

**TED ANKARA COLLEGE FOUNDATION PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL**

**PSYCHOLOGY**

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**Research Question: What are the Social, Physical and Economic Problems of Slums and their Expectations from the Urban City?**

## **Abstract**

The mechanization of agriculture in Turkey as of 1950s brought about considerable unemployment in the labour force, as a result of which Turkey experienced an accelerated immigration movement from rural to urban areas. The inadequate number of dwellings and the insufficient income of this section migrating from rural to urban areas to acquire a dwelling of their own played a key role in the unplanned urbanization.

This research was conducted with the aim of acquainting with prevailing social, economic and physical conditions in slum areas where Ankara experiences substantial increase in squatting. Through interviews carried out with slum dwellers, being characterized as people living away from urban culture due to the general stereotype, their expectations from the urban city and approaches to urban transformation was inquired.

In the scope of this study, slums and slum policy; urban transformation and urban transformation processes in Turkey were primarily explained in a conceptual manner and then a fieldwork was performed. As a result of surveys and interviews conducted in Yalçinkaya Quarter where fieldwork was also realized, social, physical and economic problems of slums as well as their expectations from the urban city were identified. The assessments in this respect revealed that shantytowns display a transitional characteristic between rural and urban areas and they are on the horns of dilemma as they possess neither an urban nor a rural lifestyle.

The study conducted in Yalçinkaya Quarter revealed the urban poverty once again; however, meeting with people striving to hold on and struggle for life in the quarter where a sort of depression area was expected to be found in ethnical aspects is of high importance in terms of demonstrating the efforts of these people for maintaining their relations with the city regardless of existing social, physical and economical problems.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The fieldwork conducted in Yalınkaya Quarter within the borders of Altındağ District in Ankara Province encompasses an area of approximately 2, 5 hectares (25000 m<sup>2</sup>) adjacent to the Bentderesi Avenue in the quarter. The study includes the assessment of surveys and interviews realized totally in five domiciles, three (3) of which were performed in Gzel Kız Street, one (1) in Meydann Street and one (1) in  Street.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this survey is to identify the social, cultural, economic, physical characteristics of this squatter area and transformation trends therein; make the analysis of and assess the data obtained through the literature review on the basis of indicators acquired via this practice.

### **Methodology**

Survey and personal observations provide the basic data concerning the area. Information related to the households, dwellings and living environment, urban mobility, municipal services and socio-technical infrastructure as well as participation and employment opportunities constitute the subtitles of the data.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The squatter (as a phenomenon) has been the subject of and has influenced almost all branches of art ranging from literature to music and cinema. For instance, the emergence of squatters was concurrent with their introduction to novels and stories. In examining the subject of these works and the period in which they were produced, the change and transformation taking place in the squatter can be clearly noticed. The whole process encompassing the positive approaches to the squatters as well as the exclusion of squatters and squatter dwellers has been reflected in these works.

The time interval as of 1948 to our days were regarded in this study intended for analyzing the squatter phenomenon, which has left its mark on the urbanization in Turkey, in terms of urban environment by taking legal/social/economic/political developments into account.

Owing to the fact that the squatter policy is directly related to the economic policy of a country and even the economic policy provides a stamping ground for the squatter policy; the squatter phenomenon, in consequence, bears a further meaning than a simple housing problem.

The squatter construction process in Turkey has been considered as fact up till now and has been legitimized. The term “construction amnesty” is applied only in urban law. The “construction amnesty” implies pardoning and conserving some of the settlements built in a non-conforming manner with the applicable rules up to certain date, but complying with the conditions stipulated as per the Law on the basis of their

own conditions and positions. A sort of transformation was launched through the legitimization of illegal developments by means of “construction amnesty”.

## **2.1. Squatters and Squatter Policy**

Notwithstanding the fact that squatters have been contradict to the law from the beginning, they have been considered legal in society as they were built by the poor at first and provide shelter with use value. So long as they were not luxury but jerry house buildings, they occupied the agenda as a poverty problem.

The common characteristics in squatter definitions are as follows:

1. Being contrary to construction and building regulations,
2. Built on the land of someone else (real, legal or public, private) without the permission of the landowner,
3. Built expeditiously,
4. Built contrary to the required sanitary and technical conditions,
5. Built by low income people; however, in the aftermath of 1980 there has been an absolute shift,
6. Meets the housing requirement of rural-urban migrants by people other than state or local administrations.

The squatter policy is defined as the total of measures enabling the solution of squatter problems in short and long terms, and this policy aims at solving both economic and social problems of the squatters and their relations with the urban city.

In this respect, the above mentioned policy includes reclamation, removal and prevention. With regard to squatters and squatter dwellers in our country, there can be reference to four different approaches and stages, which are as follows:

1. Primarily prohibition; unless a favorable result is obtained, supplying cheap land, granting loan, house-type projects, providing technical assistance can be defined as the first stage.
2. Absolving the existing squatters and the opinion of preventing the emergence of squatters via squatter prevention areas can be defined as the second stage.
3. Addressing the squatter issue in two dimensions, namely cultural and economic, and thus laying stress on the integration with cultural transformation and economic life can be ranged as the third stage.
4. The transformation of squatter areas by creating urban rents can be defined as a last stage.

The creation of an “other” within the social structure of the modern urban city draws attention as another essential characteristic of squatter areas. The fact that squatters created their “own culture” in a short term has become more striking than their illegal status. Squatter areas have been regarded as locations threatening to rusticate an urban city and later on, have been identified with various bad images such as land mafia, depredation, looting, speculation etc.

## **2.2 Urban Transformation**

The Turkish Linguistic Society defines transformation as “changing from one medium to another, changing or altering in form, appearance or nature, alternation, revolution, transformation”. Drawing upon these meanings, urban transformation can be defined as changing of urban areas from existing appearance to another and taking a different form. However, the definition of the term shows differences depending on the vision, purpose, strategy and methods intended to be underlined.

According to Lichfield, urban transformation implies a compromise on the outcomes of the transformation to be materialized for the purpose of better understanding the urban distortion processes. In view of Donnison, urban transformation means new ways and methods set forth in a coordinated approach with the aim of solving problems concentrating in the urban depression areas. Roberts defines urban transformation as a comprehensive and an integrated vision and action aiming at continuous improvement of economic, physical, social and environmental conditions in a specific area. In other words, it means the redevelopment and revival of a lost economic activity; putting an inoperative social function into operation; ensuring social integration in the areas subject to social exclusion; restoring the environmental quality or ecological balance in the areas which have lost this balance.

Hence, urban transformation refers to the entirety of strategies and actions applied with comprehensive and integrated approaches for the purpose of improving the economic, social, physical and environmental conditions of urban areas experiencing a

depression and a distortion. In this sense, the objectives of urban transformation target for bringing long-term and fundamental solutions to the problems of the relevant area.

### **2.3 The Objectives of the Urban Transformation**

The urban transformation was introduced in order to serve five main purposes:

**1. Establishing direct relations between the physical conditions of the city and social problems:** One of the most important reasons behind the conversion of urban areas into depression areas is social depression or distortion. Urban transformation projects principally investigate the reasons of social distortions and aim at finding solutions for this urban depression and distortion by bringing forward proposals to prevent it.

**2. Responding physically to continuously changing requirements of several elements constituting the urban texture:** In other words, urban transformation projects aim at re-developing different segments of the urban city in accordance with the new physical, social, economic, environmental and infrastructural requirements arising in the rapidly growing, changing and distorting texture of the city.

