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CITY and TERRITORY

Brewing property in one-dimensional city? Exploring Starbucks' locational strategies-impacts in the case of Izmir, Türkiye ¿Elaborando propiedad en una ciudad unidimensional? Explorando las estrategias de ubicación e impactos de Starbucks en el caso de Esmirna, Turquía

14

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ABSTRACT The article examines Starbucks' locational strategies and their impact on urban spaces, drawing on Rossi's concept of the "one-dimensional city." As global brands increasingly shape urban environments, three key effects emerge: rising property prices near stores, the concentration of locations in malls, transit hubs, and walkable areas, and alignment with urban landscapes standardized by major transportation infrastructure decisions. Similar to many cities in the Global South, Starbucks in İzmir functions both as a product and a driver of property-driven, rent-seeking urban development. Empirical evidence reveals that its locational strategies enhance accessibility, increase property values, and reshape the built environment. Through spatial analysis, the article examines Starbucks locations within a walkability and accessibility framework, highlighting their concentration in high-value districts with strong public transit connections. This research underscores how global brands reinforce socio-economic divides, transform urban spaces, and promote consumption-driven urbanization through their integration into global capitalism and real estate dynamics.

RESUMEN El artículo examina las estrategias de localización de Starbucks y su impacto en los espacios urbanos, a partir del concepto de la "ciudad unidimensional" de Rossi. A medida que las marcas globales moldean cada vez más los entornos urbanos, emergen tres efectos clave: aumento de los precios de las propiedades cerca de las tiendas, concentración de locales en centros comerciales, nodos de transporte y zonas caminables, y alineación con paisajes urbanos estandarizados por decisiones relacionadas con grandes infraestructuras de transporte. Al igual que en muchas ciudades del Sur Global, Starbucks en İzmir funciona como producto y motor de un desarrollo urbano impulsado por la renta y la especulación inmobiliaria. La evidencia empírica revela que sus estrategias de localización mejoran la accesibilidad, incrementan el valor de las propiedades y transforman el entorno construido. A través de un análisis espacial, se estudian las ubicaciones de Starbucks en un marco de caminabilidad y accesibilidad, destacando su concentración en distritos de alto valor con buenas conexiones de transporte público. Se resalta cómo las marcas globales refuerzan las divisiones socioeconómicas, transforman los espacios urbanos y promueven una urbanización orientada al consumo, enmarcada en la lógica del capitalismo global y la dinámica inmobiliaria.

1. Introduction

The urban diffusions of global brands such as McDonald's, Disneyland, and Starbucks have raised concerns over the homogenization of urban environments and the principles of justice and equity in urban governance and planning regulations. On the one hand, the global diffusion of such powerful brands exacerbates existing socio-spatial injustices by fueling rentier capitalist logic behind the increasing property prices (Gillespie and Mwau, 2024); on the other hand, they homogenize the socio-cultural tendencies in the production of the built environment, where local cultural identities are progressively overtaken by globally standardized consumption habits (Rossi, 2016). Urban environments are no longer shaped solely by local economic and social factors. However, they are also profoundly impacted by global capital, resulting in substantial changes in infrastructure, property values, and social habits (Smiley and Emerson, 2018). As Rossi (2016) insightfully puts forward, a "one-dimensional city" emerges due to the global functioning of powerful brands.

In the context of the one-dimensional city, Starbucks could be studied as the representative of a dominant global brand, shifting patterns of urban investments and triggering the underlying logic of capitalist urbanization. The rapid expansion of Starbucks throughout the world over the course of the past century has brought attention to the company's significant spatial and economic effects on urban environments (for example, Simon, 2009; Donner and Loh, 2019; Gallagher, 2022). Its diffusion is especially remarkable in rapidly urbanized geographies of the global South, such as the Middle East and Asian countries. Starbucks has impacted consumption patterns remarkably, changed urban environments, and greatly influenced land markets in such countries, including Türkiye.

In metropolitan cities of Türkiye, such as Izmir, the rising popularity of Starbucks reflects broader neoliberal urban development trends. Starbucks stores in Izmir are deliberately positioned in locations characterized by strong pedestrian flow and well-developed public transportation infrastructure. By investigating the case of Izmir, we argue that Starbucksization promotes a homogenized mode of producing urban space; (1) dramatically triggers property prices in the vicinity of the stores, and (2) dominates similar store location logics (in the malls, on the main transportation axes or in walkable neighborhoods), and lastly (3) standardizes urban environments fostered by and influenced on the main transportation infrastructure decisions. Thus, by arguing a dominant logic of producing space in line with the concept of one-dimensional city, we attempt to pose a threefold analytical framework of neoliberal and property driven urban development.

Although there has been much emphasis on the economic and socio-cultural impacts of global brands in cities, there is comparatively less evidence of their influence on property markets, urban transportation, spatial transformation. Thus, the article provides research evidence to analyze the role of Starbucks by drawing on three significant factors: property prices, urban transportation, and the standardization of urban environments. The crucial role of this study is in its capacity to provide a sophisticated comprehension of the position that global brands play in diffusing the neoliberal logic of urban development.

Through geographical analyses on Starbucks and its impacts on property prices, the article points out that the diffusion of global capitalist brands/companies is related to the urban policies and practices in cities analyzed. The article consists of five main sections. The theoretical section examines the concept of the one-dimensional city, its relationship with the global companies/brands, neoliberal policies, and widespread influence over the world geography. In the research method section, we described the content and limits of the research findings in line with the methodological details and justifications. In the case study part, the article manifests a critical evaluation of Starbucks stores' multiple impacts on the production of urban spaces in Izmir. In the conclusion, we present a broader discussion over the main arguments of the article.

2. New theoretical orientations? From one-dimensional man to one-dimensional city

In the last four decades of the conflict-laden history of neoliberalism, one can easily observe that hegemonic narratives, global brands, and multinational companies have always been at the heart of the capitalist urbanization processes. Marcuse (1964/1991) was the first great thinker in the Frankfurt School's analysis of globalization, stating that the evolution of "advanced industrial society" has resulted in the "enslavement" of individuals, rendering them incapable of mounting a revolt. Marcuse (1991) sheds light on how advanced capitalism cultivates a one-dimensional mode of thinking and existence, concealing inherent contradictions and suppressing revolutionary possibilities in the name of "freedom" and "satisfaction" derived from consumerism. As Rossi (2016) clearly identified in his thought-provoking book, this concept resonates with Lukács' (1999) theory of reification and Adorno's (2004) critique of exchange value, which both underscores how capitalism standardizes experiences and transforms culture into commodities.

According to Marcuse (1991), the one-dimensionality of capitalist production not only negatively influences our cognitive abilities but also limits our ability to see other possible options for societal change. That is, the one-dimensional individual is not only limited to a life dictated by labor, production, and mere survival but, more significantly, lacks the capacity to envision a path beyond this constrained existence. This incapacity extends to the realm of political thought, where ideas that challenge the existing societal structure are rendered inaccessible for critique, reform, and their reflection on urban environments.

Rossi (2016) insightfully uncovered how the transition from Marcuse's concept of the "One-dimensional Man" (1991) to the contemporary notion of the "One-dimensional City" signifies a profound evolution in our understanding of capitalist societies. Throughout the 1990s to the present, critical scholars of sociology and political economy revisited these notions by drawing on the rise of consumer culture, the embodiment of commodification, and the dominance of globalization (for example, Ritzer, 1983; Lefebvre; 1996; Harvey, 2007; Ansenberg, 2024). These cornerstones of the critical urban perspectives paved the way for a deeper understanding of how technical progress and global innovations led to a standardized global consumption pattern in the capitalist city.

