



Labor and Globalization

Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe,
Tolga Tören (Eds.)

Integration through Exploitation: Syrians in Turkey



Rainer Hampp Verlag

Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe, Tolga Tören
(Eds.):

Integration through Exploitation: Syrians in Turkey

Labor and Globalization, edited by Christoph Scherrer,
Volume 17,
ISBN 978-3-95710-260-7, Rainer Hampp Verlag,
Augsburg, München 2019, 196 S., € 24.80

This book is about the largest displacement crisis and resettlement of our time. However, it is not another piece that elaborately describes the appalling situation of Syrian workers in Turkey, but explores how they are integrated into the lower ends of the value chain in several sectors. The book seeks answers of what has been largely overlooked in the literature on the question of how labor processes have been shaped in various labor-intensive sectors by class and identity.

Key words: Migration, labor market, Syrian refugees, Turkey

Labor and Globalization

Volume 17

Edited by Christoph Scherrer

Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe, Tolga Tören (Eds.)

Integration through Exploitation: Syrians in Turkey

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

ISBN 978-3-95710-260-7

Labor and globalization: ISSN 2196-5382

First published 2019

Cover photo: Muhammed Ahmed (14) works at a textile mill. He works 11 hours a day and monthly earns 550 TRY. Istanbul, April 2014

Credit : Eren Aytuğ / NARPHOTOS

© 2019

Rainer Hampp Verlag Augsburg, München
Vorderer Lech 35 86150 Augsburg, Germany

www.Hampp-Verlag.de

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

In case of complaints please contact Rainer Hampp Verlag.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iv
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
FOREWORD	xi
Introduction: Putting Labor Market Integration in Turkey into its Place—Informality and Refugees <i>Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe, Tolga Tören</i>	1
PART 1: DIFFERENT SECTORS, SIMILAR STORIES? INTEGRATION OF SYRIANS, PRECARIZATION AND DECENT WORK	12
Refuged into Precarious Jobs: Syrians’ Agricultural Work and Labor in Turkey- <i>Saniye Dedeoğlu, Sinem Sefa Bayraktar</i>	13
Syrian Migrants and Labor Market in Turkey: A Survey on the İstanbul Textile Manufacturing Sector- <i>Ezgi Pınar, Ezgi Akyol, Ertan Erol, Pedriye Mutlu, Mustafa Kahveci, Kıvanç Yiğit Mısırlı, Cemal Salman, İpek Gümüüşcan</i>	28
Syrian Refugee Garment Workers in the Turkish Supply Chain of Global Corporations- <i>Emre Eren Korkmaz</i>	42
The Invisible Working Force of Minor Immigrants: The Case of Syrian Children in Turkey- <i>Kuvvet Lordoğlu, Mustafa Aslan</i>	55
PART 2: ‘LOCALS’, LABOUR MARKET AND SYRIAN REFUGEES	67
New Actors and New Conflicts in Construction Labor Market: Syrian Construction Workers from the Perspective of Native Workers in Turkey- <i>Sidar Çınar</i>	68
Refugees, Labor and Capital: The Political Economy of Labor Market Access of Syrian Refugees in a Border City in Turkey- <i>Serhat Yalçın, Meral Gezici Yalçın</i>	80
The Syrian Refugees and Temporary Protection Regime in Turkey: A Spatial Fix for Turkish Capital- <i>Cenk Saraçoğlu, Daniele Bélanger</i>	96

PART 3: POWER, CLASS, DISCOURSE AND IDENTITY	110
Being Immigrant in a Conflict-Ridden Society- Gaye Yilmaz	111
What we Know and Do Not Know about Syrian Women’s Labor Force Participation in Turkey: Questioning the Boundaries of Knowledge-Reyhan Atasü-Topçuoğlu	128
Asylum Seeker Identity and the Labor Market: Syrian Asylum Seeker in Turkey- Polat Alpman	143
Syrian Refugees: A Part of the Working Class of Turkey-Ergün İşeri	161

List of Figures:

Figure 1 Syrian Refugees with Work Permit 168

List of Tables:

Table 1 Average Wage by Gender and Country, 2016..... 35
Table 2 Wage Levels by Country and Gender, 2016 36
Table 3 The Number of Syrian Immigrant Children Aged 0–18, Registered in Turkey in 2018
..... 56
Table 4 Number of Children Reached under the Scope of Research 57
Table 5 Working Situation of Interviewed Children in Three Cities 58
Table 6 Participants of the Study..... 86

List of Abbreviations:

3D:	Dirty, Dangerous, Demeaning
3RP:	The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
ACT:	Action, Collaboration, Transformation
AFAD:	Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı (Disaster and Emergency Management Authority)
AfD:	Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
AKP:	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
B.A.:	Bachelor of Arts
BBC:	British Broadcasting Company
BEPAM:	Boğaziçi Eğitim Politika ve Araştırma Merkezi (Centre for Educational Policy Studies)
Bianet:	Bağımsız İletişim Ağı (Independent Communication Network)
ÇGSB:	Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı (Ministry of Labour and Social Security)
CHP:	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican Peoples' Party)
CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
DERİTEKS:	Deri ve Tekstil İşçileri Sendikası (Leather and Textile Workers Union)
DGB:	Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (German Trade Union Confederation)
DİSK:	Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Progressive Workers Union)
DİSK-AR:	DİSK Araştırma Enstitüsü (Research Institute of DİSK)
ETI:	Ethical Trading Initiative
EU:	European Union
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GENEL- İŞ:	Türkiye Genel Hizmetler İşçileri Sendikası (General Services Workers' Union of Turkey)
GLU:	Global Labor University
HAK İŞ:	HAK İŞ Konfederasyonu (HAK İŞ Confederation)
ICDD:	International Center for Development and Decent Work
ICG:	International Crisis Group
IFAs:	International Framework Agreements
IHKIB:	İstanbul Hazır Giyim İhracatçıları Birliği (İstanbul Apparel Exporters' Association)
ILO:	International Labour Organization
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IMPR:	Uluslararası Ortadoğu Barış Araştırmaları Merkezi Derneği (International Middle East Peace Research Center)
INGEV:	İnsani Gelişme Vakfı (Human Development Foundation)
IOM:	The International Organization for Migration
IS	Islamic State
ISIL:	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISO:	İstanbul Sanayi Odası (İstanbul Chamber of Industry)
İŞKUR:	Türkiye İş Kurumu (Turkish Employment Agency)
ITKIB:	İstanbul Tekstil ve Hazır Giyim İhracatçıları Birliği (Association of Textile and Apparel Exporters)
LFP:	Labour Force Participation
LPG:	Labour Policies and Globalization
M.A.:	Master of Arts

MHP:	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
MMD:	Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Migration Management Directorate)
M.Sc.:	Master of Science
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORSAM:	Orta Doğu Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Center for Middle Eastern Studies)
ÖZ İPLİK İŞ:	Tüm Dokuma, İplik, Trikotaj, Hazır Giyim, Konfeksiyon ve Deri İşçileri Sendikası (All Woven, Yarn, Knitting, Apparel, Garment and Leather Workers' Union)
PhD:	Doctor of Philosophy
PICUM:	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
PKK:	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PM:	Prime Minister
SGK:	Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu (Social Security Institution)
SİG:	Suriye'den İstanbul'a Gelen Sığınmacıları İzleme Grubu (Monitoring Group for Syrian Refugees in Turkey)
SOAS:	School of Oriental and African Studies
TBMM:	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (The Grand National Assembly of Turkey)
TEKSİF:	Türkiye Tekstil, Örne, Giyim ve Deri Sanayi İşçileri Sendikası (Textile, Knitting, Clothing and Leather Workers' Union)
TGSD:	Türkiye Giyim Sanayicileri Derneği (Turkish Clothing Manufacturers' Association)
TRY:	Turkish Lira
TTB:	Türk Tabipler Birliği (Turkish Medical Association)
TTSİS:	Türkiye Tekstil Sanayi İşverenleri Sendikası (Turkish Textile Industry Employers' Union)
TÜBİTAK:	Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey)
TÜİK:	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Department)
TÜRK-İŞ:	Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions)
UCL/UK:	University College London/United Kingdom
UIDDER:	Uluslararası İşçi Dayanışması Derneği (Association of International Workers' Solidarity)
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USA:	United States of America
USD:	American Dollar
WLFP:	Women Labour Force Participation
WTO:	World Trade Organization
WW2:	Second World War

List of Contributors:

Ayla Ezgi Akyol

She is a doctoral candidate and a research assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. She continues her dissertation on state and class formation in Turkey.

Polat S. Alpman

He is an assistant professor at the Department of Social Work, Yalova University. He was born İstanbul, Turkey. He holds a master's degree and a doctorate in Sociology from Ankara University. His main areas of interest are the state, class, social inequality, discrimination, migration, citizenship, and urban issues. Alpman, in addition to several book chapters and articles, published his book titled *Esmer Collar: Urban, Class, Identity and Kurdish Labor* with İletişim Publishing in 2016.

Mustafa Aslan

He graduated from Ankara University, Faculty of Language, History and Geography in 1986. In January 1989, he received his master's degree in Paleoanthropology at the same university. In 1998, he finished his PhD on medical anthropology at the University of Aix-Marseille III (France). He is currently teaching at Mardin Artuklu University. His main research areas are international migration, national migration, seasonal agricultural workers, and the participation of migrant workers in Turkish Labor Market.

Reyhan Atasü Topçuoğlu

She received her B.A. in Economics at Bilkent University and her first M.A. in Sociology at Middle East Technical University and her second in social work at Hacettepe University. She completed her PhD in sociology at Humboldt University of Berlin. She is currently working at Hacettepe University. Her research interests are migration, human trafficking, refugees, child migration and feminist theory. She is the author of "Ideology and Human Trafficking" published by Routledge, as well as several other articles.

Danièle Bélanger

She is a professor of Geography at the Université Laval in Québec City, and the holder of the Senior Canada Research Chair in Global Migration Processes. Between 1997 and 2013, she was Professor of Sociology at Western University, London, Ontario, and Canada. Her research analyses the relationships between policies and precarious migration status. Her projects have focused on temporary migrant workers, trafficked individuals, undocumented migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and marriage migrants.

Sinem Sefa Bayraktar

She completed her BA in International Relations at Bilkent University, MA at University of Nottingham, has more than 15 years of professional experience in the field of human and child rights, social policy and civil society. She worked with UNICEF Turkey Education and Child Protection Programs, in EU Funded Projects and with Turkish NGO, Development

Workshop Cooperative as Director of Child Rights Workshop and manager of various projects including the Programme on Elimination of Child Labor.

Sidar ınar

She is an assistant professor at Mardin Artuklu University. She is a labor economist and received her doctorate at Marmara University. Her research interests include seasonal migration, construction industry, and agricultural sector.

Saniye Dedeođlu

She is an associate professor of social policy in the Department of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations at the University of Muđla, Turkey and was a Marie Curie Fellow at the Center for Research in Ethnic Relations at Warwick University, UK. She has a PhD in Development Studies from SOAS, University of London. She is the author of *Migrants, Work, and Social Integration* (Palgrave 2014) and *Women Workers in Turkey: Global Industrial Production in İstanbul* (I.B. Tauris 2007).

Ertan Erol

He is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. His research interests include International Political Economy and Latin America studies.

Meral Gezici Yalın

She graduated from the Psychology Department at Hacettepe University in 1997 and received her M.Sc. degree in 2001 in Social Psychology at the same university. She got her Ph.D. degree in 2007 with her dissertation entitled as “Collective action of migrants from Turkey living in Germany” at Marburg University. Since September 2014 she has been working in the Psychology Department at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University. She is the author of the book *Psychology of Migration* published in Turkish.

İpek Gümüřcan

She continues her doctoral studies in economics at İstanbul University. She is currently working at Isparta University. Her focus areas are micro economics and public economic policies.

Ergün İřeri

He received his BA degree from the Economics Department of Marmara University. He is currently the vice president of the Garment Sector Trade Union (Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey) and sendika.org author. He has been involved in labor struggles since 1980 and has contributed to the efforts for disability rights movement since 2005. He has written several working papers, leaflets, and articles in various media outlets.

Mustafa Kahveci

He is a research assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. His research focuses on housing and labor markets.

İsmail Doğa Karatepe

He is a post-doc researcher at the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD), University of Kassel. His publications generally focus on the economic policies, global value chains, and the state.

Emre Eren Korkmaz

He is a lecturer in Migration and Development at the University of Oxford's Department of International Development since October 2018. Before this, he was a British Academy post-doctoral fellow in the same department for two years. He is a Research Fellow at St Edmund Hall and a Research Associate at the Centre for Technology and Global Affairs.

Kuvvet Lordođlu

He graduated from İstanbul University, Faculty of Economics and in 1981 he started work as research assistant at Bursa University. In 1986 he received the title of Associate Professor in Labor Economics, and in 1994 the title of Professor at Marmara University. In 2007, he worked as a visiting lecturer at University of Toulouse Mirail 2 and in 2011 at Paul Valery University in Montpellier. On September 1st 2016, he was fired from Kocaeli University with his 18 colleagues, by the Decree Law 672, for having signed the declaration called “We will not be part of this crime”. Since then, he has continued his academic activities in Kocaeli Solidarity Academy.

Kıvanç Yiğit Mısırlı

He is a PhD student and a research assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. His research focuses on Turkish political history.

Pedriye Mutlu

She is a doctoral candidate and a research assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. She continues her dissertation on International Relations and works on the international political economy and African studies.

Ezgi Pınar

She is a political scientist and carries out her post-doctoral studies in Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focuses on contemporary Turkish Politics, state theories, and labor politics.

Cemal Salman

He is a research assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, İstanbul University. He is currently a visiting fellow at UCL/UK for his postdoctoral research. His research areas include migration, memory studies, cultural studies, identity, and urban politics.

Cenk Saraçođlu

He is a faculty member in the Faculty of Communication at Ankara University, Turkey. He earned his MA and PhD degree in Sociology from the University of Western Ontario, Canada in 2008. He is interested in migration, nationalism, urban transformation, and ethnic relations with a particular focus on Turkey.

Tolga Tören

Tolga Tören completed his master's degree(s) at Marmara University (İstanbul) Institute of Social Sciences Department of Development Economics and Economic Growth (2006), and - as a part of Global Labor University (GLU) - at the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg / South Africa) Faculty of Humanities, Program of Labor Policy and Globalization (LPG) (2010). He completed his PhD at Marmara University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Development Economics and Economic Growth (2012). Because he is one of the signatories of the petition entitled "We will not be part of this crime" declared by the Academics for Peace Initiative in January 2016 in Turkey, he was dismissed from his position in Mersin University as well as from all public jobs in Turkey. Since May 2017 he conducts his studies in the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) of the University of Kassel as a scholar at risk.

Serhat Yalçın

He completed his study in Political Science, Sociology and Philosophy at the Technical University of Darmstadt with a focus on the Europeanization of national immigration policies. He earned his Ph.D. degree from the Department of Political Science at the University of Kassel with a focus on state policies towards the international mobility of capital and labor in the Gulf countries. He is currently postdoctoral researcher in the Faculty of Economics, Institute for Vocational Education at the University of Kassel

Gaye Yılmaz

Gaye Yılmaz has a Master in Labor Policies and Globalisation from the Global Labor University (2004/5) and a doctorate degree in Development Economics from Marmara University (2009). Special focuses are labor and ecology related topics. Currently she has been working as a part-time post-doc researcher at the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD), University of Kassel.

Acknowledgments:

First and foremost we would like to thank Prof. Christoph Scherrer for not only having encouraged us to organize a refugee workshop titled “Syrian refugees and integration of Syrians”, which was held in February 2017 in /Boğaziçi University – İstanbul, but also for motivating us to compile the presentations of the participating academics and activists as well as the writings of a few non-participant academics.

We would also like to express our deep and sincere gratitudes to those academics and activists who accepted to contribute to the book.

We are extremely grateful to the International Center for Development and Decent Work for its financial and academic support and to BEPAM/Boğaziçi University for hosting our workshop so perfectly and providing us with engaged and competent volunteer assistants and students. Without ICDD and BEPAM/Boğaziçi University we would have neither been able to organize a refugee workshop nor editing this book.

Special thanks to our dear friend Annika Napier-Smith for helping with re-reading and grammatical corrections.