**3. Introducing an economical development approach that will increase the urban welfare and life quality:** In addition to the physical and social distortion, the loss of economic buoyancy in the relevant areas lies behind the conversion of urban areas into depression regions. Urban transformation projects target for developing strategies that will revive economic buoyancy in urban areas having become physical and social depression regions and thus improving urban welfare and life quality.

4. Introducing strategies that will ensure the effective use of urban areas and avoid unnecessary urban sprawling: Generating urban transformation projects intended for making previously used or idle areas in urban cities re-available and restricting urban development and sprawling is directly related to the “sustainability” target of the present time.

In this context, the purpose of the urban transformation is to ensure that urban policy can respond to the requirements with the medium of influence of social conditions and political powers. Generation or reconstruction of urban areas should be put into practice in conjunction with multi-perspective planning and design process. Creating a significant city and ensuring its continuity put forth the necessity of urban transformation.

However practices revealed that the attained position in the subject area following the transformation was not so different from the point the reclamation plans had conducted. It can be stated that problems related to physical and social areas generated by reclamation plans continue to exist in urban transformation projects.

However, the necessity of urban transformation gains sense with different implementation processes rather than other intervention forms.

### **3. SQUATTING in ANKARA and URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROCESS**

Beginning from the first years of the Republic until the present time, the housing requirement in Ankara has been met in three ways, which are namely build-sell model, collective housing and squatters. During the first years of the Republic, Ankara experienced the rapidest population increase and failed to offer enough housing facility to the new coming population. Public institutions constructed houses and sold them on installments during these years; however, the withdrawal of public sector from housing construction in 1930s as a result of economic crises and the failure to construct sufficient individual houses led to the construction of squatters in Ankara.

As of 1934, the emergence of cooperative housing society in addition to the individual housing construction failed to prevent the squatter construction. People migrated in 1940s preferred to dwell in areas close to the business centers and settled regions, over 25% of which were located on areas that were not appropriate to settlement in topographic thresholds due to landslide, etc. Later in 1948, a Law No 5218 on Housing Acquisition was introduced for Ankara. According to this Law, public lands were transferred to municipalities for the purposes of constructing and selling houses.

In parallel to the increases in state funds and other financial resources for “Mass Housing Act” in 1980s, mass housing projects gained importance.

In 1990s, the Law No 2981 enabled the development of new plans on squatter areas. Urban transformation projects such as Dikmen Valley Housing and Environmental Development Project represent the period which reaches until the present

time. Squatter areas such as Dikmen, Balgat, ukurambar, Yıldız and ukurca have become apartment as a result of reclamation plans. They were overbuilt under the name of urban transformation and as a result, new areas complicating the solutions have emerged.

In 2000s, firstly, partial plans, disconnected from plan gradation, were implemented in Ankara and following this transitional period, urban transformation and development regions replaced the high-scaled planning practices. This development led to the unhealthy transformation of squatter areas, to the creation of similar physical areas and failed to bring solutions to social and economic problems.

Data demonstrate that the number of urban transformation areas announced by Ankara Metropolitan Municipal has exceeded 30. The small part of these announced transformation areas encompass squatters or depression areas while the majority of transformation areas are located on empty lands or only small part of them accommodates squatters

The reflections of urban transformation projects implemented in Ankara on physical areas have been shifted from low density, garden squatters with 1-2 storeys to high density apartments with minimum 9 storeys. Furthermore, with the completion of transformation, the current rent value has started to increase in line with new, high-quality buildings and landscaping works. As a result, the objective of housing the existing population, as one of the main objectives of many urban transformation projects, cannot be attained in the long-term and these lands are taken under the possession of middle and high-income groups. The studies conducted on the urban

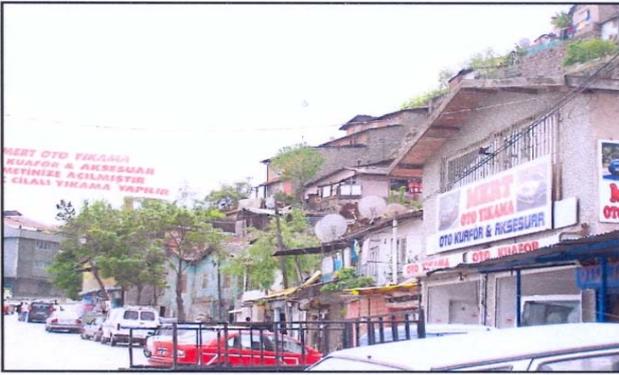
transformation projects implemented in Ankara reveal that all practices have resulted in population change by 50%-90% and that new population has different socio-economic and cultural trends. In this context, it is obvious that social concerns do not lie behind the structuring of the area.

#### **4. FINDINGS of the FIELDWORK**

##### **4.1 The General Characteristics of the Area and Environmental Relations**

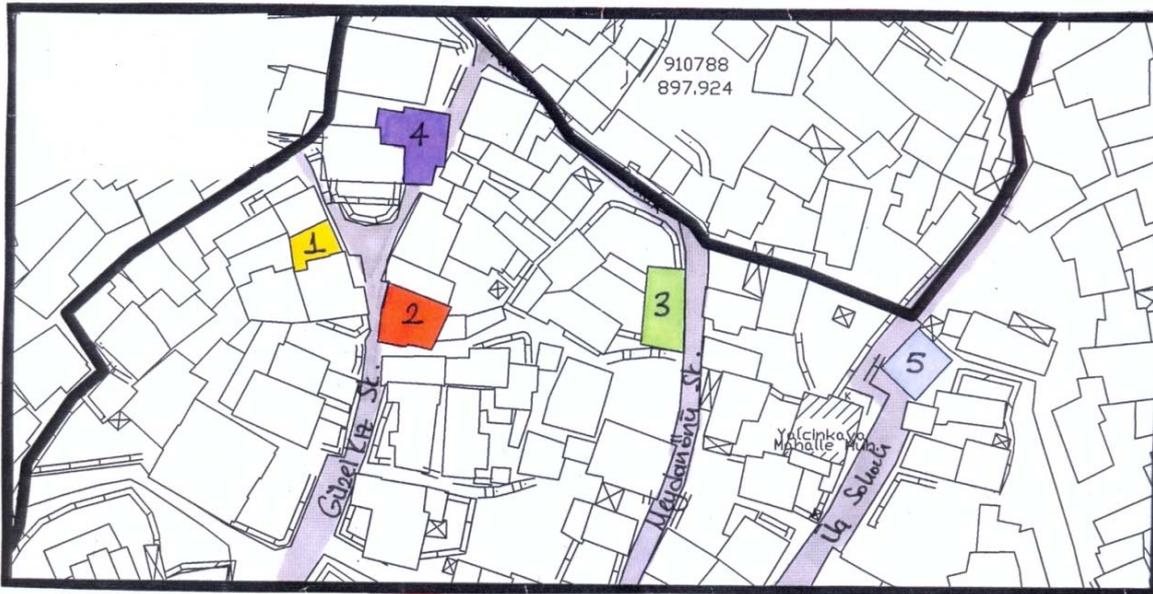
The working field falls within the borders of Yalınkaya Squatter and ends in Bentderesi Avenue. In general, this region remains among the first squatter areas in Ankara and is within a walking distance to Ulus, the historic city center. Bentderesi, located in the vicinity of the quarter, accommodates small manufacturing plants and wholesalers of plastic goods etc while the western part, namely towards Cebeci-Dikimevi region, is limited to housing facilities, wholesalers, hospitals and partially to the Ulucanlar Penitentiary.