This one-dimensionality has become dominant in cities as well through global brands/companies (Rossi, 2016; Och and Pfau-Effinger, 2022). This globalized hegemonic process encompasses the standardization of lifestyles, especially in the consumption domain, which is driven by the so-called implosion-explosion of the capitalist urban development processes (Brenner and Schmid, 2015; Brenner, 2014). For example, Rogers and Koh (2017), reflecting on real estate investments in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Canada, demonstrate how foreign investment accelerates this standardization by prioritizing profitability over community needs. Another example is reflected by Sigler and Wachsmuth (2016), underscoring how worldwide gentrification in Panama's Casco Antiguo transformed previous city centers into global enclaves, similar to Marcuse's idea of one-dimensionality.

Urban development and transformation processes have a pivotal role in shaping a one-dimensional city, functioning not just as mere receptacles of pre-existing societal phenomena but as dynamic and contested arenas where globalizing social relations are actively produced. The capitalist modes of production-consumption lead to the urban spaces that facilitate the perpetuation of capitalist values, thereby reinforcing the one-dimensionality of both individual and collective life (Rossi, 2016; Nam and Lee, 2023; Martinez et. al., 2024). Namely, global capitalism could only exist and reach its potential by producing urban spaces (Lefebvre, 1996, 1991).

In the one-dimensional city of the global capitalist system, urban spaces not only provide new sites for capital accumulation opportunities to market forces, but they also become strategic political terrains upon which deepening class conflicts and socio-spatial injustices have been kept under control by the system (Harvey, 2002; Bayırbağ and Penpecioğlu, 2017; Ferretti-Ramoss, 2024). The rise of McDonaldization and its global expansion between the period 1960s-1990s, the opening of Disneylands across different continents in the 1980s-1990s, and lastly, the opening of Guggenheim Museums in diverse countries since the 2000s after the broadly known "Bilbao Effect," have all indicates how global market forces attempt to temporarily resolve the crisis of the global capitalist system (Rossi, 2016). It means that the opening of these global fast food chain restaurants, global entertainment centers, and museums are urban homogenizing models produced to contain social discontents caused by crises in capital accumulation and class inequalities (Tarmidi, et al., 2023). The following section elucidates this contested and politico-historical process by reflecting on the concept of McDonaldization and establishing analytical links with the concept of Starbucksization (Ritzer, 1983; Rossi, 2016).

2.1. Starbucksization: towards a new McDonaldization or more?

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the 1990s symbolized the beginning of globalization, characterized by the emergence of global consumption trends and neoliberal economic policies. McDonald's, as a global fast-food franchise, became emblematic of this period, symbolizing not only the proliferation of Western culture but also the rationalization of urban consumption by means of calculability, efficiency, predictability, and control (Ritzer, 1983). Urban development and lifestyles were affected from these changes, and McDonald's became a model of urban neoliberalization that linked local adaptations with global consumerism.

Just like McDonalds, after decades, Starbucks has emerged as a symbol of the greedy pleasures, exploitative motives, and cultural standardization associated with the expansion of corporate capitalism on a global scale, as argued by social critics (Falk, 1999; Klein, 1999; Jiang and Manfredini, 2021). The reach of Starbucks is genuinely international, sourcing its coffee from South and Central America, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Founded in Seattle in 1972, Starbucks expanded throughout the U.S. and Canada by the 1990s, and by the early 2000s, it had become a global enterprise by embedding itself into coffee culture across six continents.
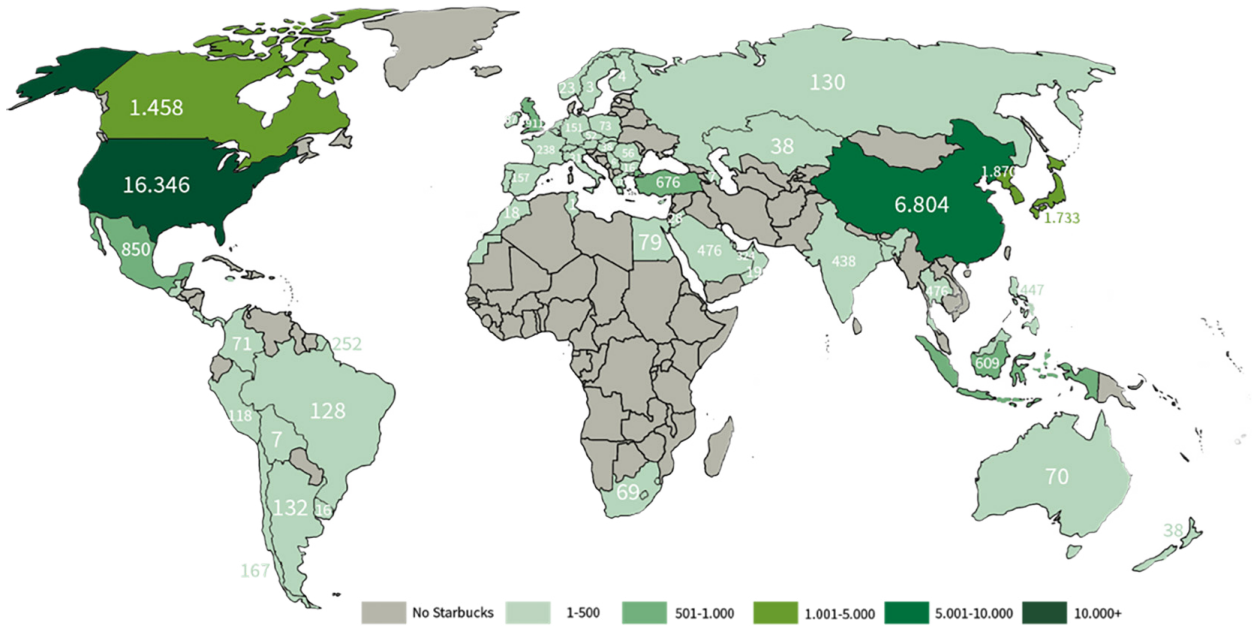
Figure 1: Number of Starbucks Stores in the World. Authors based on Statista.com and Knoema.com, (2024)

Starbucks' global strategy and impact on urban culture extend beyond mere coffee service. Its store placement aims to provide convenient customer access, reinforcing its presence in urban areas and becoming a popular spot for locals and tourists (Reddan, 2017). The uniformity of Starbucks stores worldwide contributes to a monotype atmosphere, delivering standardized coffee experiences (Rosenberg et al., 2018). Furthermore, Starbucks logo on a white cup serves as a silent communication tool among customers, indicating a shared sense of community and urban taste (Simon, 2009; Akarçay, 2012). For instance, the standardization and establishment of shared spaces can be seen in the growth of McDonald's in Hong Kong, where the franchise transformed into a consumer center and a place for varied social interactions, responding to the dynamics of urban life (Caro, 2018). However, Starbucks also significantly transforms the urban environment by influencing mobility patterns, street aesthetics, and the socio-spatial organization of public spaces.

Starbucks resembles the first wave of neo-liberalization principles and the functioning of McDonaldization, as described by sociologist George Ritzer (1983; 1993). The concept of "Starbucksization" refers to the homogenizing influence of Starbucks on global culture and is utilized by transnational corporations to penetrate local traditions (Falk, 1999; Ritzer, 1983). From a critical standpoint, it could be argued that Starbucks exhibits many of the dominant characteristics associated with McDonald's, such as homogeneity, disenchantment, and dehumanization. Starbucks also contributes to cultural and social homogenization in the capitalist functioning of the contemporary city. All these aspects signify a "Starbucks Effect" over the (re) production of urban spaces in today's contemporary cities. For example, Jiang and Manfredini (2021) illustrate that Starbucks in urban China operates as a simulation of the domestic sphere, creating familiar, hyperreal spaces that transform social practices and privatize the public domain.