Also we would like to express our deepest indebtedness to Syrian and Turkish workers. Indeed, by participating in our workshop these workers gave us the opportunity to map out and compare the actual conditions of Syrian workers in İstanbul.

Finally, we are extending our thanks to Turkish alumni of Global Labour University for their support before and during the workshop.

Foreword:

Integration through Exploitation: Syrian Refugees in Turkey is the first anthology in the Labor and Globalization series that covers of the ever-more pressing issue of the integration of refugees in the labor market. The book edited by Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe and Tolga Tören goes beyond the important task of highlighting the plight of Syrian refugees in Turkey, the country which took on most of the refugees from the Syrian Civil War starting in 2011. It contributes in a major way to the debate on which factors are conducive for labor market integration. In contrast to most Western European countries, a large part of the working-age population among the Syrian refugees has found employment in Turkey. They can be found working across the spectrum of economic branches. The contributions to the book cover their employment especially in agriculture, the textile and garment industry and in the construction sector. These sectors are characterized by a high degree of labor intensity and a history of informality. And it is precisely these characteristics that prove conducive for the employment of the refugees. Turkey's predominant place in the global division of labor as a supplier of goods produced under labor-intensive conditions provides for employment opportunities that do not require advanced technical or language skills. Therefore, employers can make use of people with qualifications in different fields and little command of the local language. In addition, the history of informal labor relations minimizes the risks for businesses in employing an unproven workforce. The possibility of ignoring labor regulations, allows them to fire an employed refugee at will and to pay substandard wages. The increased supply of workers has the added benefit of putting pressure on the already employed native workforce. By tolerating an informal labor market, state authorities avoid the costs of providing subsistence support for the refugees or the cost for providing incentives to employers to hire refugees in accordance to the labor law. Thus, an informal labor intensive economic structure proves to be conducive for integrating refugees. This process can be called integration by super exploitation.

However, the labor market integration is not complemented by social and political integration. As the contributions to the book show, this type of labor market integration happens under conditions of a structural oversupply of labor. It is this oversupply which drives informality in the first place. The result is a fierce competition among workers which is fought out along lines of constructed group identities (and fostered by the business community and the dominant political forces). Thus, the Syrian refugees are confronted by widespread xenophobia among the native Turks. However, the level of social discrimination

differs among the religiously and ethnically heterogeneous Syrian refugees. As some of the contributions to the book highlight, those Syrians which are closer to the dominant Turkish religious and ethnic groups experience less discrimination. In other words, for social integration the prevalent attitudes towards minorities play an important role.

The degree of political integration of the Syrian refugees seems to be influenced by geopolitical and electoral considerations. As the introduction mentions, in the first year of the Syrian Civil War, the Turkish government welcomed the refugees. It had hoped that by this move it could strengthen its role in Syria after the expected fall of the Syrian dictator Assad. It also considered granting voting rights in the hope of strengthening its electoral base. But as the prospect of the fall of Assad faded and the public mood became more xenophobic, it lost interests in supporting the Syrian refugees. Instead, the Syrian refugees became a pawn in the confrontation with the European Union.

The final contribution to the book offers some hope for a fuller integration of the Syrian refugees in the Turkish economy, society and polity. It advocates working class solidarity. It will be up to another book to explore ways to make working-class solidarity a reality.

Christoph Scherrer

Introduction: Putting Labor Market Integration in Turkey into its Place—Informality and Refugees¹

Gaye Yılmaz

İsmail Doğa Karatepe

Tolga Tören

Introduction

The Syrian were compelled to leave their conflict-afflicted homeland and search for proper shelter and the ability to work. As many took refuge in Turkey, there are hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees who live and work there in abject poverty and poor work conditions. As there has been no formidable political voice to express their concerns and as their problems do not resonate with the established institutions, their plight has not yet been redressed.

This book is about the largest displacement crisis and resettlement of our time. However, it is not another piece that elaborately describes the appalling situation of Syrian workers in Turkey, but explores how they are integrated into the lower ends of the value chain, in several sectors, by adapting multi-layered perspectives.

This book is a product of a workshop held at Boğaziçi University/İstanbul in 2017 in cooperation with the Global Labor University Alumni in Turkey, the International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD)/University of Kassel, and Boğaziçi University. It comprises presentations made in the workshop along with invited papers, especially those chosen to provide a comprehensive overview of the factors that mould the appalling conditions of the Syrian workers.

This book is published during a time when xenophobia against Syrian refugees had peaked, particularly after some Syrians waved Islamist rebel flags and chanted in Arabic at İstanbul's Taksim Square during the 2018/2019 New Year's Eve. The xenophobia towards Arabs has been so strong that almost all—left or right—voters, Islamist and secular Turks or Kurds, share similar hostile ideas as documented by the case studies of this book. It marked

¹ The term refugee is only applied to those who escape from an event occurring in Europe according to Turkey's official vocabulary. When Turkey ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Protection of Refugees it made use of the option to limit the convention's geographical application to Europe (Art. I B(a)) and did not abandon this restriction at the time the 1967 Additional Protocol of the Geneva Convention lifted the geographical restrictions for most of the signatory states. This created a legal void for the Syrians. The temporary protection status was invented for the Syrian refugees, who cannot be officially defined as refugees. This status has been officially given to Syrians, based on non-refoulement principle. We decided to use the term refugees in line with the 1967 Additional Protocol of the Geneva Convention.

not only the headlines of the conservative right-wing newspapers, but also that of the few dissenting newspapers left in the country manifesting traces of hostility towards Arabs.

The relevant literature confines its attention to the uneven structure of the labor market and its concomitant discrimination towards refugees. It provides examples of the mechanisms of exclusion and precarisation of Syrian refugees in the labor market by showing the de-qualification processes of the Syrians (Sert, 2016), and the neoliberalization of the labor market (Canefe, 2016). The conditional refugee status leads many Syrians to live in limbo (Baban, Ilcan, & Rygiel, 2016) amidst a labor market governance molded by “a security architecture that emphasizes containing and controlling ‘risky’ groups” (Toğral Koca, 2016, p. 66). What has been largely overlooked in the literature is the question of how labor processes have been shaped in various labor-intensive sectors by class and identity.

As of June 2018, there are almost 3.6 million officially registered Syrians (Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Migration Management, 2018), though the unofficial number is higher, of whom most live in urban areas, including metropolitan areas of Izmir and İstanbul. Only a mere 20 thousand Syrians have obtained work permits so far. It is estimated that between 800 thousand and 1 million Syrians have been working in the informal and predominantly labor-intensive sectors in Turkey, with relatively lower wages and/or unfavorable conditions in urban areas. The studies in this book focus on the rural areas. They reveal that most of the agricultural workers of Turkey are Syrian refugees who work at wages that barely allow them to survive.

The entrance of hundreds of thousands of Syrians into Turkey’s labor market has had drastic impacts, especially on the informal sector, which had already constituted 35 percent of Turkey’s work force before Syrians entered the labor markets. It is not surprising to observe that the refugee flow displaced natives from obtaining work in the labor-intensive informal sectors (Ceritoglu, Yunculer, Torun, & Tumen, 2017; Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015). With the introduction of Syrians into the labor market downward pressure on the wages in the informal sector is created and the decent work deficit for all workers in the sector, especially Syrians, is widened. However, there have been a small proportion of native workers who have managed to move into formal employment (Ceritoğlu et al., 2017; Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015).

However, the labor market informality has facilitated the integration of Syrians with the labor market. In a way, the informal economy compensates for the lack of policy making. It relieves the state of pursuing alternative policies for the integration of the Syrian refugees who are “not likely to go home” (Kirişçi & Ferris, 2015).

However, not all workers are equally poor in the informal sectors. Syrians occupy the lowest ranks. Our case studies document this phenomenon, focusing not only on employer–employee relations but also on the tension between the local Kurdish–Turkish and Syrian workers at various work sites and sectors.

The Brief Story of Open-Door Policies and Labor Market

The upshots of the Arab Spring have been more dramatically experienced in Syria. In March 2011, the protestors in Dera demanded justice for a group of teenagers who had been tortured by the police for having made graffiti against the Assad regime. The local protests and conflicts swiftly turned into a sectarian civil war in which not only several domestic but also various international actors became involved (Glass, 2016). Since then, with Assad in power, the civil war has done irreparable damage on the Syrian population of 22 million. Not only war, but also poverty, economic deterioration, and environmental disasters have led to massive dislocation. The displacement reached an extent that, according to a UN Refugee Agency report, there have been almost 5 million registered Syrian refugees only in the neighboring countries (Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey) and 6.5 million people displaced inside the country (The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan or 3RP in response to the Syria Crisis, 2016). Turkey, whose population nears 80 million, is not only the largest recipient of Syrians, but also home to the largest number of refugees in the world.

The relevant official agents and important political figures did not have a comprehensive vision-cum-project concerning the refugee crises, as they have been arguably more interested in the political conflict in Syria. The AKP’s view of Syria is informed by the Ottoman’s imperial legacy. As the civil war intensified, the hope of having more influence on Syria was roused by the Ottoman phantasies, and the ruling AKP heavily supported the rebel groups, most of which have been influenced by Islamist ideas, yet in different radical tones. They were AKP’s “Sunni brothers”, also supported by the western forces who were unhappy with the Assad regime. When the armed uprising began in Syria, the important agents in Turkey calculated that the civil war would not last long and that it would put an end to the power of Assad rather quickly—similar to what had happened to North African dictators during the Arab Spring.² However, the civil war did not proceed as Erdogan and his team expected. As the war intensified, more and more people fled to Turkey. At first, the AKP and

² They thought their “brothers?” would win rather quickly, considering their broad and strong international alliances. Even Tayyip Erdogan, then the prime minister, promised to pray in Damascus mosque “soon”. He said, “We will go there in the shortest possible time, if Allah wills it; and embrace our brothers. That day is close. We will pray near the grave of Salahaddin Ayyubi and pray in the Umayyad Mosque. We will pray for our brotherhood freely in Hejaz Railway Station” (“Premier vows to pray in Damascus mosque ‘soon’” 2012).

its cadres evaluated the flight en-masse as a chance to increase their power in the region. Media coverage of the camps built in Turkey on the long Syrian border implied that they were supplying shelter as well as military bases, which included various facilities such as hospitals for the Islamist rebels.

To Syrian refugees, the open-door policy miscalculated the duration of the civil war. As many thought that the Assad regime would be overthrown quickly, those who crossed the Syria-Turkey border were considered to suffer “temporary” displacement. Hence, what was offered to them was “temporary protection”. As the war lasted longer than expected, the coverage of the temporary protection was extended to 2014 by the Regulation on Temporary Protection. The content of temporary protection now went beyond the open-door policy, with the regulation providing access to health care, education, and other public services for the Syrian refugees (see Dedeoğlu and Bayraktar in this volume).

The treatment of the refugee wave as “temporary” was influenced by the Ansar discourse (Kaya, 2016). Islamic politics and AKP, in the last 15 years in particular, have not been reluctant to lean towards Islamic symbolism in order to address crises, and this refugee crisis has been no exception. Ansar (meaning helper) is an Islamic metaphor which refers to the hospitality of the Medina people to the Islamic Prophet Muhammad and his followers—the *muhajirun*—when they escaped from Mecca. This metaphor fails to include any comprehensive plan to accommodate and integrate refugees as can be seen in two ways. First, as the city Mecca was captured by the followers of the Muhammed, the AKP anticipated that the city of Damascus would soon be captured by the Islamist rebel forces, whom they supported, which would lead to the fall of the Assad Regime; the “guests” from Syria thereafter, would go back to their country. Second, this metaphor allows the AKP government to transfer some of its duties concerning accommodation and integration to the civil society under the guise of religious duty, just as the Median people did to the muhajirun. As one commenter puts it, “the conceptualisation of all Turkish citizens as ansar and all Syrian refugees as muhajirun reinforces the AKP’s majoritarian and sectarian ideology at home” (Erdemir, 2016).

The mass exodus to Turkey was not only seen as a result of open door policies. For many Syrian refugees, Turkey was seen as a departure port to migrate to European countries, most notably to Germany. The famous Balkan route—the migration route between the Middle East and Europe— was used by almost 700,000 migrants trying to reach central Europe.

The year 2016 was a milestone in two respects. The first was the EU–Turkey refugee agreement which efficaciously blocked the Balkan route. The controversial agreement aimed

to stop the migration flows from Turkey in exchange of material aids and political concessions such as visa liberty for Turkish citizens. The second was the new law that regulated the work permits of Syrian refugees under temporary protection. Both regulations symbolize the recognition and acceptance that Syrian refugees are not, in fact, temporary. While the former regulates Turkey's transitional position, the latter addresses the need of regulation in the labor market.

It is noteworthy that the law regarding the work permits of foreigners providing temporary protection does not *de facto* regulate the Syrian refugees' entry into Turkey's labor market. Refugees satisfy informal labor demand in many labor-intensive sectors where lower labor cost is regarded as an element of competition in the domestic as well as global production network, as in the case of textile and apparel. The law, however, was designed to regulate the formal labor market where only few Syrians work officially. A bit more than 20,000 work permits have been granted since 2016, when the law was enacted of hundreds of thousands of refugees (see Dedeoğlu and Bayraktar in this volume).

A significant part of the literature argues that the institutional and judicial barriers hamper the labor market integration of refugees (Canefe, 2016; Sert, 2016). Turkey's case shows that the judicial barriers have been sidelined through informality. The refugees under temporary protection were not officially allowed to work until the law regarding work permits of foreigners, providing temporary protection, was enacted. The law itself was a step to relax the work ban; but it included several constraints: the permits have been restricted according to refugee quota (10 percent of the Turkish citizens working in a workplace), sector and regions.

The judicial barriers might have been a real barrier for labor market integration if the informal sector did not absorb the refugee workforce or the state had the capacity to enforce the labor laws. As the economic and institutional capacity of the state is limited, monitoring and enforcement is not effective.

Identity and kinship are two related parameters that regulate the network-based informal labor market institutions in Turkey. Being a Muslim, a Turk or a Kurd can be an asset or a disadvantage in the search for jobs. Some of our contributions focus on this phenomenon, while not overlooking the employer–employee power asymmetry. In the context of power asymmetry, the contributors deliver us analyses which are not gender-blind. They document the double burden and that gender relations play an important role in shaping the labor market integration in question.

The Organization of the Book

This book is organized in three parts and 12 chapters including the introductory one. The first part focuses on the integration of Syrian workers into the labor market in different sectors and their appalling livelihood conditions. We begin with the agricultural sector where the decent work deficit is more pronounced. Saniye Dedeoğlu and Sinem Sefa Bayraktar assess the employment of Syrian workers in seasonal agricultural work in the province of Adana, showing the ways in which Syrian refugees work in the agricultural sector which could indicate a form of informal integration strategy as well as a site of conflict where different worker groups compete for the same jobs. Focusing on research findings collected in the summer of 2016 in Adana, an important agricultural city in the south of Turkey, Dedeoğlu and Bayraktar provide an overview of the working and living conditions of Syrian agricultural workers and their families. The chapter also aims to show how the structure of the Turkish labor market allows the informal integration of Syrians offering only informal employment opportunities, albeit the positive legislative changes to integrate Syrians.

The second chapter also relies on field research conducted by Ezgi Pınar, Ezgi Akyol, Ertan Erol, Pedriye Mutlu, Mustafa Kahveci, Kıvanç Yiğit Mısırlı, Cemal Salman, and İpek Gümüşcan with 300 Turkish and 300 Syrian textile workers in 10 different districts of İstanbul. In the chapter, “Syrian Migrants and Labor Market in Turkey: a Survey on the İstanbul Textile Manufacturing Sector”, the authors particularly focus on the impact of Syrian refugee labor on İstanbul’s textile manufacturing sector. They also bring to light that this sector in Turkey employs a highly informal workforce. Moreover, as the authors highlight, the sector depends mostly on low-skilled and low-cost workforce. It is therefore easier for the refugee labor to be integrated in the manufacturing sector. From this point of view, the authors discuss the possible effects of the integration of the Syrian refugee labor in textile manufacturing, analyzing the wage differences, variations on the workplace experiences, dissimilarities on previous work experiences and perceptions, and inter-workplace relations between Turkish and Syrian workers in the sector, while providing the demographic and social data of these workers.