We can state that the area includes a “transitional region” in addition to its own physical condition. In other words, neither the squatter nor its vicinity is connected to the luxury housing areas and business centers. Should we consider the new city center as the last destination to reach, Demırlıbahe-Dikimevi regions can be described to be occupied by lower-middle and middle income groups while Cebeci can be described to be occupied by middle and Kurtuluş-Kolej regions can be described to be occupied by middle and upper-middle income groups.



Photos 1-2: Yalçinkaya Squatter

#### 4.2. Household Survey Area and the Sample



Yalçinkaya Squatter Area: Streets under the Survey and Interviewed Households

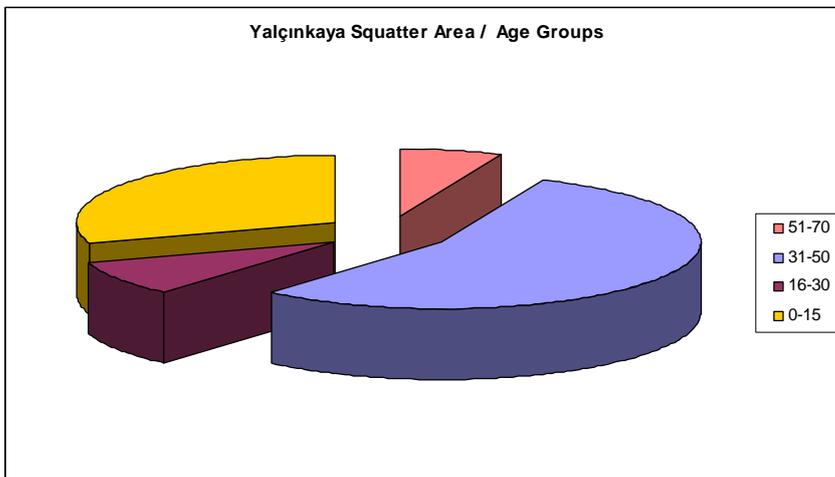
### 4.3. Household Information

Average number of household members is 4,6 and average number of employees per household is 2,2 in the survey area.

#### Age Structure

According to age structure data maximum ratio is 44 percent for 31-50 age group and 5 percent for 51-70 age group. In general, ages under and over 30 (medium age) are nearly equal to each other with values 49 percent and 51 percent consecutively.

Percentage Ratio	Age
5	51-70
44	31- 50
7	16- 30
24	0 – 15

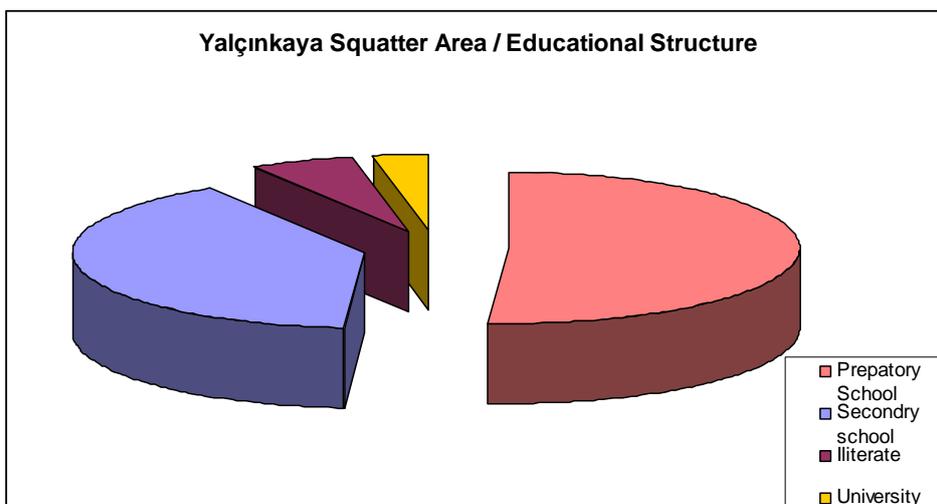


**Chart 1:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Age Groups (%)

### Educational Structure

In Yalçinkaya squatter area, first generation is mostly graduated from the primary school with 51 percent and even they have attended any school with 6 percent, while second generation graduates secondary schools by 40 percent and universities by 3 percent.

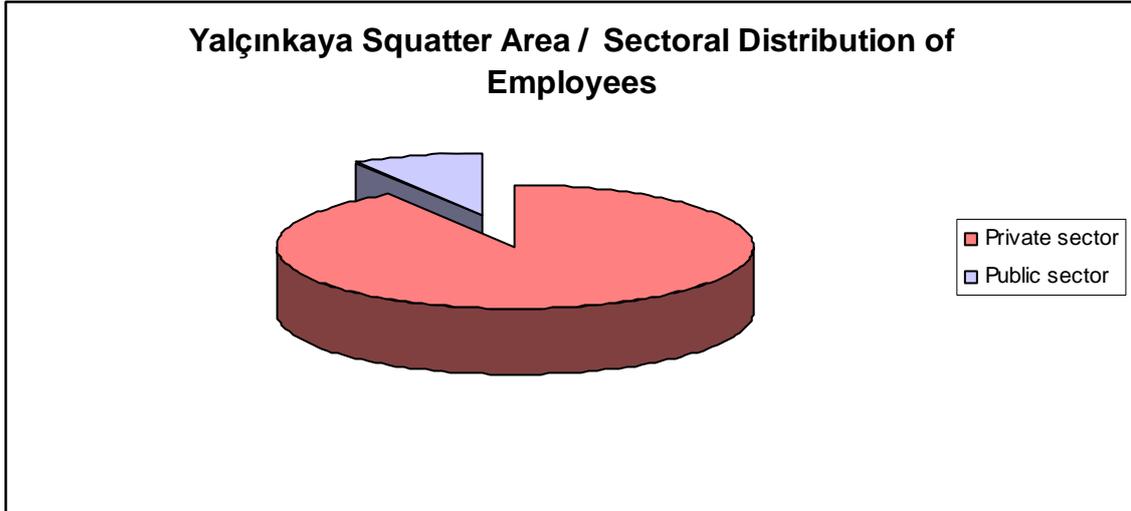
Percentage	Graduation From
% 51 .....	Primary School
% 40 .....	Secondary School
% 6 .....	Illiterate
% 3 .....	University