Starbucks Effect is not uniform, rather it is varied and context-dependent, yet producing certain consistent impacts. Several studies indicate that there is a correlation between the Starbucks store locations and increasing property values (Donner and Loh, 2019; Gallagher, 2022; Choi et. al., 2024). For instance, research on Zillow indicates that houses close to a Starbucks coffee shop typically see value appreciation more quickly than others; between 1997 and 2014, the value of houses

near a Starbucks increased by an average of 96%, in comparison to 65% for all U.S. properties (Rascoff and Humphries, 2015). However, it should be noted that this analytical focus on the impacts/correlations does not fully explain the deep-rooted causal relations behind the dominance of the global brands in the production of space in diverse contexts of many cities. In his own words, "Starbucks is both the cause and the effect", a complicated phenomenon in the property driven urban development (Rascoff and Humphries, 2015).

It is crucial to acknowledge that the Starbucks Effect is not without its obstacles, notably regarding gentrification. Starbucks' expansion into gentrifying districts enhances these areas' perceived quality and desirability (Chang and Spierings, 2023). More specifically, the standardized design and atmosphere of the Starbucks stores produce a sense of familiarity and convenience, which supports the neighborhood's perception as an attractive and pleasant neighborhood. Gentrification, marked by socio-economic transformations in neighborhoods, frequently coincides with the proliferation of Starbucks and other high-end enterprises (Petrovici and Bejinariu, 2023). As illustrated by Marasco's (2022) observations in Istanbul, the rapid proliferation of coffee shops contributes to gentrification which pricing out vulnerable groups — a process that, critics argue, accelerates the displacement of long-term residents and small local businesses amid rising property values and living costs (Kasperkevic, 2015; Fleisher, 2018; Añaños, 2020; Ansenberg, 2024).

In conclusion, the article does not intend to provide all causal relations behind the Starbucks Effect in the capitalist production of urban space, rather it focuses on its impacts on property prices and attempts to reveal how this multi-dimensional and complicated effect influences urban (re)development trends in the case of Izmir. Thus, the Starbucks Effect is investigated within the limited empirical framework of the article, with reference to the case of Izmir, and by uncovering locational strategies-impacts in this case (stores' location within the transportation network, in the shopping centers or in the main commercial avenues; their proximity to public squares, parks, open and green spaces; their impacts over property prices etc.), the article highlights the dominant locational logic of a global brand and its urban impacts in one case, the city of Izmir. The next sections critically elaborate the Starbucks Effect in the case study.
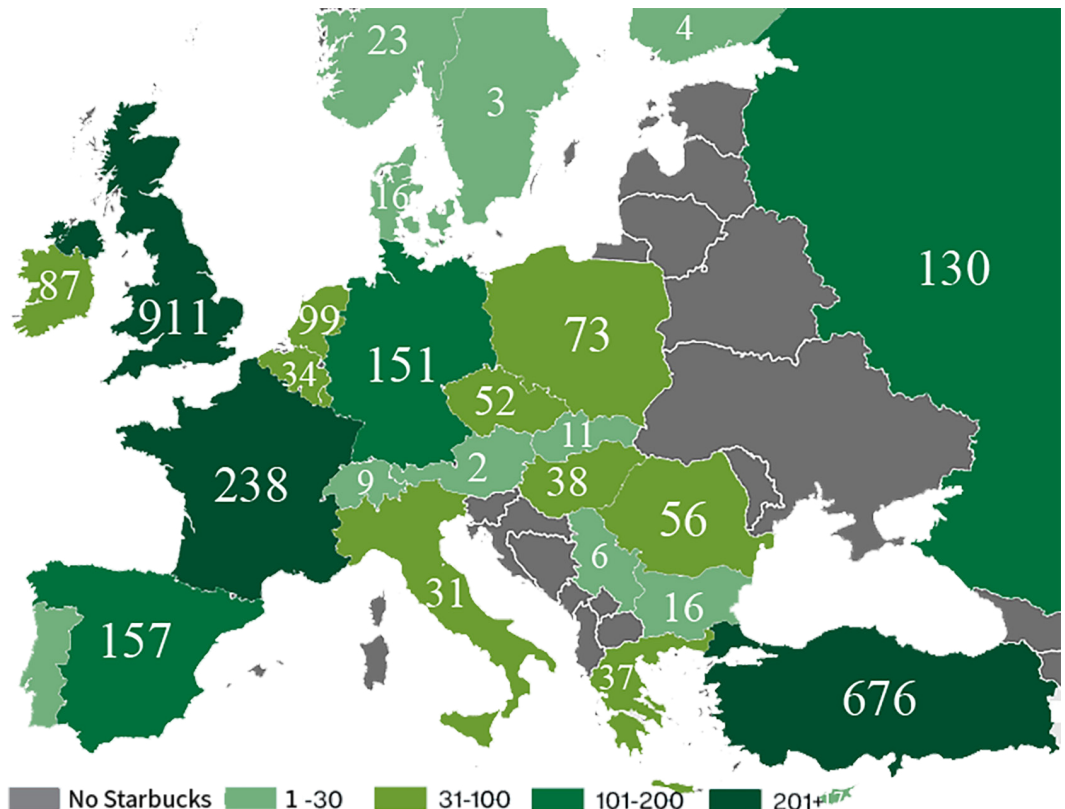

Figure 2: Number of Starbucks Stores in European Countries Authors based on Statista.com, (2024)

3. Methods

An increasing number of coffee shops, especially third-wave cafes, now offer coffee at prices that are often double those of chain brands. Starbucks, which ranks as the second most valuable brand globally after McDonald's, has an estimated brand value of $47,8 billion (Kantar BrandZ, 2024). According to various sources (Starbucks Annual Report, 2023; Statista, 2023; Knoema, 2023), Starbucks operates over 33,833 stores in 80 countries. The United States, where Starbucks originated, has approximately 16,000 stores, followed by China with 6,804 locations. Additionally, as illustrated in Figure 1, it has over 400 stores in countries such as India, Thailand, and Indonesia. It also has over 1,000 stores in Asian countries such as Korea and Japan.