The third chapter, “Syrian Refugee Garment Workers in the Turkish Supply Chain of Global Corporations”, deals with a similar field, that is, the textile-apparel sector, although this section focusses on the global supply chain. In this chapter, Emre Eren Korkmaz provides a general picture of the employment of Syrian refugees in Turkey within the global supply chain, relations between the informal and formal sectors in Turkey and how such relations have affected the survival strategies of Syrian refugees. Based on two fieldworks carried out

by the author between August and December 2016 (as part of the Turkey Programme of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)) and between July and November 2017 (as a consultant at the London-based NGO, Business and Human Rights Resource Center), Korkmaz analyses how the participation of Syrian refugees in the informal economy has changed the historical relations between formal and informal employment in the sector. In other words, rather than solely objectifying refugees as a vulnerable group, Korkmaz underlines their contribution to industrial relations by acknowledging refugees as active agents capable of changing their lives and the structures within which they operate.

In the fourth chapter, a field research study conducted by Kuvvet Lordoglu and Mustafa Aslan addresses the child labor issue under the title of “The Invisible Working Force of Minor Immigrants: the Case of Syrian Children in Turkey”. Although the exact number is unknown, a significant portion of Syrian refugees’ children work in different sectors under challenging conditions to help their families, often abandoning their schooling despite international conventions and legal measures prohibiting or limiting the work of minors. In their study, based on the survey data collected in three cities of Turkey—İstanbul, Mardin, and Urfa, Lordoğlu and Aslan focus on the working conditions of Syrian minors. While in the first part of the study the authors give a brief history of the problems in general and a review of the current situation of Syrian migrants in Turkey, in the second part they analyze the survey data on the living and working conditions of Syrian migrant minors and the problems encountered by them in the three cities mentioned. The section concludes with a general discussion and proposals for improving the living and working conditions of Syrian minors in Turkey.

The second part of the book focuses on the relationship between “the locals” and Syrian workers. Drawing analyses from the fieldworks, the focus is on the perception of the locals, the access of Syrian workers to the labor market and the relationships among workers. The fifth chapter is devoted to the construction sector, which has been seen as the engine of the Turkish economy since the beginning of the AKP rule. In her chapter, titled “New Actors and New Conflicts in Construction Labor Market: Syrian Construction Workers from the Perspective of Native Workers in Turkey”, Sidar Çınar discusses the presence of Syrian labor from the perspective of native workers in the construction sector. Considering the fact that the Syrian refugee labor constitutes the latest group to enter the ethnically multi-layered Turkish construction labor force, there is fierce competition among various worker groups. Çınar examines the dynamics mentioned above through a qualitative research relying on in-depth interviews conducted with 32 domestic workers in Diyarbakır in 2015. She concludes that

there is an increase in competition among the construction workers and a decrease in the bargaining power of all workers in Turkey after the arrival of Syrian refugees.

In the sixth chapter, titled “Refugees, Labor and Capital: The Political Economy of Labor Market Access in Syrian Refugees in a Border City in Turkey”, Meral Gezici Yalçın and Serhat Yalçın consider the questions of how Syrian refugees’ access to the labor market is perceived by the host community, how Syrian refugees find jobs, and whether their current employment in Turkey is related to their previous employment in Syria. Focusing on the city of Mardin, which is not only a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious border city hosting a large number of Syrian refugees, but also a leading city in low employment and high unemployment rates, the study applies both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study specifically relies on data obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted with locals and refugees in 2018 and analyzes the perceptions of local Kurdish and Arab community members towards the access of Syrian refugees to the labor market.

The seventh chapter assesses the Syrian experience from the east to the west of Turkey. Relying on the findings of ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Izmir in 2016 and 2017, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Daniele Belanger discuss the effects of the exploitation of the Syrian refugee population on work relations and the socio-economic position of the workers from the host community, particularly those employed in labor-intensive informal sectors. The authors’ analysis, “Syrian Refugees and Temporary Protection Regime in Turkey: A Spatial Fix for Turkish Capital”, is based mostly on ethnographic observations and in-depth interviews conducted with the Kurdish shoe and leather workers employed informally in Işıkkent, one of the main manufacturing zones of Izmir/Turkey with significant Syrian workers’ population.

The third part of the book gives space for debates revolving around class, identity, ideology and the migration question. This section begins with a debate about the conditions of the Syrian refugees in the Turkish labor market in the context of conflicts on religion, identity, and discrimination. In the chapter titled “Being Immigrant in a Conflict-Ridden Society”, Gaye Yılmaz focuses on the Syrian immigration views of Turkey and aims to show reflections of discrimination, class, and identity conflicts on both sides. In this respect, Yılmaz argues that depending on their political preferences and religious affiliations, both Syrian refugees and the Turkish citizens might well become either discriminators or those who are exposed to discrimination. Syrian refugees may have multiple identities, such as Alawi, Kurd, worker and woman, just like their counterparts who carry similar multiple identities in Turkey. Yılmaz names the situation as “two faces of the same coin”. Finally, by

taking into account the political measures to reduce these stresses on both sides, Yılmaz states that each of these discriminations deserves to be approached independently.

In the subsequent chapter, the issue of Syrian refugees in the Turkish labor markets is discussed in the context of difficulties or barriers that the researchers from the field in Turkey face; this is also analyzed in the context of gender and identity. In her essay “What We Know and Do Not Know about Syrian Women’s Labor Force Participation in Turkey”, Reyhan Atasü – Topçuoğlu discusses the challenges faced by social scientists trying to problematize Syrian migration to Turkey in terms of relations of patriarchy, capitalism, and identity politics. She reveals the existing challenges such as the absence of simple statistics on immigrants and a previous research ban, which have been mostly accepted both by the academic community and the general public. Topçuoğlu also questions the effects of this silent acceptance on the ways of thinking about Syrians and immigrants, underlying the resulting deficiencies in research design and methodology by reviewing the existing literature and addressing the construction of Syrian migrants as a scientific object. Finally, Topçuoğlu, addresses the main problems faced by Syrian women, such as early marriages, social exclusion via host communities, poverty, and informal working conditions, by questioning the general discourse defining these problems as being culturally specific to Syrians.

In the tenth chapter, the identity issue of the Syrian refugees in the Turkish labor markets is addressed more specifically in the context of creating the asylum seeker identity in parallel with the conditions in the labor markets. Although the smuggling of immigrants as a market has emerged due to the nation-state regime, this market became widespread only with the Syrian civil war. Polat S. Alpman addresses the making of the refugee identity through class disparity between Syrians in the chapter titled “Asylum Seeker Identity and the Labor Market: Syria Asylum Seeker in Turkey”. Dealing with some constitutive elements of the refugee identity, permeating social, political, and economic processes, Alpman follows the traces of the new identity construction developments taking place through different levels, to understand and explain the consequences of being Syrian in Turkey.

The last chapter is devoted to answering the question of where Syrian refugees stand together within the Turkish labor markets, with their realities from informal working conditions to the identity questions, from child labor issues to gender conflicts. The title of the last chapter, written by Ergün İşeri, might be seen as an answer to this question: “Syrian Refugees: a Part of the Working Class of Turkey”. In this chapter, İşeri discusses the way Syrian refugees manage to survive in the adverse conditions within Turkey, how capital organizations have dealt with the Syrian refugee issue, and whether the placement of Syrian

refugees in Turkey is a temporary or permanent arrangement. Finally, the chapter concludes addressing whether working class organizations, especially trade unions in Turkey, are well prepared to offer a solution to the problems of Syrians or developing a strategy to integrate the refugee laborers as part of the working class in Turkey.

References

- Baban, F., S. Ilcan, & K. Rygiel. (2016). Syrian refugees in Turkey: pathways to precarity, differential inclusion, and negotiated citizenship rights. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43, 41–57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2016.1192996>.
- Canefe, N. (2016). Management of irregular migration: Syrians in Turkey as paradigm shifters for forced migration studies. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 54, 9–32. <https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2016.6>.
- Ceritoglu, E., H. B. G. Yunculer, H. Torun, & S. Tumen. (2017). The impact of Syrian refugees on natives? Labor market outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a quasi-experimental design. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*. 6, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40173-017-0082-4>
- Del Carpio, X.V. & M.C. Wagner. (2015). The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 7402*. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/505471468194980180/pdf/WPS7402.pdf>
- Erdemir, A. (2016). The Syrian refugee crisis: can Turkey be an effective partner? Retrieved from <http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/dr-aykan-erdemir-the-syrian-refugee-crisis-can-turkey-be-an-effective-partner/>
- Glass, C. (2016). *Syria burning: a short history of a catastrophe*. New York: Verso.
- Kaya, A. (2016). Syrian refugees and cultural intimacy in İstanbul: ‘I feel safe here!’. *Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Research Paper*. RSCAS 2016/59. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2870516###
- Kirişci, K., & E. Ferris. (2015). Not likely to go home: Syrian refugees and the challenges to Turkey and the international community. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Turkey-Policy-Paper-web.pdf>
- Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Migration Management. (2018). Migration statistics. Retrieved from http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection_915_1024_4748_icerik
- “Premier vows to pray in Damascus mosque ‘soon’” (2012, June 9). *Hürriyet Daily News*. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/premier-vows-to-pray-in-damascus-mosque-soon.aspx?pageID=238&nID=29505&NewsCatID=338>
- Sert, D.Ş. (2016). From skill translation to devaluation: the de-qualification of migrants in Turkey. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 54, 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2016.9>.
- The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) in Response to the Syrian Crisis. (2016). Mid-year report. Retrieved from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=11804>.
- Toğral Koca, B. (2016). Syrian refugees in Turkey: from ‘guests’ to ‘enemies’? *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 54, 55–75. <https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2016.4>.

**Part I: Different sectors, similar stories? Integration of Syrians,
precarization and decent work**

Refuged into Precarious Jobs: Syrians' Agricultural Work and Labor in Turkey

Saniye Dedeođlu

Sinem Sefa Bayraktar

Introduction

In his well-acclaimed novel *On Fertile Lands*, Turkish author Orhan Kemal described about the bitter and merciless living and working conditions that day laborers in the ukurova region³ endured just to earn a piece of bread. Referring to the 1940s and 1950, the majority of Kemal's day laborers was formed by landless farming families. The side of winners and losers in fertile lands has not much changed since the days that Kemal described in his novel; only the type of workers have undergone transition with the landless local farming families being replaced by seasonal agricultural workers travelling from the south-east of Turkey to work in the ukurova region. Kurdish and Arabic workers coming from the provinces of Őanlıurfa, Adıyaman, and Mardin became prominent laboring groups in seasonal agricultural work since the beginning of the 1990s. However since early 2011, the Kurdish and Arabic workers from south-east Turkey were soon being replaced by a new labor source—the Syrian refugees.

Drawing on research findings collected in the summer of 2016 in Adana, this chapter focuses on Syrian refugees' agricultural work in Turkey as a case for studying Syrian labor market activities, its precarious integration as a bottom-up integration strategy, and the relationship between migration and labor markets in Turkey. The analysis is based on the current dilemma of refugee integration in which the government's central legal and policy frameworks provide Syrians with some citizenship rights while they are continuously being pushed into precarious employment due to the existing structural conditions of the Turkish labor market. The analysis emphasizes that the existing conditions of legal rights available for Syrians have built up two different pathways to integration—one is formal integration through which refugees are able to make claims to citizenship rights, as well as negotiating their access to employment, humanitarian assistance, and social services; the second is precarious, informal integration in which Syrians are becoming an indispensable part of the labor-intensive industries through which Turkey enters the global international competition in a constant search of tapping into cheaper forms of labor.

³ ukurova is a region of Southern Turkey including the provinces of Mersin, Adana, Osmaniye, and Hatay. Majority of the region consists of plains, one of which is the Adana Plain. Even though the names "Adana Plain (Adana Ovası)" and "ukurova" are generally used interchangeably, it is a common mistake. Adana Plain is only a part of the larger region called ukurova, located to the south of the city of Adana including the Seyhan, Karataş, Yüređir, and Yumurtalık districts.

The field research referred to in this chapter was conducted in the Adana province in the summer of 2016. It encompassed a multi-method approach that not only included interviews and field observations common to various ethnographic research designs but also a questionnaire survey conducted with 266 Syrian households that produced results for 1,655 individuals which took place in the temporary worker settlements of Adana where worker families live in tent accommodations. In the study, qualitative data were collected through interviews and field observations. Thirty interviews were conducted with Syrian refugees, agricultural labor intermediaries, employers, representatives of agricultural production and trade in Adana, and related community organizations that provided assistance to Syrians. The interviews focused on their journeys, conditions of living, their access to education, healthcare, and work experience as agricultural workers and their future prospects. The survey findings revealed the demographic characteristics of Syrian agricultural workers, their migration practices, household characteristics, nature of agricultural labor, their basic needs and main challenges, and the ways in which they cope with their situation in the case of a group of migrants living in tents and engaged in agricultural labor on the Adana Plain. Detailed information is also revealed on child labor and the position of migrant women in Syrian families (Development Workshop 2016b).

In this context, we paid particular attention on refugees' experiences of precarity and how Syrians' entrance into the agricultural work is cultivated by social and economic inequalities in the Turkish labor market. The chapter shows that an environment of a large informal sector and deepening economic crises prepares the preconditions of Syrian labor market activities and survival strategies. The increasing precarity of the Turkish labor market has been due to the influx of Syrian refugees who participates in the labor market only by working with rates much lower than the minimum wage. Agriculture is one of the major sectors hiring Syrian labor in high numbers, other than textile, construction, and services, which again contributes towards Syria's precarious integration into Turkish society.

Refugees and Labor Market Integration

For refugees, the right to work and access labor markets are the keys for becoming self-reliant, thus enabling them to build their lives and secure dignity, and allowing them to contribute to their host communities. The refugees' labor market integration is now more important than ever since forced migration has reached the highest with 68.5 million people seeking protection in the EU and other parts of the world in 2017 and is expected to continue to grow. UNHCR's annual Global Trends report shows that out of this huge population of forcible displacement as a result of persecution, conflict, or generalized violence, 25.4 million is refugees, 40.0 million is

internally displaced people, and 3.1 million is asylum-seekers. Developing regions hosted 85 percent of the world's refugees under UNHCR's mandate which is around 16.9 million people. For the fourth consecutive year, Turkey hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide, with 3.5 million people (UNHCR, 2018). Against the increasing refugee flow, it is evident that of the 145 states, who have been parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention, almost half have declared reservations; even states that grant the right to work usually impose conditions on access to labor markets. The same limitations apply to many of the 48 states that are not ratified with the Refugee Convention (Zetter and Ruaudel, 2017). These constraints force refugees to use irregular paths both to enter and to work in the country. Even in countries that adhere to the Convention, the legal entitlement to work for refugees is rarely unconditional.

Many studies emphasize instabilities and insecurities refugees experience in employment and workplaces, documenting how particular vulnerable groups, such as migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, can be compelled, coerced, or restricted into highly exploitative work (e.g., Jordan and Brown, 2007; Lewis et al., 2015). Other studies not only recognize employment as an important precarious field but also identify other precarious fields which intersect with it (e.g., Banki, 2013; Papadopoulos, 2016). While mostly compelled to informal labor market activities, migrants typically do not take jobs away (Constant, 2014), do not depress the wages of the natives (Peri, 2014) or abuse the welfare system (Giulietti, 2014). Even a study by Peschner and Tanay (2017) shows that the overall performance of refugees'/asylum seekers is better than those of migrants who came with family reunification status but fall much behind of those migrated through a work status. Thus, refugees have lower employment rates than most other migrant groups. They have lower employment rates than the natives (56 percent vs 65 percent as an EU average) and much lower rates than those who have come for employment and study (71 percent) (Peschner and Tanay, 2017). Woman asylum seekers have a relatively low rate of participation in the labor market. They cannot access opportunities for cultural integration, language and skills training, and employment in the countries they have migrated to due to the burden of child care and foreign cultural codes (European Parliament, 2016).