**Chart 2:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Educational Structure (%)

### Sectoral Distribution of Employees

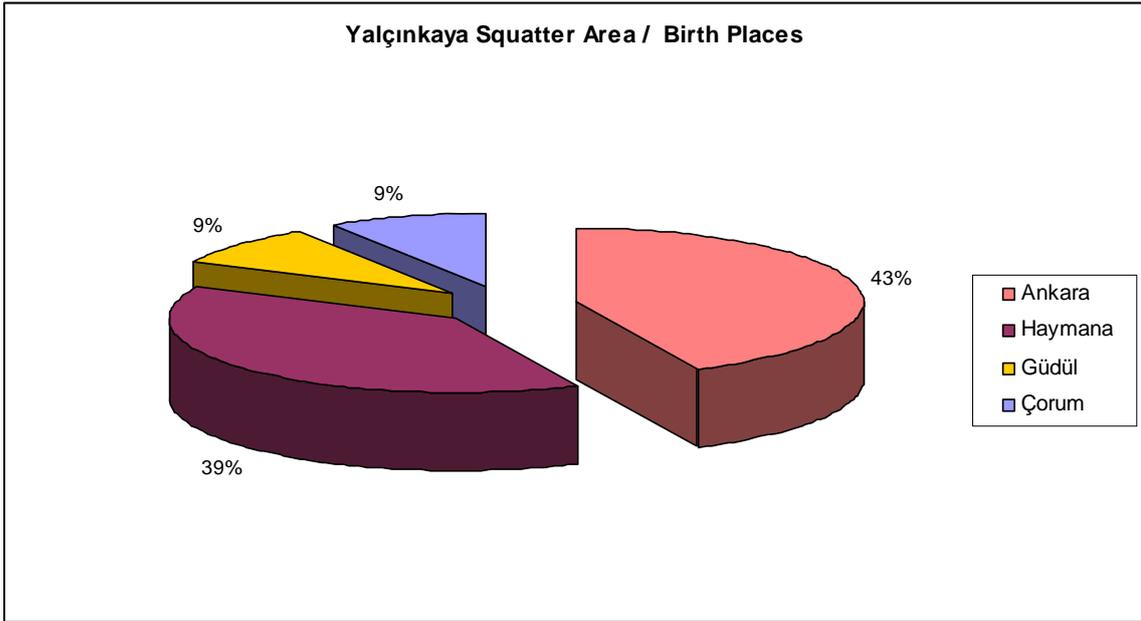
According to interviews, while nearly 91 percent of those are employed in the private sector only 9 percent are employed in the public sector.



**Chart 3:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Sectoral Distribution of Employees (%)

### Birth Places

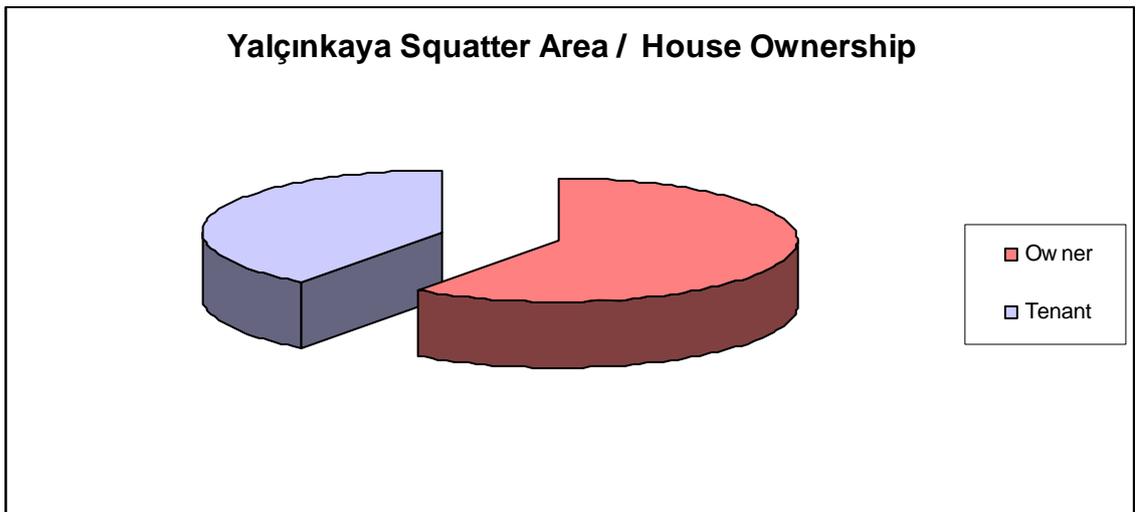
Birth places ratio differs between 43 and 9 percents: Haymana gets the first place with 39 percent alone. Other districts of Ankara hold the 43 percent in total and orum and Gdl hold 9 percents equally.



**Chart 4:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Birth Places (%)

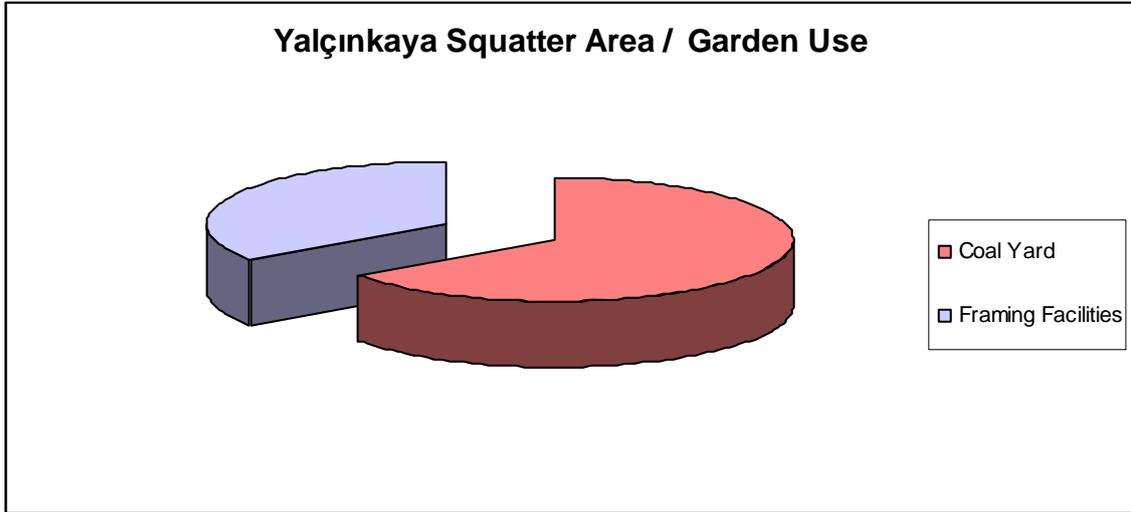
#### 4.4. Dwelling and Living Environment

The question of “house ownership” is answered by 60 percent as “owner” and by 40 percent as “tenant”. Average property rent prices changes from 135 to 150 TL per month in the survey area.



**Chart 5:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / House Ownership (%)

It is determined that building type is squatter with two flats in average in the area. While most of the dwellings have a garden (80 percent) and these gardens are used as coal yard (with 75 percent) and for farming facilities (with 25 percent).

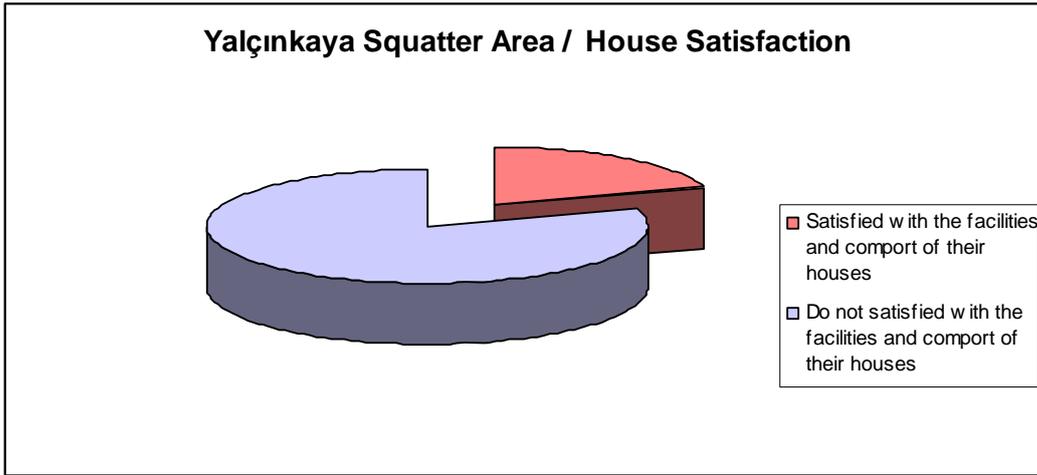


**Chart 6:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Garden Use (%)

Also, it is found out that these squatter dwellings often lack many technological articles such as computer, internet, video and dishwasher other than a house with a vcd-dvd player.