The 2023 graph illustrates the number of Starbucks stores in European countries; Türkiye, with 676 stores, is ranked just after the U.K. (911), exceeding not only France (238) and Spain (157). In Türkiye, Starbucks opened its first store on Bağdat Street in Istanbul in 2003, and the company has expanded to 676 stores as of May 2023 (Figure 2).
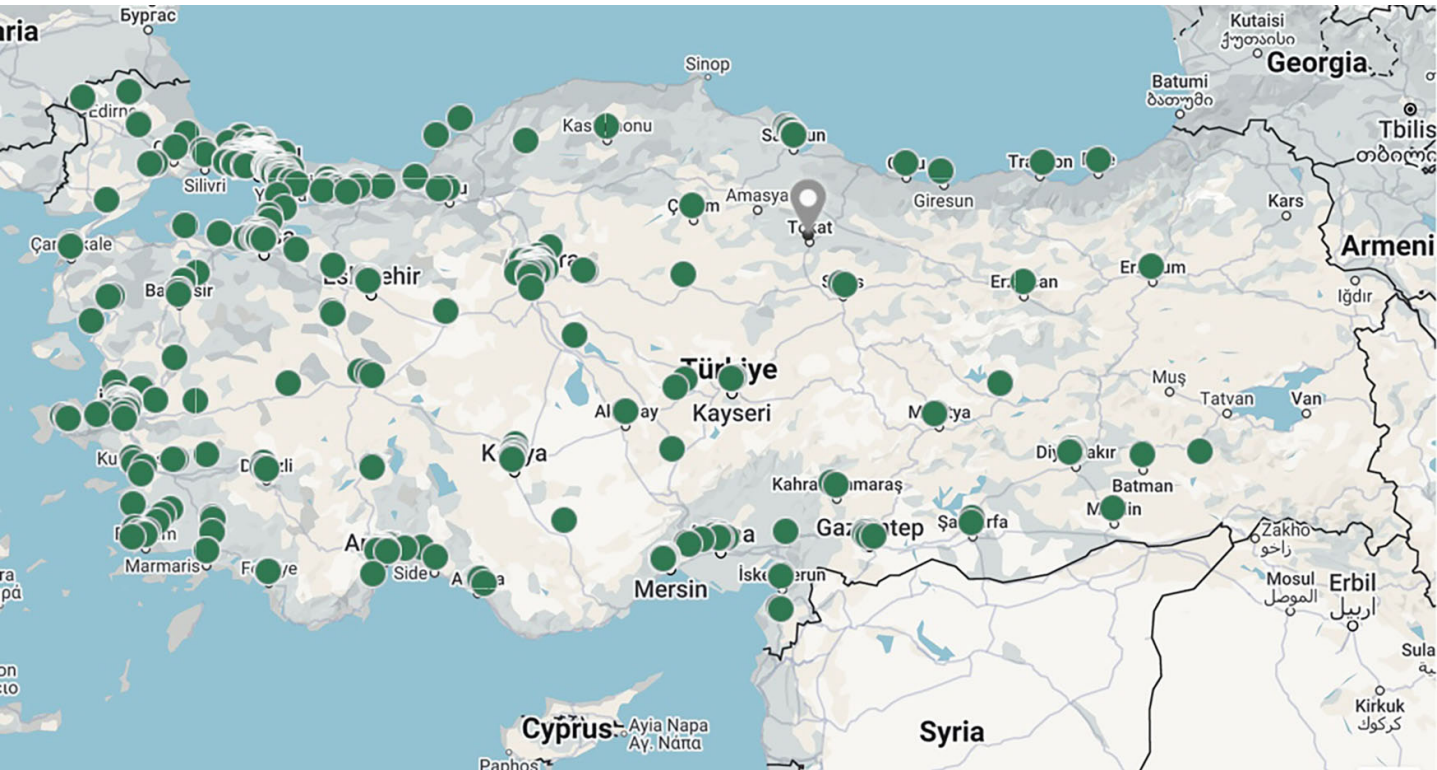
For example, although being influenced by Italian culture, Italy managed to maintain its position with a surprisingly minimal number of stores, limited to 31. However, in Türkiye, the rapid proliferation of Starbucks stores — in contrast to Italy's limited integration and Germany's moderate expansion —has significantly contributed to both cultural and urban fields, mainly through the opening of numerous stores in densely populated urban areas.

In Türkiye, the geographic distribution of Starbucks locations demonstrates the brand's penetration of urban areas (Figure 3). While Istanbul and Ankara predictably have a greater number of Starbucks stores, similar to high-density cities like London or Paris, the significant rise in property prices in Izmir mirrors urban trends seen in emerging metropolises, making it a noteworthy case study (Table 1).

Name of the City (in an alphabetical order)	Adana	Ankara	Antalya	Bursa	İstanbul	İzmir
Number of Starbucks Stores	20	80	32	34	286	58

Table 1: Cities with 20+ Starbuck Stores in Türkiye. Authors based on starbucks.com.tr, (2025)

Figure 3: Starbucks Stores in Türkiye. Starbucks.com.tr, 2025

Izmir, one of the cities with the highest Starbucks density, stands out in this context. Table 2 shows the yearly increase in Starbucks stores, particularly since 2017. Although growth paused during the COVID-19 pandemic, new store openings have resumed. The period from 2019 to 2024 was chosen as it reflects key political and economic conditions, including the pandemic, high inflation, and economic instability in Türkiye. This timeframe captures both the pandemic's short-term effects and the broader shifts in property markets and urban development trends.

The research aims to uncover the factors driving property price increases around Starbucks locations and their potential consequences, specifically in the case of Izmir, whose rapid urban development, remarkable urban transformation, rising property values, and dominant gentrification tendencies make it an ideal context to explore such influences.

The study examines the locations of Starbucks stores in Izmir, their opening years, their site selection, and property price increases in their immediate surroundings. First, data containing the geographical coordinates of all 46 Starbucks stores in the city as of May 2023 was obtained from the Starbucks Türkiye website (www.starbucks.com. tr/stores). In addition to coordinates, each store's location was classified based on whether it was inside or outside a shopping mall, in the university, gas station, or airport. Given Starbucks' general site selection preferences, stores not located on the street were excluded from the analysis, as their locations that offer high pedestrian traffic and purchasing power- are assumed to have already influenced urban space through other uses like malls, gas station, and university presence. Consequently, the study focuses on the 26 stores located on the street, which are with green symbols on the map (Figure 4).

In the literature, walking distance is usually defined as 400-800 meters (approximately 5-10 minutes' walk) (Perry, 1929; Gehl, 1980, 2010; Hass-Klau, 2015); therefore, the 800-meter walking distance is used as a method to understand trends in people's use of these spaces and the transformation of urban space. Further, this metric aligns with İzmir's urban patterns, where mixed-use neighborhoods and public spaces encourage walking as a primary mode of transport. Therefore, in this study 800-meter buffer allows for a systematic evaluation of Starbucks' influence on local property values,

social interactions and urban transformations (Figure 5). Fourthly, it was checked whether there are stops of public transport lines, especially rail systems such as metro and tram, within the buffer zone to examine how these accessibility features influence Starbucks' location choices and enhance walkability and area desirability. In addition to public transport stops, each buffer zone's Walk Score was calculated (www.walkscore.com). This website provides a standardized measure and calculates a walkability score for any address based on the distance to nearby amenities such as grocery stores, schools, parks, restaurants, and public transit.

For each Starbucks buffer zone, property values (in T.L. per square meter) were obtained from the Endeksa, a pioneering real estate platform producing data in Türkiye (https://www.endeksa. com/tr/evimin-degeri/ogren). Then, property listings within the buffer zones were reviewed to validate the data. The research findings reveal the increase in property prices over a 5-year period (between 2019 and 2024) to assess changes in the market-driven urban development trends.

To assess whether Starbucks locations are associated with higher property values, a spatial analysis was conducted using GIS mapping to identify spatial correlations between store locations, public transportation access, urban public areas and facilities (including public squares, public parks, open and green spaces, cultural and artistic activity centers, and other types of recreational spaces).

4. Results

4.1. Starbucks brewing not only coffee but also property

First, the annual average changes in property prices between 2019 and 2024 in each 800-m buffer zone and the urban environment around Starbucks with the highest annual average changes were examined. It is seen that Starbucks stores are concentrated in the coastal areas of Izmir, where urban development is also dense, namely Alsancak, Bayraklı, and Karşıyaka.