Lower labor market integration is usually associated with institutional barriers put before refugees and the legal status at entry into the country has a long-lasting effect on refugees' labor market potential (Constant and Zimmermann, 2005). It has been reported that once their status is approved and they gain the right to settle, asylum seekers receive higher pay and work for longer hours than other migrant groups. This is thought to be a result of asylum seekers being more likely to invest in human capital once they have been granted asylum and become settled permanently. The case of agricultural work of Syrian refugees in Turkey, however, shows that

the structure and conditions in the labor market can lead to further precariousness for the migrant labor and an informal path of labor market integration even when refugees have the legal rights of settlement.

Syrians in Turkey: A Pendulum from Guests to Refugees

The Turkish migration system is based on a nation-building notion in which those from Turkish descent only are accepted as migrants coming to settle in and the others as “foreigners” or as in the case of irregular migrants as “tourists”. With the arrival of Syrian migrants, the exclusionary Turkish migration regime has been modified to be more inclusive. In the early stages of Syrian influx in 2011, the Turkish government accepted Syrians as guests with the expectation that they would return soon once the conflict was over. Yet, after recognizing the unique challenges posed by such a large influx of people in such a short period of time, the Turkish government introduced a series of measures aimed at providing legal status to Syrians in order to address their long and short-term needs.

Following the enactment of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (No. 6458) in 2013, the Turkish government issued the Regulation on Temporary Protection in 2014, which applies specifically to Syrian refugees and others who arrive en-masse and whose application for protection cannot be processed individually. This regulation granted Syrians to have residency, identification cards, and access to basic social services such as education and health. Syrians’ legal status and access to labor market is also supported by the Law on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection issued in 2016.⁴ While significantly improving Syrians’ status from that of mere guests and building up Syrian’s formal integration channels to Turkish society, these regulations are nevertheless undermined by the fact that Syrians need a work permit to be employed in formal jobs (which is costly and administratively difficult and needs a job offer from an employer) and that Turkish labor market demand Syrian labor mostly only on informal jobs.⁵

The large informal sector in Turkey is extensively connected with Turkey’s most popular labor-intensive sectors—agriculture, textiles, construction, and tourism—and are in constant search for new forms of labor to lower the costs on which its international competition is mostly based (Dedeoğlu, 2008 and 2014; Dedeoğlu and Gökmen, 2011). Living in host communities, the

⁴ The Law allows Syrian refugees who possess temporary identity cards and have resided in Turkey for six months to apply for work permits. The work permits must be applied by an employer and restricted to a maximum of 10 percent of the Turkish citizens working in a particular workplace, thereby allowing only one permit per each small-scale workplace, which has less than 10 employees.

⁵ For a more detailed discussion on the issue, Development Workshop, 2016b.

only way to survival for Syrians has been to work in the large informal sector; this fact is supported by many studies. Most qualitative studies have pointed out the strong presence of Syrian labor in informal and marginal jobs while quantitative research questioned if Syrians have had any impact on native-born Turkish workers and on the wage levels. Ceritoğlu et al. (2017) finds that the prevalence of informal employment in Turkey, which stands around 35 percent has accelerated the diffusion of immigrant workforce into informal jobs. Carpio and Wagner (2015) supports this finding by showing that presence of Syrian refugees has led to large-scale displacement of Turkish workers from the informal sector, around six natives for every 10 refugees. Displacement occurs among all types of informally employed Turkish workers irrespective of their gender, age, and education. There are particularly large informal job losses for Turkish citizens who have no formal education.

Prior to the enforcement of the Law on Work Permits (January 2016), around 7,700 Syrians were granted work permits between 2011 and 2015 (Kaymaz&Kadkoy, 2016). The Ministry of Labor and Social Security had granted 13,298 work permits in total to Syrians in 2016. A recent work permit data released by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security shows the sectoral breakdown of work permits (agriculture 57, manufacturing 4489, construction 518 and services 8222). İstanbul holds 1022 work permits out of 13,298 total work permits issued in 2016⁶. Against this data, it is estimated that if Syrians in Turkey were to participate in the labor force in identical rates with that of pre-war Syria, it can be estimated that nearly 750 thousand Syrians would be eligible for work (Kaymaz&Kadkoy, 2016).

Informal labor demand in many labor-intensive sectors is being met by Syrian labor which in turn has helped to lower the wage levels of the sector they have stepped in. Sectors such as textiles, clothing, agriculture, livestock, and construction are among the most popular sectors for Syrians (Kaymaz&Kadkoy, 2016; Afanasieva, 2016). In large cities such as Gaziantep, Adana, Bursa, and İstanbul they work mostly in textiles and apparel workshops. In recent years, İstanbul has been the attraction center for Syrians especially due to work opportunities in clothing sweetshops. Global and national media's attention has been higher specifically on use of child and undocumented migrant labor in the sector enterprises. Mutlu et al. (see this volume) surveyed 300 Syrians in textile workshops in İstanbul and compared them with Turkish workers. They recorded that Syrian workers were younger, worked longer hours and earned less than their Turkish counterparts. The Syrian workforce was also more male dominated than that of Turkish.

⁶ The Ministry of Family, Work and Social Services has published this data on their website but later removed it: <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/istatistikler/calisma-hayati-istatistikleri/resmi-istatistik-programi/yabancilarin-calisma-izinleri/>

The textile, agriculture, construction and tourism are the major sectors employing Syrian workers (Akbaş and Ulutaş, 2018; Çınar, 2018; Dedeoğlu, 2018; Ekiz Gökmen, 2018; Korkmaz, 2018). It is often stated that Syrian labor has been rescue boat for labor-intensive sectors of Turkey and help the sectors lower their labor costs. The main characteristics of labor-intensive sectors are their constant strife for cheaper labor forms, the source being the internally displaced migrants from the East of Turkey, who were known as international irregular/undocumented⁷ migrants and now Syrian refugees. Thus, the informal labor market integration path for Syrians is built through informal, insecure, and harsh working conditions with no guarantee for any payment. Agricultural work has been one of these informal integration paths where Syrian migrants are taking a lion's share in most of causal jobs generated by the agricultural sector. The following section is an account of how this informal work is attracting Syrians more and more, and on which conditions Syrians work and live in Adana, one of Turkey's agricultural production provinces.

A Precarious Path to Integration: Syrian Migrants in Seasonal Agricultural Production

Seasonal agricultural work has been a common feature of agricultural production in many parts of rural Turkey and fills the void left by intensive urbanization and withdrawal of unpaid family worker regime. Seasonal work in agricultural production is mostly undertaken by the most disadvantage groups of the society and characterized by its precarious working conditions. Significantly ethnicized, gendered, and classed labor force is frequently associated with the poorest groups in the society that are willing to take these jobs (Development Workshop, 2016a-b, Lordoğlu and Aslan, 2016). Agricultural work rarely demands any qualifications and commute to work is easy; therefore, workers with limited mobility in the labor market are usually drawn to seasonal migratory employment opportunities when the demand for temporary and seasonal workers are on the rise.

Seasonal agricultural work is a distinctly precarious work classed as a 3D job (dirty, dangerous, and demeaning)⁸ and Syrians move into this job further exacerbate the working conditions and precarity of workers. This is exactly the reason for increasing presence of Syrians in seasonal agricultural work which results in a race to bottom. It is evident that agriculture is a

⁷ According to the definition by Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM): "People lacking the required valid documents to reside or work in the country they currently reside in are called 'undocumented migrants'. This includes people whose visitation, residence or working permits have expired or have been invalidated for other reasons; those whose international protection applications were rejected; those who entered the country through illegal means; and the children of 'undocumented' parents born in the host country."

⁸ For more detailed discussion on this issue, see Development Workshop (2018: 38).

labor-intensive sector and offers often insecure, informal and short-term employment. As a low-wage and entry-level job, farm work is an unattractive employment opportunity for native workers but also that is why its labor demand is mainly met by immigrant labor in many countries. For migrants, it is easier to find informal jobs in agriculture and harder for public authorities to observe and identify the migrants, as they are employed in more remote areas. According to December 2015 report of the International Labor Organization (ILO), 150 million migrants are participating in the workforce around the world, and 16.7 million of these are working in the agricultural sector (ILO, 2016).

In Turkish agriculture, foreign migrant workers coming from Georgian, Azerbaijanis, and Syrian are widely utilized and play an active part in agricultural production in the production of hazelnuts and tea, cutting fodder and rearing livestock, apricots, cotton and citrus (Development Workshop 2016a). The entry of Syrians into the seasonal agricultural workforce after 2011 has prevented any increase in daily wages and at the same time caused the amount of work available to each family to decline in comparison with the past. The amount of money which families earn from their labor has therefore fallen. This situation both exacerbates the exploitation of labor and increases the tension between different groups of workers (Hayata Destek Derneği [Support to Life Association], 2014).

A similar emphasis is to be found in the Turkish Grand National Assembly's (TBMM, the Parliament of Turkey) Report of the Parliamentary Research Commission Established to Investigate the Problems of Seasonal Agricultural Workers. The report of the parliamentary commission notes that Syrian migrants in particular have caused wages to fall. It also states that:

Employers treat foreign workers as a store of cheap labor and employ them even though they have no work permit documents. It has been observed that persons of foreign nationality accept lower pay and harsh working conditions because they have no other option. This situation leads to risks both from the point of view of the labor markets and in terms of health and social problems, and significantly complicates the provision of services (TBMM, 2015, p. 176).

Development Workshop research reports also show that significant numbers of Syrian migrants in Adana and Mersin are observed to have come to work in the production and harvesting of vegetables, greenhouse plants, cotton, citrus fruits, and groundnuts. It has even been remarked that the arrival of the Syrians in the region had a positive impact on agricultural output, and that by reducing the costs of labor they have brought about an increase in the level of

production. The arrival of Syrians had caused wages to fall, adding that it had become easier to find cheap paid labor (Development Workshop 2016a-b, 2017, 2018).

Syrian Agricultural Worker Families: New Precariat of Agricultural Work

The research findings collected from 266 households living and working in the Adana Plain reveal the striking character of the Syrian agricultural families; 78 percent of the sample migrated from a rural area of Syria. Their affinity for agricultural work and ability to endure life in tents is partly related to their rural background. The sex distribution of all household members shows that 50.5 percent are male and 49.5 percent are female. This sex distribution points strongly to a pattern of migration of whole families. One of the most salient aspects of the flow of refugees towards Western Europe is that it consists of young male asylum seekers, while in Adana, the group studied had migrated and continued to live as family units. While the average age of men representing the 266 households interviewed was 38.6, the average age of women was 32.2. For all household members (N: 1,655), the average age of men was 19.8 and the average age of women was 17.7. The sample was younger than the average for the Syrian population in Turkey, with 52.7 percent of all household members consisting of those younger than 18. Only 15 percent of the population was older than 30. Approximately a quarter of the population was of the age of compulsory education. Low levels of education and illiteracy have been very common. Almost half of the group is illiterate and the proportion of those who dropped out of primary education is 23.7 percent. Only a fifth of the total number of interviewees had completed a primary school education.

Syrians are registered under temporary protection regime and special identity numbers beginning with the code number 99 are issued for them in Turkey. This document gives migrants the right to reside in Turkey, as well as access to basic healthcare and education services; 88.4 percent of the 1,655 individuals covered in the sample had registered with the migration authorities. However, 11.6 percent were still residing in Turkey without identity documents. It is not known whether this high ratio is unique to the sample, or what proportion of the total Syrian population in Turkey had registered. Half of the interviewees crossed the border with their spouses and children, while others said that they were accompanied by members of their wider families and relatives. These findings are in keeping with other findings regarding forced mass migration and show that families have had to abandon their homes en masse.

Seasonal Agricultural Work

The decreasing numbers of native labor from the closeby provinces had been pushing up the labor cost of Adana's agricultural producers. The arrival of Syrians to Turkey, which started in 2011, has been a remedy to keep the cost competitive; Syrians began to replace the native-born labor in the region. This overlapped with the labor shortages generated by the fact that the workers from Şanlıurfa tend to stay in their home provinces for work, with the onset of irrigated agriculture in and around Şanlıurfa. Producers on the Adana Plain have made use of Syrian migrants to solve their labor supply problems and now have access to a greater workforce pool at lower cost. This has resulted in a great change in the outlook of labor source and over the last few years, agricultural production in Adana has been carried out mainly by Syrians living in Adana. In this region, there is a strong indicator of Syrians taking up the jobs previously done by local agricultural workers travelling from Şanlıurfa, Mardin, and Adiyaman.

Syrians' work experience is no different from earlier research findings on agricultural wage work. Working conditions, relations with agricultural intermediaries, payment level, working hours, and payment periods are similar but the Syrians are further exploited due to lower wage levels and worse working conditions and, therefore, they lined up on the lowest rung of the seasonal agricultural worker hierarchy. The proportion of household members reported to be working as agricultural wage laborers was 45.4 percent. Workers endure long working day, around 11 to 12 hours as a result of nature-bound production. The products have been picked before they get spoilt or owing to other time constraints on the harvest. These characteristics of the work lead workers to spend the whole day in the fields, from sunrise to sunset. Data from the survey supports this observation. Workers may have to work for up to 11 hours in a day. The time which workers spend getting to the fields where they are to work is also an important factor when it comes to calculating how much of the day workers spend in work-related activities. Workers tend to spend, on average, between half an hour and an hour getting to the fields. Taking the return journey into account as well, this means that nearly two hours a day are spent in travelling to work.

In 2016, Syrian migrant workers on the Adana Plain were paid an average daily wage of TRY 38. This is the net payment to the worker once the commission of the agricultural intermediary has been accounted for. However, most laborers do not always get their cash payments, as their expenses, such as supplies purchased from agricultural intermediaries, rent, power, and water are cut from their wages. Furthermore, payment is postponed for long periods and landowners only pay their workers after they have sold off the product and been paid for it.

This could mean a postponement of payment for up to four months. In return for payment, workers are expected to meet daily thresholds.

Agricultural Intermediaries

Agricultural intermediation, as an important institutional practice in agricultural labor markets in Turkey that fulfill the task of bringing workers and employers together, functions like an employment agency. Labor intermediaries are significant for Syrian labor too. Besides their mediation role in recruitment, agricultural intermediaries also fulfill many other functions such as ensuring that the workers reside close to fields of production, that they are transported to work, and that they can meet their food and other needs. In return of their services, intermediaries get 10 percent of the gross wages fixed for laborers. They are also said to take a cut from the net payment received by the workers. Agricultural intermediaries are generally depicted as people who reproduce a relationship of labor exploitation in seasonal agricultural production and ensure that desperate workers remain dependent on them in a relationship of patronage. Given the high proportion of the commission they receive and the cuts they take from workers' wages for providing supplies and transport, this claim may well be true.

Most Syrians interviewed for the study have found the agricultural jobs they work in through agricultural intermediaries. It is a rational choice for migrants to find work through agricultural intermediaries given that they seldom speak the local language and have little knowledge of how to proceed with work relationships. Agricultural intermediaries not only ensure a supply of Syrian labor living in Adana, but also bring Syrian workers from other provinces to Adana. A tent group visited during the field study included agricultural laborers from Şanlıurfa coming to work in Adana, who were mostly Syrian migrants. Agricultural intermediaries play a key role in the management of supply and demand for workforce in agricultural production. Not only do agricultural intermediaries direct laborers towards fields where there is a demand for them, they also ensure their mobility among provinces. One agricultural intermediary interviewed in Adana said that he had sent some of his Syrian workers who are resident in Adana to work in Kayseri and Ankara. In ensuring the continuity of work and solving daily life problems when necessary, such as transporting sick people to hospitals, intermediaries play an important role in the lives of the workers. The findings of the survey show that almost all agricultural intermediaries are from Turkey and that agricultural intermediaries from within the Syrian migrant population have not yet appeared on a widespread basis.

Children's Work and Labor

Child labor is a distinct feature of seasonal agricultural work and families put their children at work to earn more cash income. Syrian families engaged in agricultural work also show a similar character where the work of children is a significant income-earning potential for families. As many as 53 percent of those living at the tent settlements were under 18 years of age and 49 percent of boys and 50 percent of girls under 18 worked as agricultural wage workers. Child labor is justified with commonly held perception that only the young can do agricultural work, as adults are too “old and ill” to do such work. The prevalence of child labor is not just due to this perception, but also a way of increasing household income by having many members of the household, including children, work. Interviews have also revealed that agricultural intermediaries who find work for very young children think that they are helping poor families. The employment of children is generally rationalized through excuses such as “*They were very poor, I gave them work, they work for their bread.*” Agricultural intermediaries who employ children act on the grounds that they are supporting the household budget and are helping the child to grow up as an experienced agricultural laborer. The result of these perceptions and attitudes is widespread child labor in agricultural production.