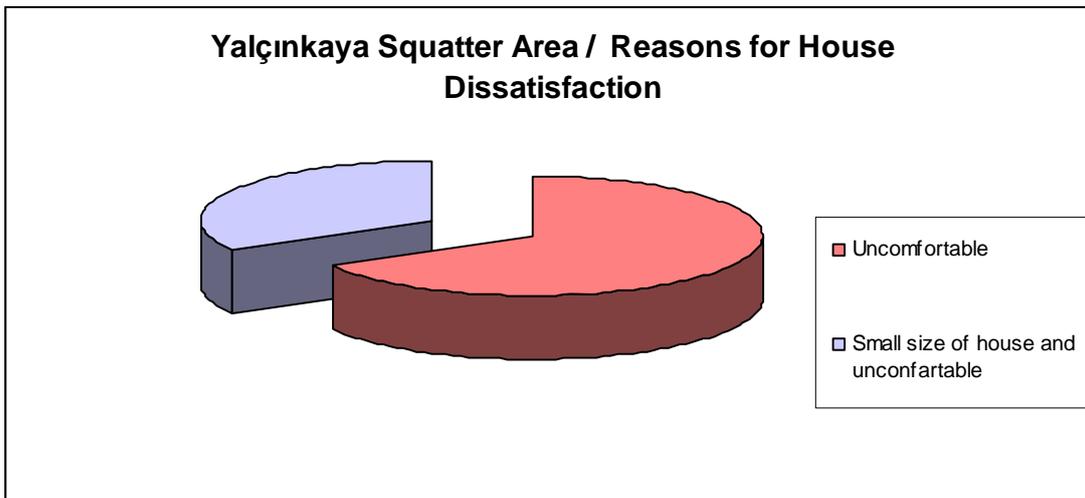
Stove is the main heating alternative for these people due to its cost-efficiency and municipal coal aids.

If we examine the house satisfaction it is clearly seen that most of the households (80 percent) aren't satisfied with the facilities and comfort of their houses.



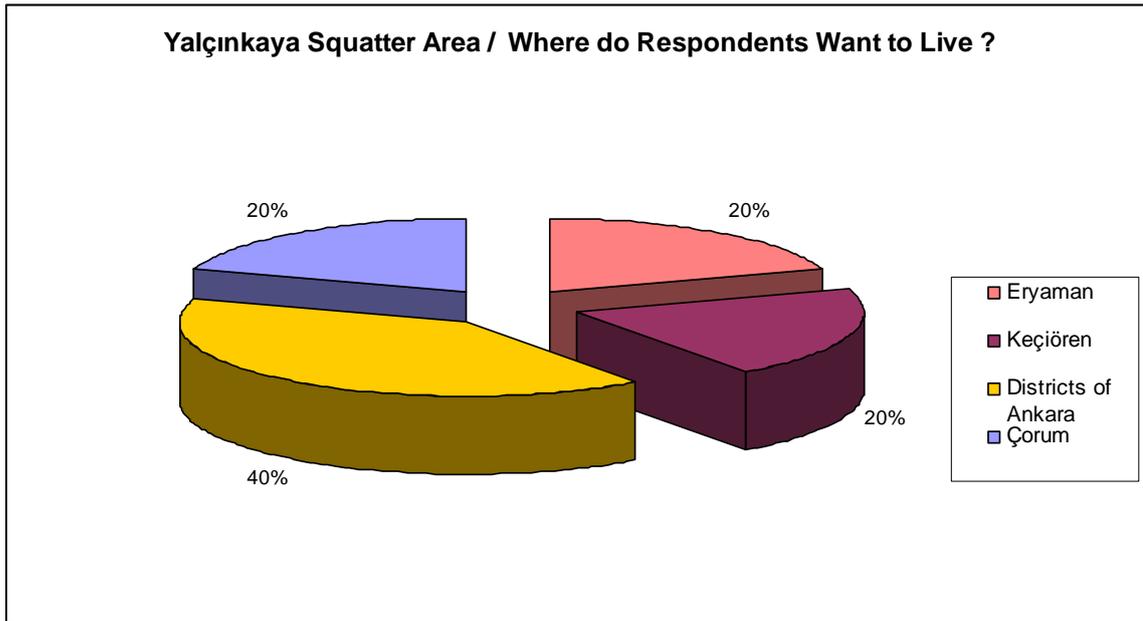
**Chart 7:** Yalinkaya Squatter Area / House Satisfaction (%)

The leading reason of dissatisfaction is the problems faced due to lack of comfort with 60 percent and it is followed by the small size of house with 40 percent.

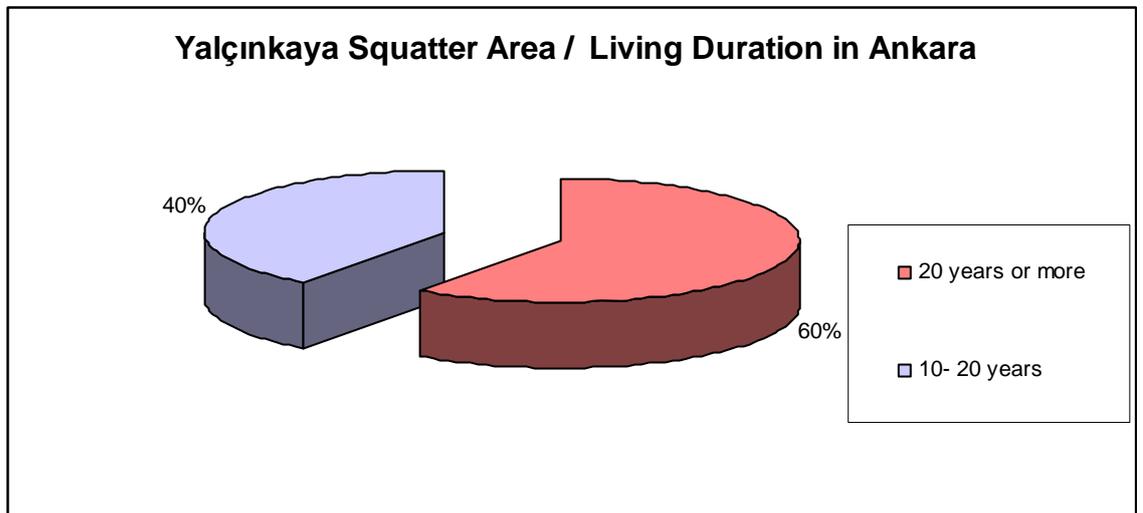


**Chart 8:** Yalinkaya Squatter Area / Reasons for House Dissatisfaction (%)

The question of “if you have economic opportunity where would you prefer to live?” is answered by 20 percent as “birth place (orum)”, and by 20 percent as “Ankara-Eryaman” and by 20 percent as “Keioren”, and by 40 percent other districts of Ankara.