Figure 6 shows the price change in Turkish Lira per square meter on a 5-color scale, lightening from dark red to yellow, based on the formula Annual average change = Value2024-Value2019/5. Geometric Interval, i.e., mathematically defined class widths

opening_year	2006	2007	2008	2014	2015	2016	2017
number_of_stores	2	1	1	2	3	1	5
opening_year (cont.)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2024	
number_of_stores (cont.)	7	9	4	2	1	4	

Table 2: Number of Starbucks Stores in Izmir according to their opening years. Authors based on (TOBB, n.d.)
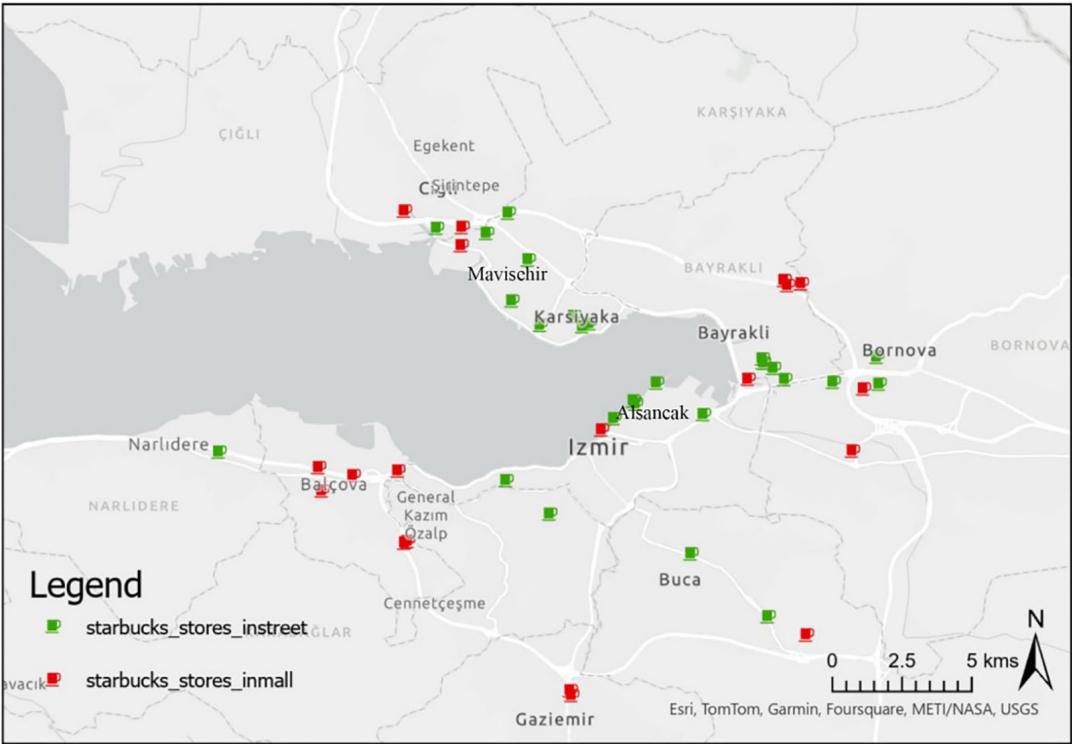
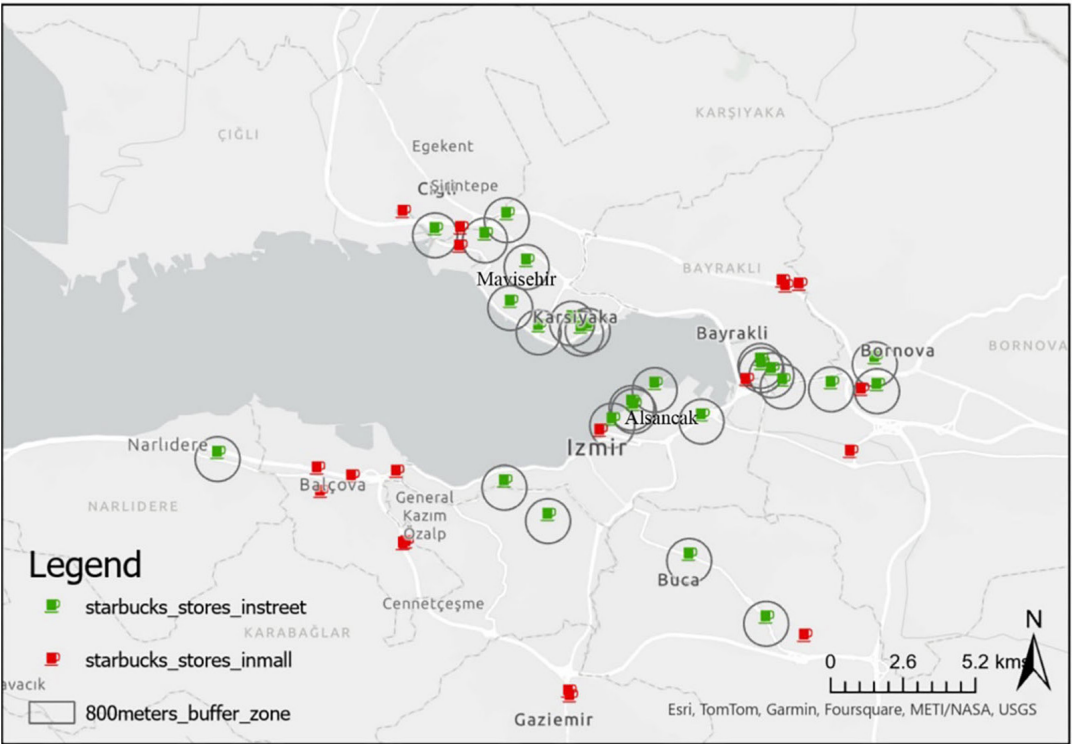Figure 4: Location of Starbucks Stores in Izmir. Created by Authors based on Starbucks.com.tr, (2024)

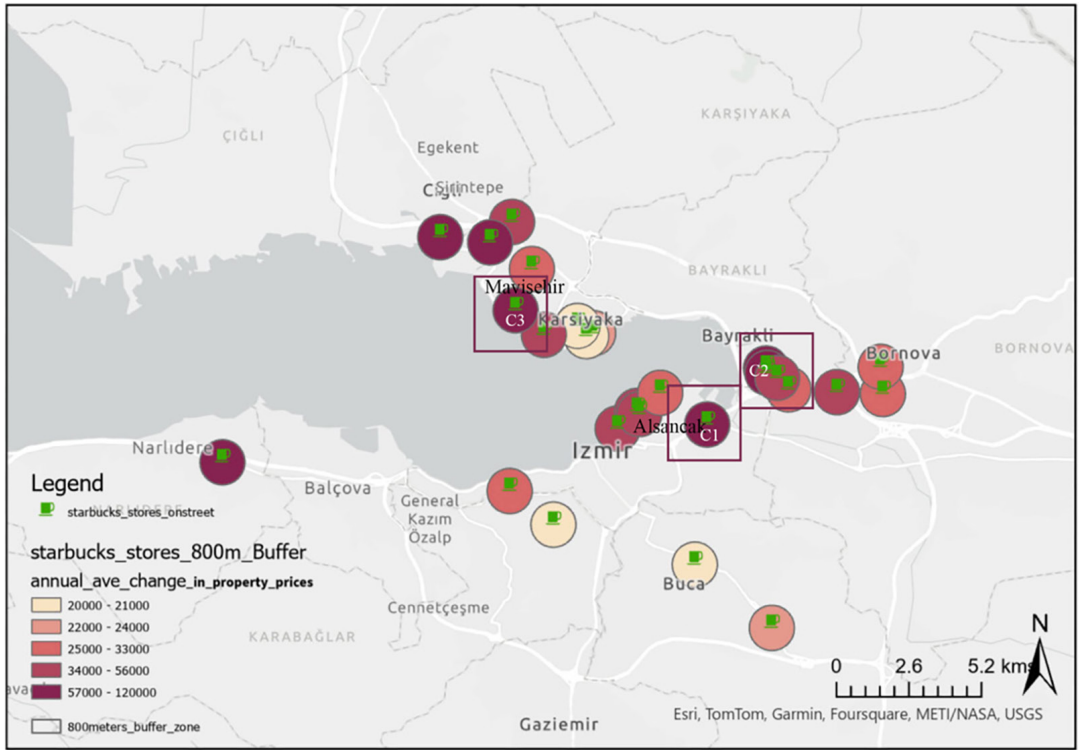Figure 5: 800 meters Walking Distance around on-street Starbucks Stores in Izmir. (2024)