Double Burden of Migrant Women

Seasonal agricultural worker families heavily rely on women's labor not only paid but also women's unpaid labor which is so vital for their survival. Syrian women burden similar responsibilities in tent areas; 40.5 percent women living in tent settlements participated in seasonal agricultural work. Non-working female population (59.5 percent) express various reasons of activities such as cleaning, childcare, cooking, baking bread, and fetching water which consume more time in tent areas than when done in a conventional house.

It must be emphasized that the workload of women who live in tents and participate in agricultural production is much heavier. Women live in tent settlements which do not have running water or adequate kitchen and bathroom facilities and equipment, and are devoid of the benefits of electricity. Accordingly, they find the activities such as cooking and baking bread, washing dishes and laundry, and caring for their children and meeting their sanitary needs very tiring and time-consuming. Washing needs to be done with carried water, which is warmed up by collected firewood. The burden of these activities falls disproportionately on the shoulders of women and girls.

The domestic distribution of labor between men and women also shows that women are generally engaged in traditional house work and childcare activities. Washing laundry and dishes,

cooking, baking bread, cleaning, and taking care of the elderly are generally tasks carried out by women. In seasonal agricultural worker families, women take on a double burden. They work in the fields as well along with their household activities. Men, on the other side, have been observed to be more active in the public activities of the household. Shopping, and in some cases taking children to the hospital, are tasks performed by men. Contacts with agricultural intermediaries, the neighborhood foremen (*muhtar*), and other individuals from the local community are done by men. This is an indicator that financial matters are under the jurisdiction of men and that women have to depend on, or cannot live without, men.

Conclusions

The arrival of Syrian refugees has had a prominent effect on labor markets in Turkey. Most refugees are absorbed into the large informal economy of the country which has the worst working conditions and offers very low wages. The existence of a large informal sector and deepening economic crises prepare the preconditions of Syrian's labor market activities and survival strategies. New precariat of Turkish labor market is the Syrian refugees whose only labor market participation form is to work with rates much lower than the minimum wage. Agriculture is one of the major sectors hiring Syrian labor in high numbers, other than textile, construction, and services and it is a site of rivalry taking place between different groups of agricultural workers. The Turkish labor market offers Syrian refugees' integration on informal terms at the bottom of the social strata. The Law on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection issued in 2016 has been too weak to protect the precarious labor market position of Syrians. Although the regulation is a positive step to further protect the refugees in the labor market and facilitate their access to formal employment, its actual outreach has been so far limited.

Drawing on research findings collected in the summer of 2016 in Adana, this chapter focused on Syrian refugees' agricultural work in Turkey as a case for studying Syrian labor market activities, precarious integration as a bottom-up integration strategy, and the relationship between migration and labor markets in Turkey. It underscores the government's central legal and policy frameworks that provide Syrians with some citizenship rights while Syrians are simultaneously pushed into precarious employment due to the existing structural conditions of the Turkish labor market. The analysis emphasizes that the existing conditions of legal rights as available to Syrians and the labor markets built up two different pathways of integration for Syrian refugees. One is formal integration through which refugees are able to make claims to citizenship rights, as well as negotiating their access to employment, humanitarian assistance, and

social services. The second is precarious, informal integration in which Syrians are becoming an indispensable part of labor-intensive industries through which Turkey enters the global international competition in a constant search of tapping into the cheaper forms of labor.

While a young population is advantageous for the labor market, it also presents the risk of a high population that has not benefited sufficiently from education and other basic social rights and services, and lives in constant poverty and social exclusion. The migrant population in particular and the segments of the local population who live beneath the poverty line have the potential to be locked into significant poverty. This could also be an indicator of future tension and conflict between different groups of poor people. As an already low-educated population has lost all access to the formal education system through migration, their chances of breaking the circle of poverty appears to have become even slimmer. Keeping in mind the scarcity and even absence of financial resources specifically income-generating activities of Syrian refugees in Turkey due to forced migration and the limitations of their temporary protection status, access to formal, better paid, and permanent jobs seem as the only solution to mitigate this risk. However, such causality dilemma makes it hard to resolve.

References

- Afanasiyeva, D. (2016). In Turkish sweatshops, Syrian children sew to survive, Reuters Investigates; <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/europe-migrants-turkey-children/>
- Akbaş, S., & Ç. Ünlütaş Ulutaş. (2018). Küresel fabrika kentinin görünmeyen işçileri: Denizli işgücü piyasasında Suriyeli göçmenler, *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2018/1.
- Banki, S. 2013. Precarity of place: A complement to the growing precariat literature, *Global Discourse* 3 (3–4): 450–63.
- Ceritoglu, E., H.B. Yunculer, H. Torun, & S. Tumen. (2017). The impact of Syrian refugees on natives' labor market outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a quasi-experimental design, *Working papers 1705, Research and Monetary Policy Department, Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey*.
- Constant, A.F. (2014). Do migrants take the jobs of native workers? *IZA World of Labor: 10*; <https://wol.iza.org/uploads/articles/10/pdfs/do-migrants-take-the-jobs-of-native-workers.pdf>.
- Constant, A., & K.F. Zimmermann. (2005). Immigrant performance and selective immigration policy: a European perspective, *The Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper No. 1715*.
- Çınar, S. (2014). *Öteki "proleterya": De-proletarizasyon ve mevsimlik tarım işçileri*. NotaBene Yayınları, Ankara.
- Çınar, S. (2018). İnşaat işgücü piyasasında yeni aktörler ve yeni çatışmalar: Türkiyeli işçilerin gözünden Suriyeli inşaat işçileri, *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2018/1.
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2008). *Women workers in Turkey: Global industrial production in Istanbul*.
- Dedeoğlu, S. & Ekiz Gökmen, Ç. (2011). *Göç ve sosyal dışlanma: Türkiye'de yabancı göçmen kadınlar*, Efil Yayınevi.
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2014). *Migrants, work and social integration, women's labor in Turkish ethnic economy*. Palgrave-MacMillan.
- Del Carpio, V. Ximena, & Mathis Wagner. (2015). The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market, *World Bank Group, social protection and labor global practice group, Policy Research Working Paper no: 7402*.
- Development Workshop. (2016a). *Yoksulluk nöbetinden yoksulların rekabetine: Yabancı göçmen işçiler mevcut durum raporu*. (The report on the present situation of foreign migrant workers in seasonal agricultural production in Turkey); <http://www.ka.org.tr/dosyalar/file/Yayinlar/Raporlar/İNGİLİZCE/02/POVERTY%20RIVALRY%20AND%20ANTAGONISM.pdf>
- Development Workshop (2016b). *Bereketli topraklar zehir gibi yaşamlar: Suriyeli göçmen mevsimlik gezici tarım işçileri Adana ovası mevcut durum araştırma raporu*. (The situation analysis report on Syrian seasonal agricultural workers in the Adana plain); <http://www.ka.org.tr/dosyalar/file/Yayinlar/Raporlar/İNGİLİZCE/03/FERTILE%20LANDS%20BITTER%20LIVES%20REPORT.pdf>
- Development Workshop. (2017). *Geçmişten günümüze Adana ovası'nda mevsimlik tarım işçileri ve çocukları: Adana ovası'nda çalışan mevsimlik tarım işçileri ve çocuklara hizmet modeline yönelik mevcut durum analizi*. (Then and now: Seasonal agricultural workers and their children in the Adana plain); <http://www.ka.org.tr/dosyalar/file/Yayinlar/Raporlar/İNGİLİZCE/05/ADANA%20EN/THEN%20AND%20NOW%20REPORT.pdf>
- Development Workshop. (2018a). *Bir yevmiye bir yevmiyedir: Tarım araçları ve Türkiye'de tarımsal üretimde çocuk işçiliği*. (Agricultural intermediaries and child labor in agricultural production in Turkey);

- http://www.ka.org.tr/dosyalar/file/Yayinlar/Raporlar/İNGİLİZCE/05/TARIM%20ARACILARI/TARIM%20ARACILARI_RAPOR_%20ENG.pdf
- Development Workshop. (2018b-Forthcoming). Yoksulun umudu çocuk; mevsimlik tarım işçisi hanelerin sosyo-ekonomik profili ve çocuk işçiliği araştırması.
- Ekiz Gökmen, Ç. (2018). Turizm sektöründe göçmen emeği: Nitelikli emek mi? ucuz emek mi?, *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2018/1.
- European Parliament. (2016). Labor market integration of refugees: Strategies and good practices, *Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department A. Economic and Scientific Policy*; [www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU\(2016\)578956_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/578956/IPOL_STU(2016)578956_EN.pdf)
- Hayata Destek Derneği. (2014). *Mevsimlik gezici tarım işçiliği 2014 Araştırma raporu*; http://hayatadestek.org/yayinlarimiz/Mevsimlik_Gezici_Tarim_Isciligi_%202014_Arastirma_Raporu.pdf.
- Hayata Destek Derneği. (2016). Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Istanbul, <https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/54518>
- ILO. (2016). *Global estimates on migrant workers*.
- Giulietti, C., (2014). The welfare magnet hypothesis and the welfare take-up of migrants, *IZA World of Labor* 37.
- Jordan, B., & P. Brown. (2007). Migration and work in the United Kingdom: Mobility and the social order, *Mobilities* 2(2): 255–76.
- Lewis, H., P. Dwyer, S. Hodkinson, and L. Waite. (2015). Hyper-precarious lives: Migrants, work and forced labor in the global north, *Progress in Human Geography* 39(5): 580–600.
- Kaymaz, T., & O. Kadkoy. (2016). Syrians in Turkey—The economics of integration, ALSHARQ Forum Expert Brief.
- Kormaz, E. (2018). Türkiye’de tekstil sanayisinin sosyal taraflarının mülteci işçilerin istihdamına bakışı, *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2018/1.
- Lordoğlu, K. & M. ve Aslan. (2016). Beş sınır kenti ve işgücü piyasalarında değişim: 2011, 2014; *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2016/2.
- Papadopoulos, D. (2016). The two endings of the precarious movement, in A. Bove, E. Armano, and A. Murgia (eds), *Mapping precariousness, labor insecurity and uncertain livelihoods: Subjectivities and resistance*, pp. 17–35. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Peri, G., (2014) Do Immigrant workers depress the wages of native workers? *IZA World of Labor*: 42.
- Peschner, J. and Tanay, P. (2017). Labor market performance of refugees in the EU, European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Unit, *Working Paper 1/2017: Analytical support to the employment and social developments in Europe 2016 Review (ESDE 2016) Chapter 3: The Labor market and social integration of refugees in the EU*.
- PICUM-(2018) Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, Words matter, Retrieved in 2018 from: <http://picum.org/words-matter/#1470043179771-2-67e4c-96054262-3972>
- Şahankaya Adar, A. (2018). Türkiye’de yeni prekarya Suriyeli işgücü mü?, *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 2018/1.
- Turkish Grand National Assembly. (2015). *Report of the parliamentary research commission established to investigate the problems of seasonal agricultural workers*.
- UNHCR. (2018). *The global trends report: The forced displacement in 2017*.
- Zetter, R., H. Ruaudel, and K. Schuettler. (2017). Refugees' right to work and access to labor markets, KNOMAD Study. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Syrian Migrants and Labor Market in Turkey: A Survey on the Istanbul Textile Manufacturing Sector⁹

Ezgi Pınar

Ezgi Akyol

Ertan Erol

Pedriye Mutlu

Mustafa Kahveci

Kıvanç Yiğit Mısırlı

Cemal Salman

İpek Gümüşcan

Introduction

At the focal point of an increasing demand for insecure and cheap labor lies the notion of migrant labor. In this way, Syrian migrants have become one of the most fervent concerns for Turkey's economy and labor market. In the first days of Syrian migration into Turkey it was believed that there would be a regime change in Syria as other countries in the region had already experienced. This is why, at the very start of the migration flow, Syrian refugees were welcomed as guests and placed in temporary shelters. However, the prolongation of the war and increase of violence in the region resulted in the influx of migrants, making their guest status highly problematic. The "Foreigners and International Protection Law" was issued in April 2014 as a solution to this status problem and within the framework of this law, Syrian refugees in Turkey were categorized under temporary protection status.

Throughout the Syrian migration to Turkey, one can observe three parallel phenomenons. The first is Turkish public opinion; as the days went by, the public began to approach the refugee question as a security/public order problem. The discourse of public order and control became much more pronounced primarily in cities like Gaziantep, where the density of Syrian refugees had been quite high (Yücebaş, 2015, p. 44; Sönmez and Adıgüzel, 2017, pp. 805–807), followed by metropolitan cities, İstanbul being the first (Doğanay and Keneş, 2016, pp. 177–178). This discourse was nourished with discrimination among the workers (ORSAM, 2015, p. 17). The second phenomenon is the growing popularity of capital-oriented solutions for the strategical articulation of Syrian refugees. This was evident from the statement of governmental authorities and the reports prepared by capital organizations. The third phenomenon is Turkey's Syrian foreign policy which made the

⁹ This article is first published in Turkish and translated by Ezgi Pınar and Ezgi Akyol.

refugee issue a two-fold foreign policy. The Turkey–EU refugee deal put refugees in a position of significance for politicians. In addition, refugee issues functioned as a legitimization of the Turkish state’s regional role in the Syrian War. Temporary protection granted leeway to the host states regarding the respective migrants and also laid less burden on them (Voutira & Dona, 2007, p. 167). As a matter of fact, while the refugee issue was being increasingly associated with security problem, Turkish decision makers were able to become the dominant actors guiding the discussion. In this way, refugee politics were being formed in line with the national and international objectives of these actors (Memişoğlu & Ilgıt, 2017, p. 332).

The group of irregular migrants (including those under temporary protection, formal refugees, and the victims of human trafficking) were defined within the labor market in a much more unequal and flexible manner than the “regular migrants” and the citizens of the respective countries (Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2015, p. 89). In addition to being migrant, there were other already-existing causes perpetuating the irregular status of the Syrian migrants. Global production demanded more and more cheap and insecure labor. It can be argued that labor policies in Turkey were largely designed to meet this global demand. The prevalence of the informal sector and precarious working conditions were the two main features of the labor market in Turkey. It should be noted that Syrian refugees were thrown into this structure and their temporary status of refugees only intensified their fragility in the job market.

In this introductory portion we presented the general picture of the Syrian refugee problem in Turkey with its most salient aspects. The notion of migrant labor within the context of Turkish labor market and immigration laws was also introduced. Throughout this chapter, we will detail the issues based on our field research and with reference to the literature on migrant labor, and we will try to analyze the field data in relation to the relevant literature.

The Literature Review

The nature of the informal sector is labor-intensive and such sectors do not require high levels of education and/or qualification. The textile sector, a labor-intensive and informal sector, provides the main labor market for migrant workers to participate in. Domestic care work, construction, and textile and garments manufacturing are among the other sectors where the concentration of migrant labor is high (Şenses, 2015, p. 980). Due to its very nature, this fact is not peculiar to Turkey but is a universally pronounced.

Quantitative studies, which look at the ways of articulating the migrant labor to the labor market and to the factors affecting the quality of the articulation process, largely discuss the correlation between wage differentials and parameters, such as education level, age, gender, language proficiency, and the existence of ethnic/religious groups in the host country. Fortin et al. (2016) discusses the correlation between experience and education level for immigrants in Canada. Authors found a negative correlation with the wages and the age at the date of migration and they argue that the positive impact of education level and experience on wages differ according to the emigrant country. Krahn et al. (2000), based on their research on the Canadian labor market, argue that migrants experience more unemployment and downward occupational mobility than the indigenous people.

Furthermore, Kossoudji (1988), Dustmann and Soest (2002), and Kim (2011), discuss the relation between language proficiency and the wages of the migrants. Mamgain (2003) analyses language proficiency and wage relation on a gender basis and puts forth education as the main factor determining the wages of female migrants and language proficiency as the main determinant of the wages of male migrants. Daniş (2016) introduces the findings of two research projects carried in 2015 and 2016 within the context of workers, trade unions, and global organizations in Turkey. She argues that the textile industry has lost attraction as opposed to the service sector, including shopping malls, call centers, and private security, etc., which have grown after 2000. She adds that while the costs are increasing in the textile sector, revenue remains the same.