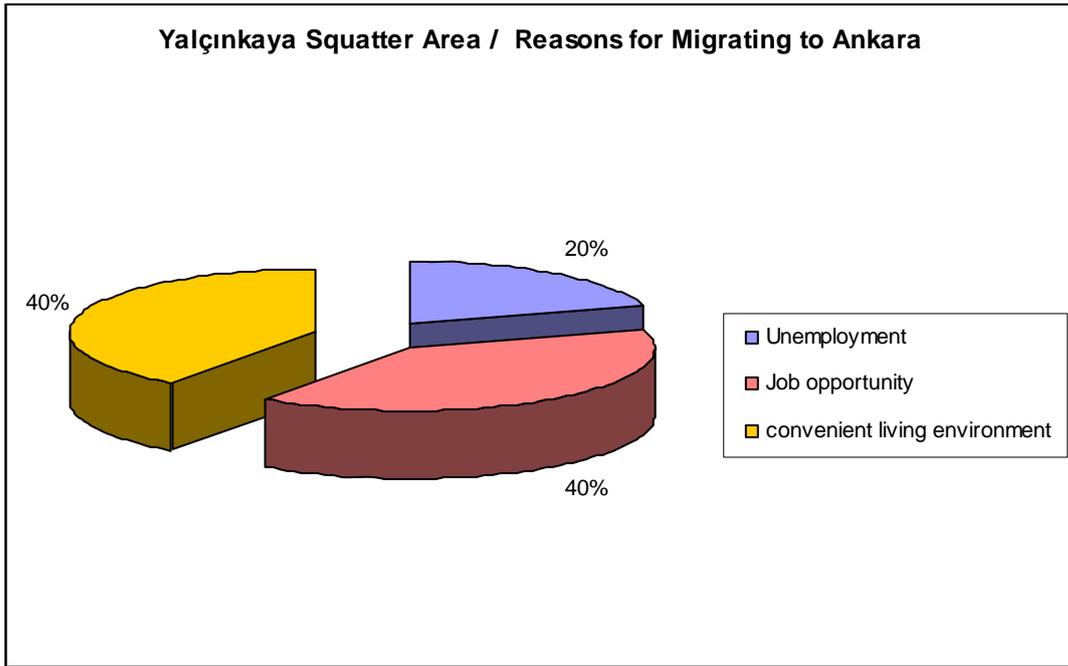


**Chart 9:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Where do Respondents Want to Live? (%)



**Chart 10:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Living Duration in Ankara (%)

For all the households in Yalçinkaya squatter area main reason for moving to Ankara is stated as unemployment. It is followed by job opportunity and convenient living environment.

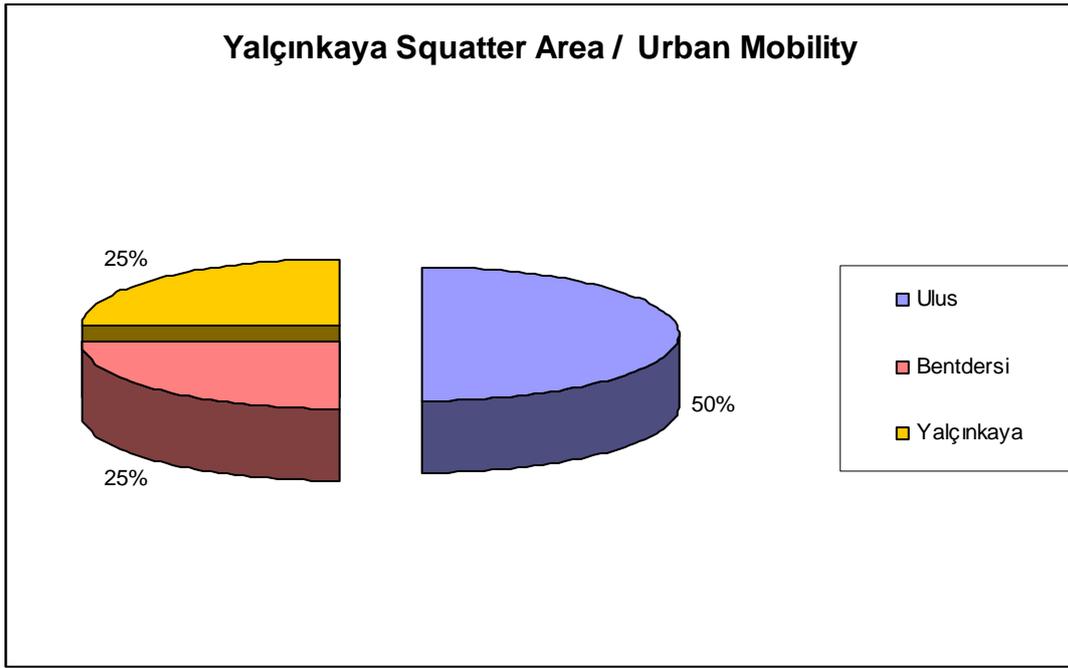


**Chart 11:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Reasons for Migrating to Ankara

In Yalçinkaya squatter area car ownership ratios indicate 20 percent private car, 20 percent delivery van and 60 percent none.

#### 4.5. Urban Mobility

Most preferred mode of transport is “walking” for job travels in the survey area. Ulus is the main destination (50 percent) for work travels while Bentderesi and Yalçinkaya get the second and third ranks with 25 percents.



**Chart 12:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Urban Mobility (%)

Children go to school by walking with 67 percent, and by minibus and dolmus with 33 percent.

#### 4.6. Municipal Services and Social-Technical Infrastructure

Respondents answer to the questions in this section is as follows:

**Table 1:** Municipal Services and Social-Technical Infrastructure

	None (%)	Not Enough (%)	Enough (%)
Kinder Garden	80	20	-
Park, sport facility	80	20	-

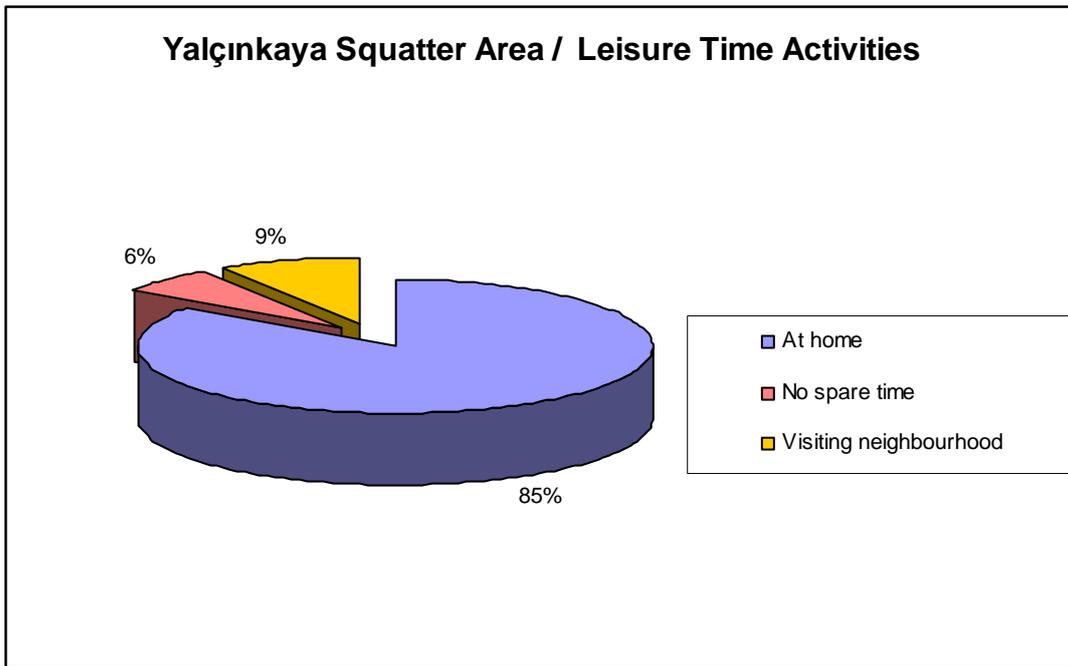
Health facility	-	-	100
Cinema, theatre, public education center	100	-	-
Market area, shopping center	-	-	100
Durable good, apparel stores	-	80	20
Waste services	-	20	80
Water and sewerage services	-	20	80
Street maintenance	-	100	-

#### 4.7. Participation and Job-oriented Education Facilities

Respondents recognize “Mayor” by 20 percent and “a little bit”.