Figure 6: Annual Average Property Price Change between 2019 and 2024 within the 800-meter Buffer around the on-street Starbucks Stores in Izmir.
Authors based on Endeksa.com, (2024)

based on geometric series, giving an approximately equal class width and consistent frequency of observations per class, represents the price change intervals of 20 000-21 000; 22 000-24 000; 25 000-33 000; 34 000-56 000; 57 000-120 000 m²/tl from dark to light, respectively. As a result of analysis, similar to the concentration of Starbucks locations, the highest annual property price increases are observed in the vicinity of Starbucks stores in these areas. As an example, in the Alsancak (noted C1 as Case1), the property price increased from 9,021 m²/TL in 2019 to 96,666 m²/TL in 2024; the annual average increase is 87,645 m²/T.L., i.e. an increase of 91%. In Bayraklı (noted C2), the property price increased from 6,827 m²/TL in 2019 to 64,399 m²/TL in 2024; the annual average increase is 57,572 m²/T.L., or 89%. Moreover, finally, in Karşıyaka (noted C3), the property price increased from 6,485 m²/TL in 2019 to 74,266 m²/TL in 2024; the annual average increase is 67,781 m²/T.L., or 91%.

Table 3 details the 5-year property price booming of the 3 case areas and the built environment around the Starbucks in the area. The analysis reveals significant variations in the spatial context of the case areas (C1, C2, and C3), each with distinct urban characteristics influencing property prices. Case 1 (C1) in Alsancak and Case 2 (C2) in Bayraklı are in n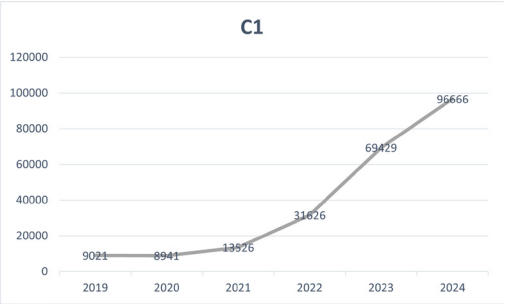ewly developed and rapidly transforming urban areas. These areas are characterized by high-rise residential developments and substantial increases in property prices, reflecting their attractiveness for new investments and urban expansion. The concentration of Starbucks locations in these areas correlates with the high annual property price increases observed, reinforcing the notion that the presence of global brands accelerates property value appreciation in such emerging urban zones.

In contrast, Case 3 (C3) in Karşıyaka, while also exhibiting high property prices, differs in its urban setting. C3 is located on a pedestrianized commercial street, which is more established and actively used by residents and visitors. The area benefits from a public transportation line directly in front of the site, contributing to its accessibility. Additionally, C3 is surrounded by a higher density of activity spaces, including shops, cafes, and cultural venues, which distinguishes it from the newer, high-rise-dominated environments of C1 and C2. This unique setting suggests that while Starbucks' presence correlates with high property prices, the urban context—such as pedestrianization, public transport availability, and the concentration of activity spaces—also plays a crucial role in shaping the area's real estate dynamics. Briefly, within the scope of this study, based on the field observations made in the case areas and the annual increase
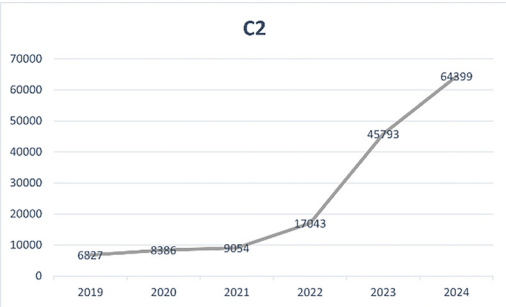
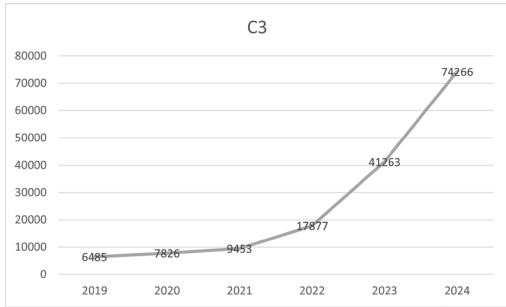| Property Price Change in 5 Years	Urban Development around the Starbucks Store
C1: Alsancak	
C2: Bayraklı	
C3: Karşıyaka	

Table 3: Property Price Change in 5 Years and Urban Development around the Starbucks Store for the Selected Cases. (2024)
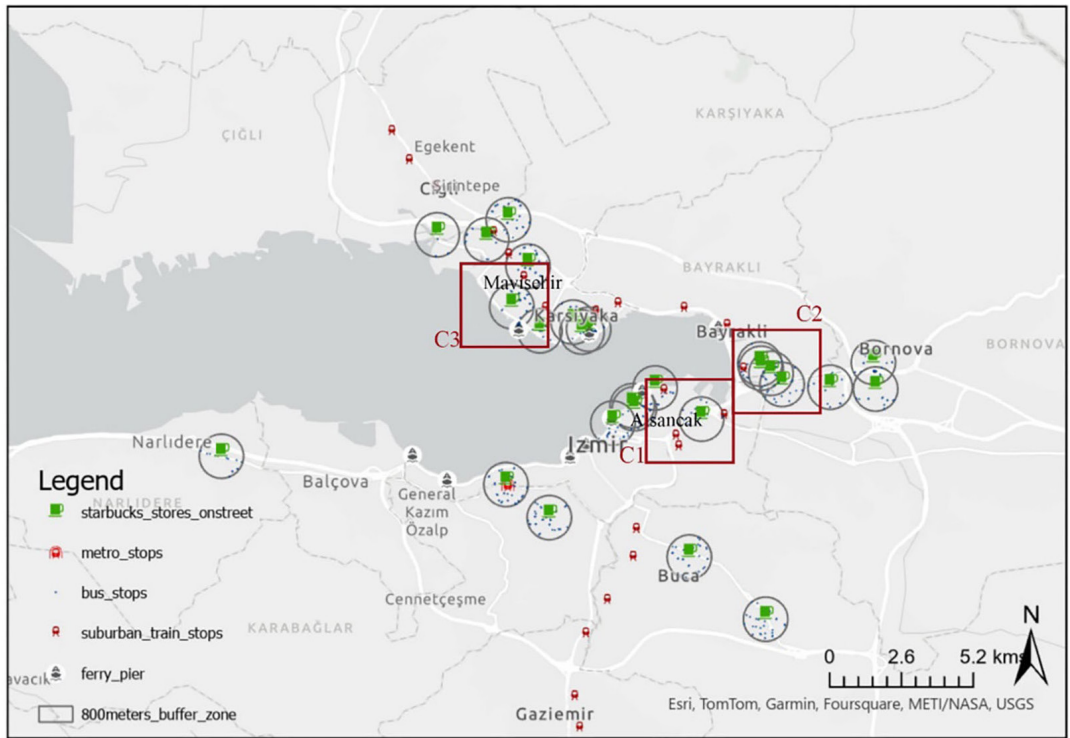
Figure 7: Accessibility Map: Public Transportation Stops within the 800-m of Starbucks locations in Izmir. Authors based on the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality dataset, (2024)

values of occupational group number 42 - that is, mainly cafes - from the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB) member information system, it can be argued that Starbucks has replaced local businesses in different parts of the city, reducing the commercial diversity in a region; in other words, creating similar cafe and restaurant environments. In addition, it is apparent that it causes the formation of the same type of housing structures (luxury housing projects in the example of Izmir) in different districts.