Del Caprio et al. (2015) assert that Syrian migrants have a positive impact on the formal sector but brought about wage decrease to the detriment of Turkish workers in the informal sectors. Ceritoğlu et al. (2015) states that though there is no remarkable change in the wages, they agree with Del Caprio et al. that the Syrian refugee participation in the labor force fundamentally results in the exclusion of female workers and poor qualified male workers from the market.

There is also literature on the link between the accommodation conditions of the migrants and their participation to the labor market. Turner (2015) emphasizes the labor structure of the country as a determinant of the differentiation of the migrants living in the cities and in the camps. With regards to this, he compares Jordan and Lebanon. As part of the labor politics of the respective countries, Turner puts forth that the Lebanon elite, who wants to benefit from the excess supply in the labor market, allows accommodation of the refugees outside the refugee camps; while Jordan elites, who refrains from pressure over wages, constrains accommodation of Syrian refugees outside the camps. Being inside or outside the

camps has a direct impact on the labor market participation of the migrants. Considering the fact that less than 1 percent of the refugees in Turkey are living in temporary shelters, the labor market impact of the refugees would be drastic. However, it should be noted that despite these numbers, it is difficult to say that the Turkish state has a policy strategy like Jordan and Lebanon. This fact can be expected to have an intensifying effect on the precarious condition of Syrian migrant workers.

As stated before, it should be understood that Syrian refugees have a crucial effect on the labor market by meeting the demand for cheap and flexible labor. This is confirmed with the fact that Syrian refugees continue to work without work permit despite having temporary protection and the right to own a work permit. Concurrently, it should be expected that the direct impact of Syrian refugees on the daily lives of domestic workers, especially on their wages and rents, should be an important factor partially fashioning the Syrian perception of Turkish workers.

Field Research

The literature on migrant labor provides us with the parameters of the labor market participation for the migrants, and neither the motivation nor the findings of our survey are independent from these parameters.

The textile sector, with its universal character, high rate of informal employment, flexible working hours, its labor-intensive character, peculiarities in Turkey, and relative importance in Turkish economy, is an appropriate field to understand the labor market participation experiences of Syrian refugees and to analyze their interaction with the Turkish workers in the labor process. With its comparatively large sector, İstanbul is an operational space to grasp the research problem. The data provided by the Social Security Institution (quoted by Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology, 2015, p. 20) shows that workers employed in the textile and garment industries (903,743 people) are about 8 percent of the total labor force in Turkey. Taking the informal workers into account, it is estimated that 2.5 million people work in this sector (ibid). When we look at the trajectory of the share of export of the sector across Turkey, the share of the garment industry within overall exportation rose gradually between 1980-1995 and reached 28.6 percent in 1995 (ITKIB, 2008). Still maintaining its significance, due to the newcomers and increasing competition in the international market of garment industry, its shares began to decrease afterwards and was 14.5 percent in 2007 (ibid). By the year 2016, the share of the garment industry was 11.9

percent (ITKIB, 2016) of the overall export in Turkey, meaning that it still had an important place in the economy.

For sampling, three steps were followed. First, determining the officially registered firms and their distribution in the 11 districts. In the second step, respective districts were visited where research would be carried out. Finally, the workshops in the neighborhoods where the surveys were to be undertaken had to be decided. For the geographical distribution of the sector, the database of İstanbul Chamber of Industry (ISO) and Association of Textile and Apparel Exporters (ITKIB) were utilized. ISO and ITKIB records showed that almost 90 percent firms are registered in the European side of İstanbul; thus, the fieldwork is limited to this side of the city.

The districts of Fatih and Şişli, although being prominent districts in the mentioned databases, were excluded from the fieldwork due to the fact that they were not significant production centers any more, but were largely the sales offices of the firms in the sector. Pre-interviews also confirmed that production had shifted to the peripheries of the city.

After determining the districts where production was concentrated, 603 surveys were conducted in the respective neighborhoods. The questionnaire, presented before 300 Syrian workers and 303 Turkish workers, essentially had five themes: “labor process and working conditions”, “encountering of migrant workers and Turkish workers in workplaces and in daily life”, “wages and income level”, “access to social provisions and rights”, and “perception of both Syrian and Turkish workers regarding the future of Syria and the future of Turkey”.

Field Research: Demographic Findings

Demographic distribution of the sample shows that about 50 percent of the workers were under 25 years old. Among the Turkish workers, the most populated group (38 percent) was between 25–35 and 40 percent of the Syrian workers were between the age 18–25. A number of workers above 45 accounted for 5 percent and the vast majority was made up of Turkish workers. One salient point regarding age groups is the rate of child workers. Child workers under 18 corresponded to 19 percent of the total workers, while this number amounted to 29 percent among Syrian workers. In addition to the legal deficit in employee rights, working conditions, and sectoral auditing, there was an increase in the number of working children under 15 which was actually forbidden by Labor Laws as well as international conventions. When we look at the gender distribution of the sample, the rate of female workers among the Syrian textile workers remained 7 percent, while it was 31 percent for the Turkish workers.

Among the employees in the sector, 50 percent were primary school graduates; for female workers it was 55 percent and for male workers it was 49 percent. Among the interviewees, the highest education level, which was taken as one's university degree in percentage, was 7 among the Syrian workers and 2 for the Turkish workers. A general comparison of the education levels revealed that the education level of Syrian workers in the textile sector is higher than the Turkish workers. This result complies with the literature on migrant workers and their downward job mobility.

The analysis of the question on total work experience showed that about 15 percent of workers had work experience of less than one year. Regarding this finding, there was no significant difference between male and female workers; however, the difference between Syrian and Turkish workers was quite striking. The rate of Turkish workers having work experience less than a year was about 5 while it was 24 percent for Syrian workers. This figure could be read as an indicator that Syrians, who were not in the labor force before, had to participate in Turkey's labor market. 60 percent Syrians reported that they were the only working person in the family, while this was 40 for Turkish workers. This data confirms that there is a significant difference between the Syrians and the Turkish in terms of household income. It should be added that the participation of women to the labor force has been higher when there was already another family member already working.

Amongst Turkish workers 55 percent lived in rented houses and 37 in their own residences; 6.6 percent workers stated that they lived in a house belonging to a family member. According to the TÜİK 2015 Household Income and Living Conditions Research Data, 60.4 percent households lived in their own houses, while 26.3 resided in rented houses across Turkey. Across İstanbul, TÜİK 2011 Population and Housing Research showed that 60.6 percent had their own houses. When we compare these rates with our findings, we see that homeownership is considerably below average within the country and that in İstanbul. This meant that the wealth level of the textile workers was quite below levels within the country and the city. While 98.6 percent of Syrians lived in a rented house, more than 73 percent Syrian workers stay in an apartment, 13 percent lived in a public building and 8 percent accommodated in their workplace, with 5 percent in a ruined building or as a bed-sitter. Our research also revealed that Syrian workers live in crowded places. More than 54 percent workers express that they live with more than 7 people in the same house. Strikingly enough 7 percent live with more than 20 people in the same place. It is apparent that most of the Syrian refugees share their housing and rent expenses to make a living.

Field Research: Living Experiences of the Syrian Workers

The survey showed that 80 percent Syrian workers enter Turkey via legal ways while 20 percent enter without a passport. In contrast, more than half of the Syrian interviewees (about 53 percent) stated that they don't have any legal document to reside in Turkey.

Interviews demonstrated that about 80 percent Syrian workers initially settled in İstanbul, and then in cities close to the Syrian border. In other words, about three out of four of Syrians did not settle in the cities through which they entered Turkey. Considering the fact that surveys were conducted in 2015, it can be stated that 80 percent of the Syrian textile workers settled in İstanbul in 2013 or later. One can conclude that Syrians migrated to İstanbul for higher opportunities of employment. Apart from İstanbul, data also showed that family members lived in Turkish cities like Adana, Gaziantep, Kilis, Konya, Mardin, Muğla, Aydın, Ankara, Bursa, Mersin, Antakya, Denizli, İzmir, and Trabzon. These places are either close to the Syrian border or have intensive economic activity (except Trabzon) as economic motivation and transportation facilities have effects on the settlement preference of Syrians after migration.

The survey included questions about the status of the family members, and 68 percent of the interviewees expressed that none of the family members were living in Syria; only 33 percent workers expressed that they moved to İstanbul with their entire family. This data manifested that the war had disrupted family unity amongst Syrian workers.

Regarding language proficiency, Syrian refugees' level of Turkish in terms of speaking, comprehension, and literacy has been questioned. Only one percent interviewees had no knowledge of Turkish, neither comprehension nor speaking; 80 percent stated that they understood Turkish; 41 percent declared that could not speak although they understood it. In spite of the high rates in the level of comprehension and speaking, majority of the workers (76 percent) do not know how to read and write in Turkish.

Data on Syrian's place of birth puts forth that majority of them are from Aleppo. The existence of the textile sector especially in Aleppo and Afrin before the war is among the reasons for the high portion of textile workers coming from this region. When asked if the work they are doing now is compatible with the work they used to do in Syria, 52 percent said yes. Additionally, there is a wide range of professions that Syrians have adapted, such as Quran teacher, blacksmith, greengrocer, accountant, teacher, technician, car mechanic, electrician, glazier, computer programmer, barber, drug distributor, and musician.

Field-Research: Working Conditions in the Sector

To draw up a general picture of the working conditions and the structure of the sector, the findings of the research have been summarized here.

All of the Syrian workers and 50 percent Turkish workers are employed without insurance. The proportion of the workers who experience seasonal layoff is 70 percent, 35 percent of Syrian textile workers and 13.2 percent of Turkish workers are unskilled workers. Only 2.3 percent workers stated that they worked 45 hours per week which is equal to the legal limit of working time. The rest are above the legal limit. Another finding is that 60 percent of workers are unable to use their annual leave on a regular basis. In 60 percent of the workshops where the research was conducted, work overtime was compulsory when the workshop owner asked for it.

Table 1 shows that wages in the sector are far behind the framework provided by the labor law and respective legislation.

Table 1 Average Wage by Gender and Country, 2016

Gender	Average (month/TRY)	wage
General		1,270
Female		1,136
Male		1,302
Turkish		1,410
Female Turkish		1,221
Male Turkish		1,494
Syrian		1,127
Female Syrian		776
Male Syrian		1,155

Comparing average wage of employees by country and gender in the labor market, it was evident that Turkish male workers had the highest average wage. It was followed by Turkish female workers; Syrian male workers fell into the third row, earning an average wage of 340 TRY less than Turkish male workers. The most striking results came from the average wage

of Syrian female workers, which was approximately 50 percent lower than the average wage of Turkish male workers.

Table 2 Wage Levels by Country and Gender, 2016

Wage Level	Total	Syrian	Turkish	Male Syrian	Male Turkish	Female Syrian	Female Turkish
0-750	56	44	12	36	4	8	8
751-1049	145	94	51	80	22	14	29
1050-1250	110	55	55	55	38	0	17
1251-1500	173	72	101	72	75	0	26
1501-1750	46	14	32	14	24	0	8
1751-2000	50	16	34	16	29	0	5
2001-2250	4	0	4	0	4	0	0
2250-2500	9	0	9	0	8	0	1
2500+	10	5	5	5	5	0	0
Total	603	300	303	278	209	22	94

Difference between the wages of Syrian workers and Turkish workers can also be related to factors such as previous work experience, the level of Turkish language proficiency, unemployment tolerance level, and Syrians' consent to low paid jobs. However, as stated earlier, the nature of the textile sector does not require education, so it is apparent that education is not a variable for the wage level.

Perceptions of Syrian and Turkish Workers Regarding the Participation of Syrians in the Labor Market and Social Life: Working Conditions in the Textile Sector

Considering the situation of the textile sector in Turkey within the global production network, the precarious working conditions imposed by the sector in terms of working hours, wages, and insurance manifest themselves in various negative experiences in work life.

Syrian and Turkish workers were asked if they went through any unpleasant experiences such as "encountering discrimination while seeking employment, not getting

paid, receiving a lower salary than agreed, suffering discrimination from the employer or the co-workers at work, being subjected to psychological or physical violence”. Rate of those indicating that they had negative experiences was 39 and 57 percents for Syrian and Turkish workers, respectively. Throughout the interviews, it was observed that Syrian workers were not confident about expressing ‘bad things’ about their workplaces. These rates can be read as their relative silence rather than lack of negative experiences. One can also argue that uncertain and precarious migration process can be interpreted as a reason for the silence of Syrian workers. Moreover, one can see their settlement process and the daily life functions as an impact on governing, immobilizing, and silencing them (Biehl, 2015, pp. 58–9).

Nevertheless, the proportion of those reporting negative experiences reached nearly 50 percent among all interviewed workers; this indicates the intensity and prevalence of negative conditions in the sector.

Perceptions on Participation of the Syrians in Working Life

Stating the obvious, Syrian workers have significant effects on the informal sector. They have considerably changed the labor composition by displacing local informal workers (Akgündüz et al. 2015; Ceritoğlu et al., 2015; Del Carpio et al., 2015; Azevedo, et al. 2016), and by supplying ‘precarious’ and ‘obedient’ labor, Syrian refugees have displaced/have the potential to displace the local labor.

Perception on the participation of the Syrian workforce in the sector is articulated by views on issues such as ease of finding a job, wage differentiation, preference of employers, and influence of Syrian workforce on wages, discrimination, and solidarity at work.

For this purpose, Turkish workers were asked whether they agree with statements such as “Syrians are working for lower wages” and “bosses prefer Syrian workers because it is cheaper”. Nearly three-quarters of the Turkish workers agreed with both statements. They thought that employers preferred Syrians because Syrians worked for lower wages. However, this impression weakened when they were asked whether “Turkish workers have a difficulty in finding job compared to the Syrians”. Only 34 percent Turkish workers shared this view. This can be interpreted in a way that Turkish workers feel the threat of unemployment; however, they were not completely excluded from the sector due to factors such as qualification and experience. Turkish female workers (39 percent) who agreed that Turkish workers had “difficulty in finding a job” were higher than Syrian male workers (33 percent). This shows that Turkish female workers were much more worried about finding a job.

Since 2012, forced migration of Syrians had become more intense. Nonetheless, this was the reason why it was often stated that Syrians “close the labor deficit in the seasonal sectors” and the jobs Syrians were working were those “that Turkish workers would not prefer” (Duruel, 2017, p. 219).

Syrian workers perceive that they are discriminated in their working life (50 percent) and in renting house (74 percent); but still the majority of Syrians (74 percent) point out that Turkish workers helped them in the workplace. We can conclude that rather than Turkish workers, it is Turkish employers and the property owners who discriminate Syrians in the labour market.

Perceptions on the Status and Social Rights of Syrians in Turkey

Our survey showed that 66 percent of Turkish workers indicated that Syrians should not have received a permanent work permit. Yet, Turkish workers had more moderate view about temporary work permit: 67 percent of them supported temporary work permits.

Turkish workers have a relatively positive approach about the enjoyment of the fundamental rights, such as the right to education for Syrian children, with 77 percent of them supporting the provision of education to Syrian children. Turkish female workers, specifically, had a positive attitude in this issue with a noticeable difference compared to Turkish male workers. The percentages are 83 percent for Turkish female workers and 75 percent for Turkish male workers.

Despite the views of Turkish workers indicating that Syrian refugees should remain in “temporary” status, the proportion of Syrians whom they expected to return was low. Only 17 percent of Turkish workers believed that all Syrian refugees would return; conversely, 75 percent of the Syrians expressed their desire to return to their countries as soon as the war ended.

Concluding Remarks

Since 2011, with the gradual expansion of Syrian War to the whole country, millions of Syrians have been forced to migrate both within the country and to neighboring countries. Turkey, like the other countries in the region, has become one of the host countries for Syrians.