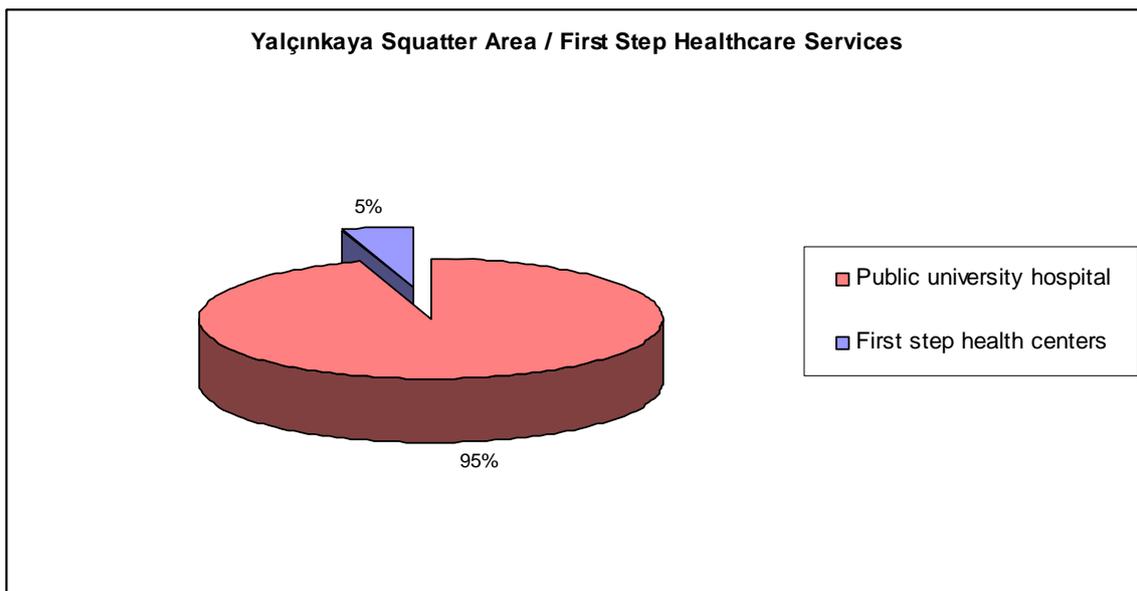
Job oriented occupational training is the most demanded course from the municipality.

#### 4.8. Urban Integration and Segregation



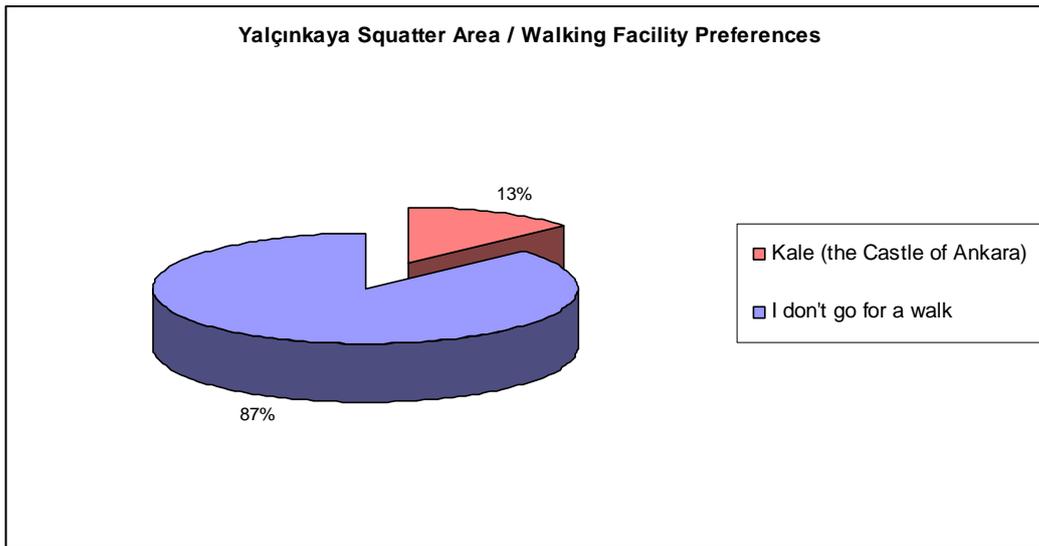
**Chart 13:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Leisure Time Activities (%)

The question of “where do you solve your health problems?” is answered as public university hospital by 95 percent, and first step health centers by 5 percent.



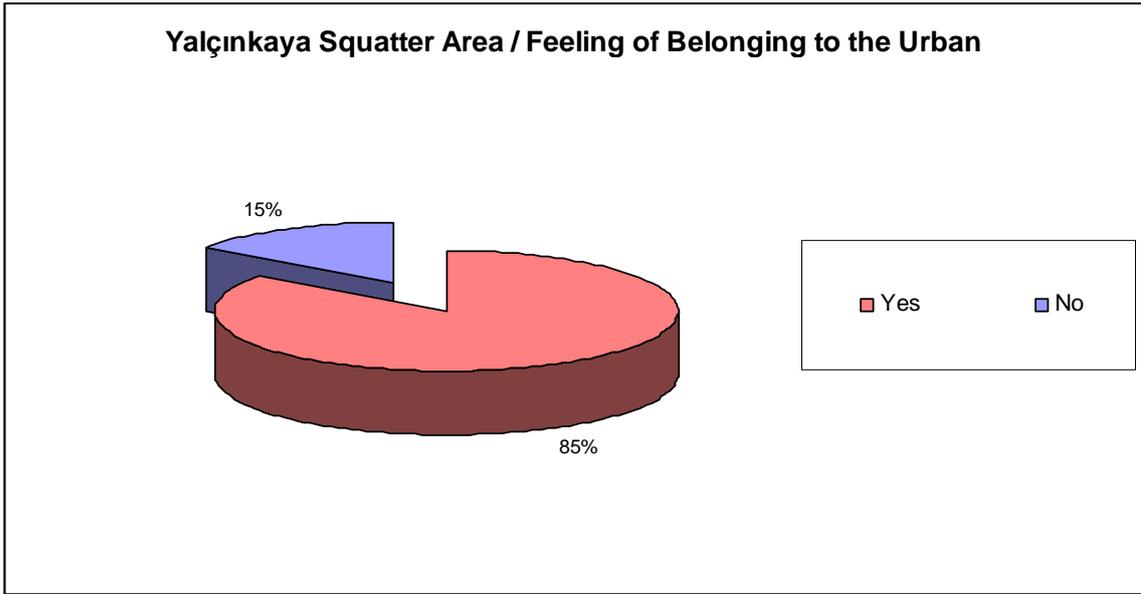
**Chart 14:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / First Step Healthcare Services (%)

While any place is specified for socialization with friends, the question of “where do you prefer for recreational walking in the evening?” is answered as “I don’t” by 87 percent. Only 13 percent visit Kale (the Castle of Ankara) and nearby park areas.