4.2. Accessibility and walkability: two key strategies of Starbucks locations

To examine the accessibility and relationship between urban transportation and Starbucks locations, several public transport stops, which are metro, bus, suburban train, and ferry, within the 800-meter buffer zone of on-street Starbucks stores were examined (Figure 7). When 26 zones in Izmir are examined, it is observed that there is an average of 30 public transportation stops within 800 meters of a Starbucks location. It has been revealed that there are at least 11 and at most 53 public transportation stops within buffer zones.

The zones with the fewest stops are the Starbucks stores close to the coast, such as Alsancak and Bayraklı and Mavişehir (Figure 8). In contrast, the zones with the most stops are the Starbucks stores located far from the coast, such as Karabağlar and Buca. This variation in transportation accessibility suggests that Starbucks locations closer to the coast, with high urban density, may rely less on expansive public transport networks. In contrast, stores farther inland might need an expanded transportation system to reach a broader range of consumers from commercial or residential areas that are spread out.

To examine the walkability of Starbucks locations, scores obtained from walkscore. com were added to the map. Figure 9 shows scores within the 800-m buffer zones
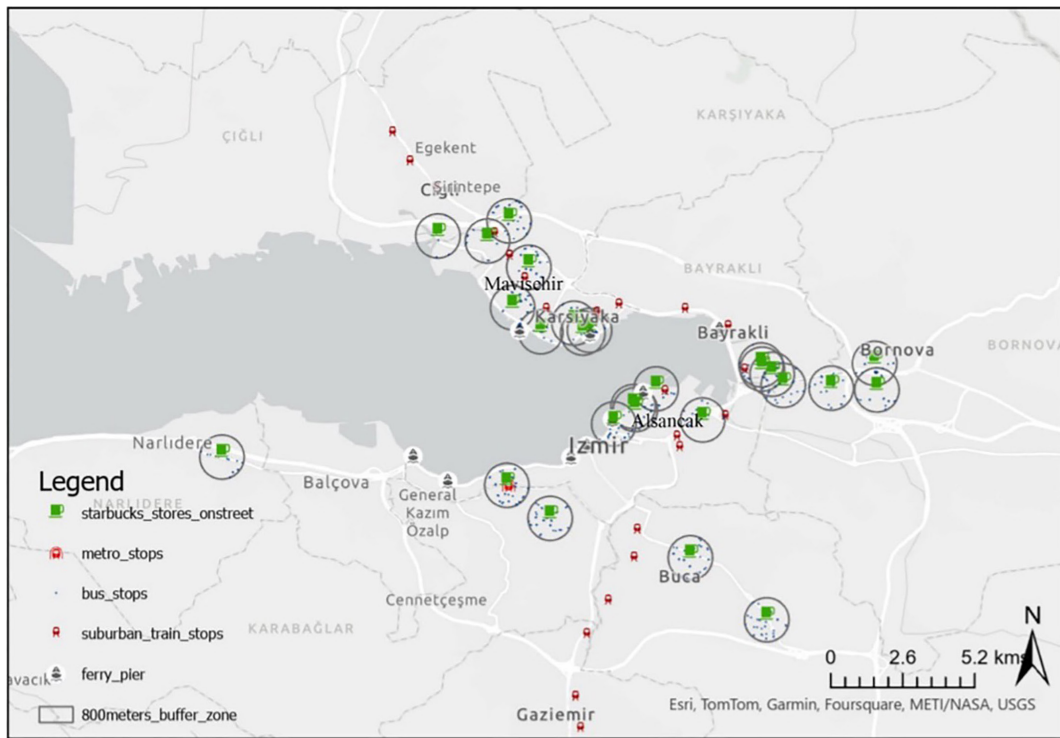
Figure 8: Zoom in Accessibility Map: Public Transportation Stops within the 800-m of Starbucks locations in Izmir. Authors based on the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality dataset, (2024)

in 5 segments with reference to the walk score website. These are, from darkest to lightest, walker's paradise for 90-100; very walkable for 70-89; somewhat walkable for 50-69; car-dependent for 25-49 and 0-24. The results show that, in line with the highly accessible Starbucks location selection criteria, 21 out of 26 on-street Starbucks stores are in the Walker's Paradise zone, i.e., have a walk score above 70. In addition, 14 out of these 21 Starbucks stores have a score between 90-100. This suggests that Starbucks prioritizes placing its stores where potential customers can get to them without using a car, which is likely to attract foot traffic in dense, populated urban areas. For example, in the C1 area, the walk score is 39, indicating that it is car-dependent due to its proximity to the main road, whereas C2 has a walk score of 92, classifying it as a walker's paradise because C2 is close to residential areas and other daily amenities. These results imply that walkability and the success of companies like Starbucks, which influence the urban environment, have a mutually reinforcing relationship. In addition to bringing in more businesses and increasing property prices, high walkability rankings make a neighborhood more desirable overall for residential and commercial use. In contrast, places that rely heavily on cars can find it difficult to develop their economy to the same extent.

Overall, the relationship between Starbucks stores, public transportation, and pedestrian mobility creates a reciprocal loop. Starbucks branches serve as strong pedestrian attractions in the locations where they are located. Starbucks stores, especially those in central areas and on busy streets, increase pedestrian density in these areas. As speople prefer these places to drink coffee, have social meetings, or work, pedestrian traffic in the area also increases. That is, stores in areas such as Alsancak, Karşıyaka, and Bayraklı in Izmir increase the already intense pedestrian movement and turn these areas into social meeting points. Such a density can benefit other commercial activities in the area, as an increased walk score increases opportunities for spontaneous shopping and social interaction. At the same time, these branches can put pressure on local governments to improve pedestrian paths and encourage alternative transportation solutions such as bicycle lanes.
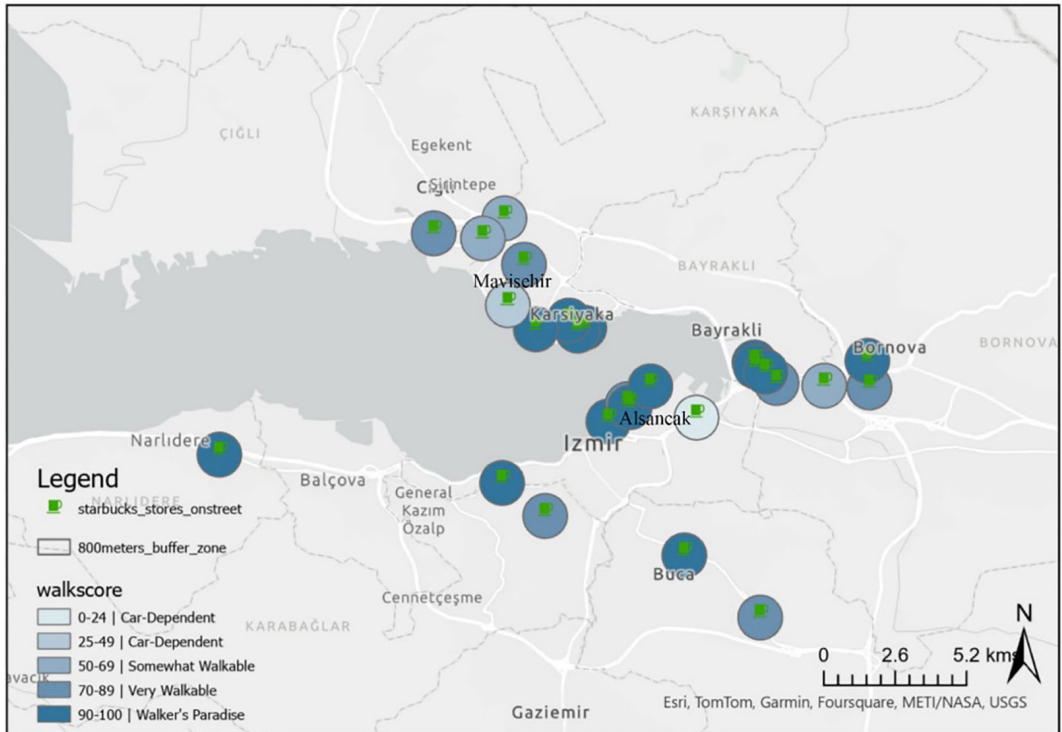
In other words, strategic locations of Starbucks can encourage more efficient use of urban transportation. Therefore, when analyzing the location of Starbucks stores in Izmir regarding accessibility factors, such as transportation networks, public transportation stops, and proximity to main arteries were considered in addition to pedestrian access.