This research once again confirms that Syrians work in sectors such as textile, agriculture, and construction, which are based on low-wages, and on an informal, unskilled, and flexible workforce. Although, there was a very limited but legally recognized right of a work permit, all Syrian migrants in the textile sector have been working without work permits

and without insurance. This means a work permit does not actually exist and they are illegal workers. This is an open violation of the labor legislation and these violations leave the door open for the employment of children under legal age of employment and working over legal working hours. As the literature on the migrant labor already indicated, informal and insecure work life is almost a routine for the migrant worker. The field research, while underlying this universal fact, also sheds light on the sector and the country-specific consequences of being a migrant worker. The impact of Syrian migration in the labor market was two-fold and the research showed that participation of Syrian workers did not result in holding a negative perception of them by Turkish workers. The reduction in the wages and increase in the house rents were the two fundamental problems reflected by Turkish workers. This perception of them (Syrians) negatively influences their perception of granting permanent work permits or citizenship rights to Syrians.

In the textile sector, the working conditions were already precarious and open to violations for Turkish workers as well, but still as the fieldwork revealed, there is also inequality within the sector itself. Combined with dynamics such as language, legal status, and daily life, it was apparent that the working life of a migrant worker was much more precarious compared to their counterparts. The field research carried out in the textile workshops in İstanbul revealed this fact. This field research was a contribution to the existing literature on migrant labor, including peculiarities of the textile sector in Turkey. Yet, it should be noted that our findings on gender and age are potentially open for revisions.

References

- Akgündüz, Y., Van Den Berg, M. & Hassink, W. (2015). The impact of refugee crises on host labor markets: the case of the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey. *IZA Discussion Paper No. 8841*.
- Azevedo, J.P., Yang, J.S. & Inan, O.K. (2016). What are the impacts of Syrian refugees on host community welfare in Turkey? A subnational poverty analysis. *The World Bank Report no: WPS 7542*.
- Biehl, K.S. (2015). Governing through uncertainty—Experiences of being a refugee in Turkey as a country for temporary asylum. *Social Analysis*, 59(1): 57–75.
- Ceritoglu, E., Yunculer, H.B.G., Torun, H. & Tumen, S. (2017). The impact of Syrian refugees on natives' labor market outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a quasi-experimental design, *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, 6(1): 5.
- Clean Clothes Company (2015). Facts on the global garment industry, <https://cleanclothes.org/resources/publications/factsheets/general-factsheet-garment-industry-february-2015.pdf>
- Constant, A. & Massey, D.S. (2005) Labor market segmentation and the earnings of German guestworkers. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 24(5), 489–512.
- Daniş, D. (2016). Konfeksiyon sektöründe küresel bağlantılar: göçmen işçiler, sendikalar ve küresel çalışma örgütleri. *Alternatif Politika V. 8, Sayı 3 s: 562–86*.
- Del Carpio, X.V. & Wagner, M.C. (2015). The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market, *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 7402*.
- Doğanay, Ü. & Keneş, H. (2016). Yazılı basında Suriyeli 'mülteciler': ayrımcı söylemlerin rasyonel ve duygusal gerekçelerinin inşası. *Mülkiye Dergisi*, 40 (1): 143–84.
- Dustmann, C. & Soest, A.V. (2002). Language and the earnings of immigrants. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 55 (3): 473–92.
- Duruel, M. (2017). Suriyeli sığınmacıların Türk emek piyasasına etkileri: fırsatlar ve tehditler. *Uluslararası Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 3 (2).
- Fırat, H. (05 Temmuz 2017a). Başbakan yardımcısı kaynak: kimsenin suç işleme özgürlüğü yoktur. *Hürriyet*, 05.07.2017 <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/basbakan-yardimcisi-kaynak-kimsenin-suc-isleme-ozgurlugu-yoktur-40509701> (26.08.2017).
- Fırat, H. (5 Temmuz 2017b). Suç işleyen kendini sınır dışında bulur. *Hürriyet*, 05.07.2017 <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/suc-isleyen-kendini-sinir-disinda-bulur-40510915> (26.08.2017).
- Fortin, N., Lemieux, T. & Torres, J. (2016). Foreign human capital and the earnings gap between immigrants and canadian-born workers. *Labor Economics*, 41: 104-19.
- Hall, M. & Farkas, G. (2008). Does human capital raise earnings for immigrants in the low-skill labor market?, *Demography*, 45 (3), 619–639.
- International Labor Organisation (ILO) (2014). Wages and working hours in the textiles, clothing, leather and footwear industries. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@sector/documents/publication/wcms_300463.pdf
- İstanbul Tekstil ve Konfeksiyon İhracatçı Birlikleri (ITKIB), (2008). Yıllar içinde tekstil ve konfeksiyon ihracatının Türkiye toplam ihracatındaki payı 1980-2007. Retrieved from <https://www.itkib.org.tr/tr/elektronik-kutuphane.html?c=raporlar&page=11>
- İstanbul Tekstil ve Konfeksiyon İhracatçı Birlikleri (ITKIB), (2016). Hazırgiyim ve konfeksiyon sektörü 2016 aralık aylık ihracat bilgi notu. Retrieved from <https://www.itkib.org.tr/tr/elektronik-kutuphane.html?c=raporlar&page=11>
- Kim, J. (2011). Education, English language proficiency, and earnings of male immigrants in the U.S. labor market. *Journal of Business & Economics Research (JBER)*, 1 (3): 17-26.

- Kossoudji, S.A. (1988). English language ability and the labor market opportunities of hispanic and east asian immigrant men. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 6 (2): 205–28.
- Krahn, H., Derwing, T., Mulder, M. & Wilkinson, L. (2000). Educated and underemployed: refugee integration into the Canadian labor market. *Journal of International Migration and Integration/Revue de l'integration et de la migration internationale*, 1(1): 59-84.
- Lang, G. (2000) Native-immigrant wage differentials in Germany: Assimilation, discrimination, or human capital?, *Volkswirtschaftliche Diskussionsreihe, Institut für Volkswirtschaftslehre der Universität Augsburg, No. 197*.
- Lordođlu, K. & Aslan, M. (2016). En fazla suriyeli göçmen alan beş kentin emek piyasalarında değişimi: 2011-2014, *Çalışma ve Toplum*, 49 (2): 789–808.
- Mamgain, V. (2003). Off the boat, now off to work: refugees in the labor market in portland, maine. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 16(2): 113–46.
- Memisoglu, F. & Ilgit, A. (2017). Syrian refugees in Turkey: multifaceted challenges, diverse players and ambiguous policies. *Mediterranean Politics*, 22(3): 317–38.
- ORSAM & TESEV. (2015). Suriyeli sığınmacıların türkiye’ye etkileri. http://tesev.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Suriyeli_Siginmacilarin_Turkiyeye_Etkileri.pdf
- Poston, D.L. (1994) Patterns of economic attainment of foreign-born male workers in the United States, *International Migration Review*, 28 (3), 475-500.
- Rittersberger-Tılıç, H. (2015). Managing’ irregular labor migrants in Turkey. *Göç Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(1): 80-107.
- Sönmez, M. and Adıgüzel, F. (2017). Türkiye’de suriyeli sığınmacı algısı: Gaziantep şehri örneği. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 16 (3), 797–807.
- Şenses, N. (2015). Rethinking migration in the context of precarity: the case of Turkey, *Critical Sociology*, 42(7-8), 975-987
- T.C. Bilim, Sanayi ve Teknoloji Bakanlığı. (2015). Türkiye tekstil, hazır giyim ve deri ürünleri sektörleri strateji belgesi ve eylem planı 2015-2018.
- Turner, L. (2015). Explaining the (Non-)encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labor Market in Lebanon and Jordan, *Mediterranean Politics*, 20 (3), 386–404.
- Voutira, E. and Giorgia, D. (2007). Refugee research methodologies: consolidation and transformation of a field, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20 (2), 163–71.
- Yücebaş, M. (2015). Gaziantep yerel basınında Suriyeli imgesi: Yeni taşranın yeni sığınmacıları: Suriyeliler, *Birikim*, 311, 38–41.

Syrian Refugee Garment Workers in the Turkish Supply Chain of Global Corporations

Emre Eren Korkmaz

Introduction: A Brief Overview

Based on the statistics of the Directorate General of Migration Management, the composition of Syrian refugees is a heterogeneous mix. They comprise:

- refugees who are granted Turkish citizenship (38,000 with family members);
- labor employed legally with work permits (36,000);
- entrepreneurs / business people;
- students (there are around 1.1 million school-aged Syrian children, and approximately 400,000 are not enrolled in any school in Turkey. Although the challenging task of registering 612,000 refugee children with the national education system can already be considered a success, it is still necessary to focus on the future of the remaining 400,000 refugee children. There are also 20,000 undergraduate students in 140 universities);
- returning migrants (those who left Germany or some other European countries to return to Turkey owing to difficulties in the job market and delays in family unification).

Main Challenges for the Labor Market Integration of Refugees

- **Informal labor economy:** Although Turkey has a considerable percentage of the informal economy (around 35 percent), it is easier for Turkish citizens to shift to legal employment when they counter such an opportunity. However, restrictions on the work permit and unwillingness of employers to apply for work permits make it much more difficult for refugees to find legal jobs.
- **Child labor:** Approximately 400,000 Syrian children are not enrolled in any school; they face adverse conditions that force them to work. It is not difficult to find ten-year-old children making shoes at workplaces in İzmir or Gaziantep with their family members, working 13 hours per day and earning 100 TRY (19 USD in December 2018) per week.
- **Employment opportunities:** Hundreds of thousands of students will join the job market in the near future. The 600,000 students currently in primary education and 20,000 undergraduates will start looking for jobs in the coming few years. They will be in a more advantageous position as they will know the Turkish language and have more skills. The ones

who have been granted citizenship will have better opportunities in the market and will face similar conditions as their local peers; however, for the ones who do not have citizenship will face similar problems in obtaining work permits.

This chapter provides a general picture of the employment of Syrian refugees in Turkey within the global garment supply chain. Here, it is important to understand the relations between the informal and formal sectors in Turkey and how such relations have affected the survival strategies of Syrian refugees. In turn, one should analyse how the participation of Syrian refugees in the informal economy has changed these historical relations between formal and informal employment in the Turkish textile-apparel sector. Rather than solely objectifying refugees as a vulnerable group, it is crucial to understand their contribution to industrial relations in order to acknowledge refugees as active agents capable of changing lives and structures within which they operate.

The findings shared in this chapter are based on two fieldworks carried out between August and December 2016 as an integral part of the Turkey Program of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)¹⁰ and between July 2017 and November 2017 as a consultant at Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, a London-based NGO.¹¹

Syrians and the Turkish Garment Supply Chain: *Syrians and the Informal Economy*

Informal economy is defined as producing legal goods and services without being registered with the authorities (Eurofound, 2013). This enables businesses not to pay tax and other social costs, but also means they are not legally protected. The definition of informal economy as producing legal goods and services is a significant point in order to separate these products from criminal undeclared work, such as drug trafficking.

Informal economy is observed in all parts of the world, both in the Global North and Global South. It is estimated that out of a global working population of 3 billion, approximately 1.8 billion people work in the informal economy (Flexibility@work, 2014). However, there are significant differences with regard to the percentages of informal economy in different countries. For instance, in the UK, it is estimated that informal economy is 10 percent of GDP (Williams, 2014) whereas in Brazil, 92.9 percent of all start-up

¹⁰ ETI is a London-based multi-stakeholder alliance of transnational corporations, trade unions, and NGOs. One of the main focuses of the ETI Turkey Program is to deal with the legal and decent employment of Syrian refugees in the textile-apparel sector and the author of this chapter contributes to this Program as a migrant-refugee specialist.

¹¹ It is important to underline that all opinions and arguments presented in this chapter are the author's own, and do not represent, nor have any binding relation with ETI and Business and Human Rights Resource Center.

businesses operate in the informal economy, a figure which reaches 99.3 percent in India (Williams, 2015).

There are two main ways in which the economy can be “informal”. The first is where a workplace or company is informal, meaning it is unregistered with the authorities. In the second, employees may themselves be informal, i.e., they may work in a legal, registered workplace but do not have any legally binding employment contract with the employer, and their social security contributions are not paid by the employer (Flexibility@work, 2014). In Turkey, the second option is observed and registered and unregistered employees work together in the same workplace.

The Business Model in Turkish Garment Supply Chain and Syrian Refugees

In the last 30 years, the Turkish leather-garment-textile industry has developed a fast, high-quality and relatively low-cost mode of production enabling Turkey to become the fifth exporter of textiles in the world in 2016 (Shing Lu, 2017). This rapid development has been possible owing to a dense, vertical, and complex network of small factories and workshops that bigger manufacturers often subcontract to complete specialized tasks and meet the high volume and fast turnover orders of global garment brands retailing in Europe and the US. This competitive advantage is also facilitated by a huge labor force constituted of 1 million formal workers and an equivalent number of informal workers (Doğan & Palamutçu, 2013). Working in the informal economy means the workers being more vulnerable to abuses such as exploitative work conditions, low wages, and long hours, while being unable to join trade unions and organize themselves to have little recourse to protection and remedy. However, the relationship between formal and informal economy is two-folds. They do not only compete with each other but they also collaborate in providing orders to brands before the deadline. The comparative advantage of Turkish garment industry and its magical solution to provide good quality products with low cost rely on this collaboration of formal and informal economy within the supply chain of global corporations.

The informal economy also provides opportunities for migrants and refugees without work permits to be employed and start their own businesses. A research carried out by Kaya & Kıraç (2016) demonstrates that informal labor networks facilitate the development of a relationship between refugees seeking jobs and local employers. Refugees might migrate from border regions within Turkey to İstanbul or other industrial centers with crucial information about the availability of employment and other related issues such as accommodation.

Based on fieldwork observations, Syrian refugees are forced to work under poor conditions, with low wages (generally lower than the minimum wage), for long hours. As most of the refugees are from rural areas in Syria, they tend to be unfamiliar with the concepts of industrial relations. Another significant problem is the language barrier. Added to the informal, exploitative conditions, employers often prefer to employ refugee children instead of adults, who can learn the job and language quickly, perhaps faster than adult workers, and who would not oppose the given conditions. It is not just employers, but also their families, dependent on the wages they bring, who force children to accept the given working conditions (Erol et al., see this volume; Kaya & Kıracı, 2016).

The reluctance of employers to formally hire Syrian refugees, however, reflects a broader issue in the industry. Based on in-depth interviews, Turkish employer associations observe that global brands play an important role in reproducing the industry's structural problems, including informal labor and child labor, and associated issues such as low level of application for work permits for Syrian refugees. Specifically, they criticize the purchasing practices of these brands. One representative of Turkish garment exporter association explained: "if brands want Turkish suppliers to employ refugees and pay the living wage to all employees, brands should take this into account in their purchasing prices. If suppliers don't earn their living wage, how can they pay the living wage to their employees?" This highlights underlying contradictions between the expectations set out by sustainability-Corporate Social Responsibility departments and the practices of buying departments: the former want suppliers to invest in social compliance and support the employment of disadvantaged groups, while the latter insists on lowering prices and production costs.

The Turkish garment industry has evolved to deliver goods quickly and flexibly for European high street brands, and is under continual pressure to do so. This pressure leads to the use of undeclared subcontracting, informal work arrangements, and low wages to deliver, all of which create an exploitative environment for vulnerable workers of all kinds. Flexibility and speed in delivery are possible owing to a network of tens of thousands of factories with fewer than 100 employees. These factories draw on a vast pool of both formal and informal workers who work side by side. They primarily produce garments for a large domestic market, as well as serving as excess capacity to produce for organized retail and export to foreign markets. These factories do not have the same ethical compliance requirements as suppliers working for foreign brands (Tier 1 suppliers), which set standards. Tier 1 factories use and frequently change subcontractors to meet demand and fast turnover orders. This high

turnover makes the mapping of lower tier suppliers particularly difficult and requires continuous monitoring by brands to prevent undeclared subcontracting.

The business model reinforces a long-standing relationship between the formal and informal economies. As formal workplaces are generally suppliers to global brands, they usually comply with the requirements of Turkish law, international standards, and the codes of conduct imposed by these brands. When a violation of these regulations or requirements is reported, it is easier for stakeholders to take remedial measures. However there are no such binding rules in the informal sector. In order to produce low-cost, quality products rapidly, the authorized suppliers / Tier 1 suppliers mobilize large networks of other workplaces, many of whom employ informal workers, in order to meet deadlines. In the past, when such orders had been received, given that the workforce was almost entirely composed of Turkish citizens, it was easier to register these informal workers for a temporary period, hence complying with the necessary legislative requirements and codes of conduct of the global retailers. With the movement of Syrian refugees into Turkey, however, the character of “informality” has begun to transform. Before, both informal and formal workers were in the vast majority Turkish citizens, who offered the flexibility for employers to shift from informal to formal conditions and vice versa.