**Chart 15:** Yalinkaya Squatter Area / Walking Facility Preferences (%)

The question of “do you have feeling of urban belonging?” is answered 15 percent as “yes” and 85 percent as “no”.

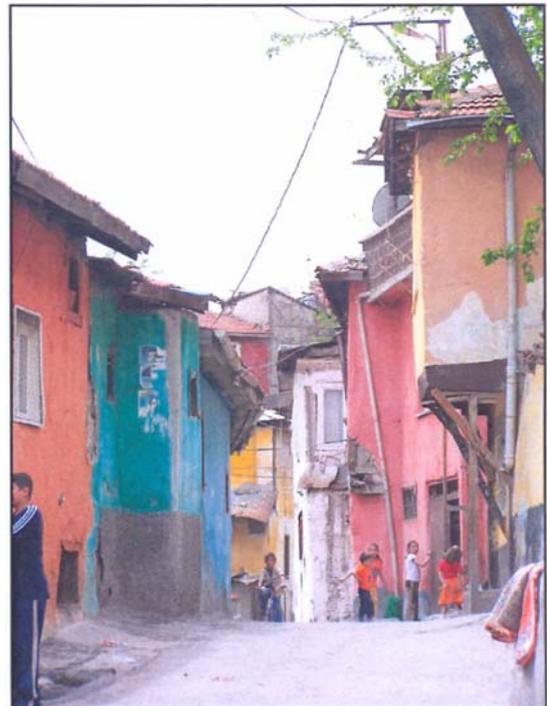


**Chart 16:** Yalçinkaya Squatter Area / Feeling of Belonging to the Urban (%)

## 5. ASSESSMENT and CONCLUSION

It is a common knowledge that squatter areas, which are on the horns of dilemma between urban and rural lifestyle, display a transitional characteristic between rural and urban areas.

Examining Yalçinkaya Quarter enables the observation of the situation from an objective perspective. We can assert that the



determining factor behind the low rates in respect of benefiting from urban services in spite of the proximity of the area to the old city center and

promenades in the vicinity is the fact that this area is settled by low income groups. Yet, another essential point is the prevailing low awareness level in the area. The low level of urban life awareness and urban environment perception has considerable impact on the low usage of these promenades located within the walking distance.

It is noticed that fellow townsman relationships in the region and the unity fed with the spirit of coming from the same hometown remain strong due to the unemployment and hard living conditions in the area. Living in a closed environment for 20-30 years corresponds to the community relations. Drawing upon the observations, surveys and interviews performed in the area, it is possible to state that the structure shaped on the basis of belonging to the same hometown has preserved its nature as the area is the poorest squatter area in Ankara. When individuals/families improve their economic conditions, they designate another squatter area while the previous area remains as a living space for new migrants with inefficient economic conditions. As the ratio of dwellers in the area working in the public sector does not exceed 3%-4% and the remaining labour force is engaged in the shadow sector such as pedlar's trade, *dolmuř* driving and scrap collection, it is observed that dwellers are leading a poorer life than those living in squatter areas of Dikmen, Keioren and Mamak.

Yalinkaya Quarter and its vicinity, located near the historic city center and settled by first migrants constituting the poorest section of Ankara, have started to become an "attraction center" for rent-seeking circles owing to various economic reasons.

Furthermore, it can be stated that the area includes a “transitional region” in addition to its own physical condition. In other words, neither the quarter nor its vicinity is connected to the luxury housing areas and business centers. Yalınkaya Quarter is predominantly settled by low-income groups while Demırlıbahe- Dikimevi region accommodates lower-middle and middle income groups and Kurtuluş-Kolej region is occupied by houses intended for middle and upper-middle income groups.

The woman population in the region can be classified as first and second generation. Women within the first generation are in-house workers whose living spaces are limited to the borders of the neighbourhood. The latter generation is mostly employed in works not requiring superior skills in Ulus and in the vicinity, and thus their living spaces expand to further boundaries. In this way, woman population in this section of the city finds an opportunity to make social and economic comparison with its own reality.



Today, the increase in the number of tenants in the area mostly populated by landlords proves that the area in question remains as the first grade housing area for rural to urban migrants and the poor.

The research conducted in Yalinkaya Quarter has once again demonstrated the urban poverty. The area was visited with the expectation to find a depression area (due to environmental uses); however, the team met with population, from youngest to oldest, striving to hold on life.

### **Social Aspects**



We can sum up the outcomes of surveys, observations and interviews conducted in Yalinkaya

*Quarter in social terms as follows:*

While the ratio of benefiting from urban services is high, the usage of urban areas remains low.

The population has drifted away from rural life; however, integration with urban life was unaccomplished.

It is observed that woman population has increasingly started to go beyond the house borders as a result of participation to the economic activities.

While the ratio of benefiting from urban services is high, the usage of urban areas remains low.

Getting out of undeclared work forms seems to be impossible regardless the higher education level of the second and third generation in the area in comparison to the first generation.

### **Physical Aspects**

The area has lower life quality than squatter areas located in Dikmen and Mamak.

The main reason behind benefiting from services is the position of the area, in spatial terms, in the city centre.

The location of the settlement on an incline and its centric position within the city in the present time demonstrate the transformation facility of the area.



### **Economic Aspects**

Low housing prices and rents as well as the proximity of the area to business spaces (namely to *dolmus* stations in Ulus or Bentderesi) provide the main reasons behind the preference of the area by squatter dwellers pertaining to low-income groups.

It is observed that women of the second generation go beyond the house borders and are employed in markets, shops etc in the vicinity.

To conclude, Yalinkaya Quarter within the Altındağ District borders in Ankara Province remains among the first squatter areas in Ankara. Notwithstanding the less frequented rural characteristics therein, the relation between individuals and their way of establishing relations with the surrounding do not display an urban characteristic. Benefiting from urban services is related to its location within the city center. The labour force is employed in the shadow sector. The second and third generation benefit from the educational services in higher proportions.

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## 8. ANNEX

### 8.1. Questionnaire

#### **Dwelling and Household Questions**

1. Number of families in the household
2. Evaluation of household and family members:  
Age,  
Place of Birth,  
The last occupation,  
Full time, part-time or temporary  
State of social security  
Secondary occupation (if available)  
Reasons for living in this house?
3. In what way did you buy or rent this house?
4. Why did you prefer this quarter?
5. How many years have you been living in this house?
6. How many years have you been living in this quarter?

#### **Occupational Life and Economic Situation**

7. When did you begin to occupational life and what was your age?
8. Do you get your salary regularly?
9. What is your mode of transportation for job journey and how long does it take?

Dou you have private car?

10. If you are a tenant what is the amount of monthly rent of your house?
11. If you have a property how did you get/buy it?
12. If you have a better economic life (e.g. better job) do you think to change your house? Which neighbourhood would you like to move?

### **Social Life**

13. What are the three most important problems in your neighbourhood area?
14. Which places are you prefer to use in the urban area? How often do you use these places?
15. Why did you migrate to Ankara?