Each factor plays an important role in Starbucks' strategic positioning within the city. In the case of Izmir, stores in central areas such as Bayraklı, Alsancak, and Karşıyaka provide direct access to transportation networks. This supports Starbucks as an easily accessible brand in the city. Starbucks stores in Izmir are generally located in areas close to the city center and main arteries, providing easy access to customers traveling by car, public transportation, and pedestrians. Areas such as Alsancak and Bayraklı, in particular, stand out as dense areas in terms of both pedestrian and vehicle traffic. The coastal side has fewer public transportation stops, indicating that Starbucks in these areas depends on high pedestrian density and central business districts. In contrast, public transit access is crucial for sustaining customer flow in locations farther from the city center. This highlights Starbucks' integration into the urban environment and its connection to transportation infrastructure. Overall, the location choices of global brands not only support their commercial success but also influence accessibility, pedestrian mobility, and the broader dynamics of urban life.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This research highlights that Starbucks, like global fast-food chains such as McDonald's, functions not only as a product supplier but also as a force in urban development. The rapid expansion of these brands, particularly in the global South—including Türkiye, Gulf countries, and several Asian nations—demonstrates their role in advancing neoliberal urban policies, despite the challenges posed by ongoing urban crises. This reflects what Brenner and Schmid (2015) define as the "implosion-explosion" mechanism of capitalist urbanization under neoliberal restructuring. The faster growth of Starbucks in these regions compared to Europe suggests that the global South has become a testing ground for the "one-dimensional city" concept. This concept refers to how global companies reshape urban spaces to align with a uniform consumer culture, altering local consumption patterns. Starbucks exemplifies how international brands diminish urban diversity by replacing local businesses,

Figure 9: Walkability Map: Walk Scores within the 800-m of Starbucks locations in Izmir. Authors based on WalkScore.com, (2024)

making cities more reflective of capitalist ideals which aligns with Lefebvre's (1996) conception of the capitalist production of space and Adorno's (2006) critique of the commodification of cultural and spatial forms. This "Starbucks Effect" drives up property values, exacerbates social and economic inequalities, and standardizes urban landscapes. Ultimately, it underscores how corporate-driven neoliberal urbanization transforms cities, prioritizing business interests over local diversity.

The global journey of Starbucks can be attributed to previous phases of globalization and the growth of the market. McDonald's experienced significant expansion from the 1960s to the 1990s, Disneyland expanded its entertainment business during the 1980s and 1990s, and the Guggenheim Museums proliferated globally after the notable "Bilbao Effect" in the early 2000s. Rossi (2016) indicated that these global expansions were urban homogenizing models that were made to cope with social unrest caused by crises in capital accumulation and growing disparities between classes. Starbucks, like McDonald's and other dominant global companies, serves an identical function in crisis containment by creating regular consumption environments in cities experiencing the challenges of neoliberal urbanization. Nonetheless, due to the intrinsically contradictory and conflict-ridden characteristics of capitalist urban development, it is uncertain that these crisis-containment strategies will be attainable over a long period (Bayırbağ and Penpecioğlu, 2017).

In the short and medium terms of the existing urban development trends, as evidenced by Izmir, Starbucks remains a significant and strategic actor in triggering and sustaining the profit-driven and market-dominated logic of capitalist urbanization. The relationship between Starbucks and neoliberal urban development might be perceived as a feature of a broader crisis-containment strategy in global capitalist urbanization that utilizes real estate speculation to generate profits and expansion. This strategy is evident in the significant rise in property prices around Starbucks stores, as demonstrated in the three cases examined in Izmir, where property values have escalated up to tenfold. The skyrocketing increase in property prices is not coincidental; instead, it is a definitive reflection of the profit-oriented dynamics of neoliberal urban development.

While the global expansion of McDonald's in the 1980s and 1990s and Starbucks in the last two share many similarities, there are also significant distinctions. Firstly, Starbucks' worldwide expansion is notably faster in late-capitalist countries of the global South. This phenomenon emphasizes the need to examine how one-dimensional cities have been shaped in the global South. Furthermore, unlike McDonald's global managerial and market-ing strategies, Starbucks employs another strategy by actively investing in urban areas and influencing property prices, eventually leading to the profit-oriented and crisis-ridden practices of neoliberal urban space production. Thus, further research is needed to assess Starbucks' impact on the homogenization of urban environments. The first step in evaluating the homogenization process involves juxtaposing the location choices and the functions of Starbucks stores to the urban transportation. As apparent in Izmir, Starbucks typically chooses locations with robust transit connectivity, frequently situated near major highways and rail junctions, and in pedestrian-friendly, accessible regions. Based on this spatial strategy, Starbucks is affected and impacted by urban, establishing the link between the local government's services and the growth of its global brand. Thus, Starbucks' site selections impact urban mobility patterns and reflect current transportation trends. Starbucks has a homogenizing 'Starbucks effect' on urban settings by placing itself in easily accessible areas and influencing how people travel around and engage with the city. Additionally, Starbucks contributes to reducing unpredictability from urban consumption. It offers a standardized experience, ensuring the same coffee quality across different places, which attracts youth, educated, and white-collar consumers.

Starbucks also functions as a 'third place'—a space for socializing, working, and informal gatherings (Oldenburg, 1999). It is evident that Starbucks contributes to a homogenized urban consumer culture, especially in street-facing locations where its influence on the neighborhood is more noticeable than in shopping malls, even though more research is required to understand this dimension fully. Also, the "Starbucks effect" is more noticeable in areas with a higher concentration of Starbucks stores, whereas it has less influence in countries with fewer stores. This study indicates some paths for further investigation. A potential approach is a thorough analysis of the correlation between Starbucks' location choice strategies and urban transportation infrastructure with the question of 'In what ways do Starbucks' location choices affect urban mobility patterns, and vice versa? Furthermore, the extensive impacts of Starbucks' involvement in real estate-driven urban transitions demand further inquiry. Within a framework where global brands are having a growing impact on the formation of urban environments, it is essential to comprehend the homogenizing consequences and the potential threats and opportunities they offer to cities.

In conclusion, Starbucks serves as a powerful symbol and catalyst of worldwide capitalist urbanization, especially in cities such as Izmir, where its existence stimulates both real estate investment and standardization of urban areas. Although these processes provide possibilities for profit-oriented

neoliberal urban development, they also present substantial risks, especially in relation to urban inequality and addressing crises. In critical actors in shaping urban futures and will continue to be line with Rossi's (2016) conceptualization of the one-dimensional city, global brands remain essential subjects of inquiry for planners, policymakers, and researchers as cities navigate the complexities of neoliberal urbanization.

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