rural gentrification dynamics and consequences in Kuşçular neighborhood are evaluated, offers a different perspective on these two phenomena happening simultaneously in a unique rural area. It attempts to fill a gap in the literature by providing specific instances of how the Kuşçular neighborhood's space, social climate, and economic circumstances have changed through these two phenomena. The research builds upon the idea of the uniqueness of each rural settlement and the experience of counter-urbanization and rural gentrification is one and only.

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