



Socio-cultural Context of Solid Waste Collection in Gaziantep



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Abstract

The recycling and solid waste sector in Gaziantep has a multi-actor structure. Considering that the most significant cost factor in the recycling process of solid waste is the collection of waste from the source, it is evident that the most important actors in the sector are the waste collectors. When compared to other cities, the profile of collectors in Gaziantep shows similarities and differences. Collectors generally consist of Syrian migrants, particularly including groups such as the Abdals, members of desert tribes, and those who migrated from rural areas of Syria. This sector, which mostly operates informally, is further characterized by the social profiles of the collectors. These groups, who were on the margins of the social system in Syria, remained outside the standard functioning of areas such as education, economy, and politics due to their nomadic lifestyle. Engaged in similar work in Syria, these communities have brought their centuries-old nomadic traditions and independent way of life to Gaziantep. These characteristics have increased their potential for informality, leading

them to prefer solid waste collection. This situation complicates the process of establishing professional standards for both local governments and NGOs that focus on the living and working conditions of this community. Efforts to register solid waste collectors and develop professional standards create tensions with the informality rooted in these groups' cultural traditions. Therefore, the working model to be proposed for this group should be based on a hybrid approach that incorporates both formal registration and freelance work.

Keywords

Solid Waste, Recycling, Informality, Gender of Collecting, Syrian Migrants

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