This process has now become more complicated since the informal sector now also accommodates a sizeable Syrian refugee population. Before January 2016, the employment of Syrians under temporary protection did not have a legal basis; the Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees under Temporary Protection introduced the right to acquire a work permit for these workers. But this development has also brought with it new bureaucratic procedures which, in fact, eliminate the flexibility offered by the previous arrangement.

Findings of the Field Work

The fieldworks include focus group meetings and in-depth interviews with different industry social actors including global brands, Turkish suppliers, trade unions, bureaucrats, and NGOs. A workshop was organized in August 2016 with all Turkish trade unions in İstanbul and another one in October in London with the corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments of the ETI-affiliated global retailers participating in the Turkey Program. Also in October 2016 one workshop was organized in İzmir and another in İstanbul with the senior management of approximately 200 supplier factories. In the supplier workshop 20 groups were formed and each group had 10 participants.

Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with employer associations (TGSD¹², TTSIS¹³), trade unions¹⁴, NGOs (Support to Life, IMPR, United Work), and the Ministry of Labor's Directorate of International Workforce, Ministry of Economy and UNDP Turkey in December 2016 and July 2017. These interviews focused on their specific policies towards Syrian refugees and their expectations from the employment of refugees in future.

Global Brands and Suppliers

Global brands / companies mainly deal with the employment of refugees issue via their departments of social compliance and corporate social responsibility. In general, there is a growing interest from global retailer brands to implement projects and policies aimed at the refugees. There are many retailers who openly invite their suppliers to employ Syrian refugees; however, such calls have not had much effect on suppliers until now.

The media coverage and the work of NGOs and international agencies to expose and report refugees working under vulnerable conditions have impacted on the decisions of brands to take further steps about the refugee question. As a consequence of the hierarchical structure of the global supply chains of corporations, even though they do not directly own production units and employ workers in Turkey, they have responsibilities for the working conditions of their suppliers. Therefore, not to be exposed by the media and to avoid possible negative campaigns, brands tend to formulate projects aimed at refugees and to train and mobilize their suppliers on the refugee question.

Although it is mainly the brands who trigger debates and projects on the refugee question, their positive approach is challenged by the suppliers in Turkey. Suppliers were critical of the working methods of the global supply chain management of brands, seeing them as operating unfair purchasing practices.

First, one must understand that these suppliers are the authorized suppliers of global brands. This means they are producing for garment retailer brands, mainly those from Europe and the US, and their productions sites are regularly audited by those corporations. These suppliers sign contracts with the brands and are directly responsible for delivering products at

¹² TGSD Türkiye Giyim Sanayicileri Derneği (Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association).

¹³ TTSIS: Türkiye Tekstil İşverenleri Sendikası (Textile Employers Association of Turkey).

¹⁴ DİSK Tekstil (Textile Workers Union, an affiliate of Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions), TEKSİF (Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Union of Turkey, an affiliate of Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions), DERİTEKS (Leather and Textile Workers Union, an affiliate of Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions), and ÖZ İPLİK İŞ (All Garment, Textile, Leather Workers Union (HAK İŞ Confederation)—the four trade unions operating in textile, garment, and leather industries under three confederations which have right to bargain collectively and sign collective agreements with companies.

the right time and of an agreed quality. As the number of suppliers and sub-suppliers cannot be controlled by brands, to determine the level of responsibility, a distinction is made between the “authorized” and “unauthorized”. Suppliers who employed an informal workforce, as exposed by the media and by NGOs, were defined as unauthorized suppliers by brands.

Second, suppliers unanimously stated that they do not employ Syrian refugees. However, interestingly, they argue that the refugee question is the biggest problem within the industry, and that it is a threat to sustainable business, so certain steps should be taken to resolve the issue. Furthermore, as they are directly responsible to brands and are regularly audited, their human resources policies are basic and sustainable, and they have a generally conservative approach to preserving their workforce, opting not to introduce radical changes that might disrupt peace at the workplace.

The main reason of the debate on purchasing practices lies in the expectations that the brands have of them. Retailer brands aim to decrease costs and delivery times, while increasing the quality of products from their suppliers. As there is a fierce competition between various countries such as Turkey, China, Bangladesh, India, and many others to attract orders from brands, and as these brands are global players, they benefit from this competition to lower costs. Turkey’s main advantage in the textile-apparel industry is its quality, as it is a traditional industry within Turkey, coupled with its geographical proximity to Europe that allows orders to be delivered in a short time.

How do these three expectations for suppliers—of being cheap, producing good quality products, and doing so quickly—come together? The answer lies in the historical relation and collaboration between the formal and informal sectors in Turkey’s textile-apparel industry. As explained earlier, the authorized suppliers of brands mobilize a large network of sub-suppliers to meet their deadlines. In order to make companies happy by complying with their rules and codes, suppliers could shift informal workers to formal status temporarily until the order has been fulfilled. However, with the involvement of hundred thousands of Syrian refugees in the labor market on an informal basis, such collaboration has been broken down. It is not easy to obtain work permits for these workers (as it was for Turkish workers) as it is a lengthy and expensive process.

This situation, then, outlines the reasons behind the demands for justice and fairness from Turkish suppliers, demonstrating the extreme difficulties they face to continue business as usual within the global supply chain. This is also the reason for which Turkish suppliers contend that the refugee question is the most significant problem within the industry, even though they do not employ any refugees at their workplaces. Therefore, for Turkish suppliers,

meeting order deadlines at lower costs to provide good quality products for brands is not sustainable. They still cannot get a long-term order guarantee from brands, cannot have longer deadlines, and still face pressure to lower prices.

Before reaching a conclusion, there is a need to explain one further issue. As formal workplaces in Turkey are perpetually audited to comply with brands' regulations, the number of workers and machines remains low when compared with conditions in some competing countries of manufacture. In Bangladesh, for example, an average workplace employs thousands of employees; in Turkey most of these authorized workplaces employ only tens or hundreds of employees. However, they accept orders from brands that could more feasibly be produced by a much greater number of workers and machines. For instance, there might be only 200 workers at a workplace to deliver an order received from a reputed brand, though actually an order of such proportion to be delivered within such a limited time period would actually require 1,000 workers. So the rest of the workforce is found through sub-suppliers which are, as previously seen, more likely to employ an informal workforce.

This reality is known to both suppliers and brands because this is a simple mathematical calculation of the number of machines and number of employees, calculating the number of weeks required to produce the given order. Additionally, as brands demand employers pay at least the minimum wage, and some brands demand the higher "living wage", together with all necessary taxes and social security contributions, it is also possible to calculate the cost of a product. Therefore, as the interviewed suppliers point out on the issue of fairness, it is not possible to pay the living wage to workers and maintain an eight-hour working day if these brands which place the orders also insist on lowering the prices of each product.

To meet these demands can also indirectly cause further exploitative conditions. As a result of the low profit margins suppliers achieve, authorized suppliers rely on distributing their order to sub-suppliers with lower costs. While the authorized supplier pays the "living wage" and provides a good workplace to a few hundred workers, thousands of other workers are forced to work informally and/or for a minimum wage for extremely long hours. The employment of Syrian refugees under informal and exploitative working conditions in this sense challenges the model of the supply chain management system.

Trade Unions

As unionized companies do not employ refugees and as unions cannot recruit informal workers, there have not been any refugee union members in the sector. Additionally, they do not have any specific policy to organize refugees or demand from employers to employ refugees in the unionized workplaces. Trade union officers accept and recognize the basic rights and liberties of refugee workers; however they also argue that their informal employment is a threat to labor relations and bargaining position that the local people have with regard to their wages. Taking the comments of the union officers as a whole, it is not difficult to observe a “local worker–refugee worker” distinction. This may even be stated as “our workers and them”. However, unions support policies and programs aim at legalizing and improving the working conditions of refugee workers, which might eliminate the unfair competition between workers based on low wages and poor working conditions. So local workers can preserve their jobs and companies may employ refugees when they cannot find a local worker for a position.

Approaches of Authority

Turkey is a major host of refugees, and it is necessary to acknowledge that central and local authorities, together with local communities, have been working hard to provide services for refugees. Although many refugees face problems in their daily lives about education, labor market integration, and health services, one can observe improvements in these services. Authorities have begun to give more importance to long-term development policies, apart from humanitarian assistance. However, there are political, economic, and other risks that should be considered to understand the challenges faced by the bureaucracy (Kaymaz & Kadkoy, 2016; İçduygu & Millet, 2016).

The failed coup attempt in June 2016, the state of emergency following it, and consequent political polarization are the main political risks. The government decrees see the bureaucratic structure shifting frequently as a high turnover of bureaucrats creates periodic delays in the existing agenda. This has included the departments and directorates dealing with refugees at different ministries. Another political risk is the politicization of the refugee question following the presidential referendum in April 2017. Such politicization is an obstacle to promote services given to refugees. Although there have been many elections since 2011, the refugee question has not been at the top of any of the political parties’ agendas. However, since many opposition figures used the refugee question to increase their

support in the recent referendum, we observe more anti-refugee rhetoric to follow in the 2018 presidential and parliamentary elections. Under the new regime, the president needs 51 percent of the total votes, and within the narrow margin between political components, the refugee issue may become more central in the agendas of political parties.

Apart from the political risks, it is worth mentioning the economic risks involved. High unemployment rates, particularly among the youth, currency fluctuations, and possible economic problems in the future may affect the livelihoods of refugees both from job creation and employment perspectives and in terms of their relationship with local communities.

Last but not the least, security risks (war in Syria and terror attacks) might also change the public perception of refugees. The state's approach towards (I)NGOs is also worth to mention. When an INGO receives funds from a donor, it generally outsources this project to a local NGO and so less money is spent on refugees. The authorities would like to have more say on these funds and they claim that uncoordinated efforts of NGOs do not allow them to make long-term plans.

Thus, the government is in preparations to regulate and limit the activities of humanitarian NGOs in the near future. The main argument is that in the seventh year of the crisis, there should be a shift from a humanitarian approach to a long-term/integration and development-oriented approach. NGOs will not be excluded, but their activities will be limited. This approach is shared by some fundamental funders/donors that aim to reduce the amount of funds for NGO projects.

Although the projects and programs geared at employing refugees have the active participation of all stakeholders – thus creating a synergy in the Turkish textile-apparel industry – such risks might have an adverse effect on the decisions taken by stakeholders to deal with refugees in future.

Conclusion

The mass movement of Syrian refugees into Turkey has made already endemic problems within the Turkish industry more complex. Turkey's large informal sector and, within it, child labor, did not begin with the influx of Syrian and Afghan refugees, or even Nigerian and Georgian migrants in the previous decade, however, irregular and illegal employment already existed. Refugees and migrants, who need to work to survive, use their networks to find places in informal workshops within the sector.

Just granting work permits to these refugees does not bring a solution. For many years, there have been such projects conducted by the Turkish authorities, NGOs and other international organizations followed by the granting of work permits in January 2016. But these endeavors have led to limited progress. The reason for this is that it is not possible to separate out individual aspects of industry-wide issues. The problems that refugees face in the employment market in Turkey cannot be solved unless the problems surrounding the labor market participation as a whole is taken into account.

Following such a sudden and dramatic change in their lives, and with the current level of their industrial experience and language proficiency, as newcomers (even with a work permit) they would still be likely to find only informal jobs, or formal jobs with the lowest wages and the worst conditions. This is similar to those Turkish citizens who migrate to metropolitan cities from rural areas, either to find a job or fleeing violence in their hometowns. When a country has a large informal sector (as is the case of Turkey), and if there are no effective inspections, audits, and legal enforcement practices, employers will always find a labor force to exploit.

As granting work permits is not the sole solution, and with vocational and language training only providing limited progress, a smooth transition from informal economy to formal economy is necessary to save children and refugees from exploitation. However, this requires two assurances—first, a process of strict control and enforcement by the authorities, and, second, reform of the garment sector’s business model to avoid “feeding” the informal sector.

Addressing purchasing practices would be a first step towards profound changes in the industry’s business model. The current model of fast, cheap and volume fashion leads to precarious and exploitative labor conditions by driving prices down and shifting responsibility and accountability down the supply chain. Fundamentally, it would require a change in the relationship between brands, their suppliers, and other industry stakeholders to give more voice to workers and their associations as well as suppliers. Human rights due diligence by brands and collaborative and collective approaches involving these various stakeholders could assist in setting fair prices, driving transparency about when and why there is a need for subcontracting, risks and ethical issues in factories, and ensuring that the rights of all workers are protected.

These processes are critical at a time when private investors and companies, including garment brands, are increasingly incentivized and relied upon to invest and create jobs in refugee hosting countries as part of international migration management programs geared to keeping displaced people near their countries of origin.

References

- Directorate General of Migration Management. (2014, April). Law on foreigners and international protection, Publishing number: 6. Retrieved from http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/eng_minikanun_5_son.pdf.
- Directorate General of Migration Management. (2018). İstatistikler. Retrieved from: http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/gecici-koruma_363_378_4713_icerik.
- Dogan, N. & Palamutcu, S. (2013). Tekstil ve hazır giyim sektöründe nitelikli iş gücü yetiştirme programları. 2023e 10 kala 3. Sanayi Şurası. Ankara: T.C. Bilim, Sanayi ve Teknoloji Bakanlığı. Retrieved from <http://www.sanayisurasi.gov.tr/pdfs/tekstil-ve-hazir-giyim-sektorunde-nitelikli-is-gucu-yetistirme-programlari.pdf>.
- Eurofound. (2013). Tackling undeclared work in Turkey. Dublin: Eurofound. Retrieved from: https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1324en6_0.pdf.
- Flexibility@work. (2014). Bringing the undeclared economy out of the shadows: the role of temporary work agencies. Amsterdam: Randstad.
- İçduygu, A. & Millet, E. (2016). Syrian refugees in Turkey: Insecure lives in an environment of pseudo-integration. Global Turkey in Europe Working Paper No. 13. Retrieved from: http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/gte_wp_13.pdf.
- Kaya, A. & Kırac, A. (2016). Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Turkey. Support to Life Association. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/54518>.
- Kaymaz, T. & Kadkoy, O. (2016). Syrians in Turkey—The economics of integration. AlSharq Forum, Expert Brief. Retrieved from https://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1473326257-7.Syrians_in_Turkey_____The_Economics_of_Integration.pdf.
- Sheng Lu. (2017). WTO reports world textile and apparel trade in 2016. Retrieved from: <https://shenglufashion.com/2017/10/12/wto-reports-world-textile-and-apparel-trade-in-2016/>.
- Williams, C. C. (2014). *The informal economy and poverty: Evidence and policy review*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Williams, C. C. (2015). The informal economy as a path to expanding opportunities'. South Africa: Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2804172>.

The Invisible Working Force of Minor Immigrants: The Case of Syrian Children in Turkey¹⁵

Kuvvet Lordođlu

Mustafa Aslan

Introduction

With this research, we have tried to understand the current working conditions and education of Syrian immigrant children workers, compelled to begin work for survival. Our research takes into account the current situation of Syrian migrant children workers and opens the findings of fieldwork to debate. During the fieldwork, we have registered some striking results concerning the Syrian migrant children workers living in three provinces. The main criteria of choosing these provinces were their being the host to a significant number of Syrian immigrants. For example, İstanbul has the most concentrated Syrian immigrants. Two other provinces, Şanlıurfa and Mardin, also have a considerable number of Syrian immigrants and all three of them encourage informal employment, which has facilitated many children workers to find a job.

The total number of registered Syrian immigrants coming to Turkey between 2011 and June 2018 exceeds 3.5 million. Immigrants who have not been registered are not included in this data. According to official data of the Directorate General of Migration Management, one million 657 thousand 953 of the Syrian immigrants are under 18. Among them, 663 thousand 953 persons (40 percent), are aged between 10–18 years¹⁶, and they are potential minor workers. As statistical database is unavailable, it is difficult to estimate the number of children who are unable to go to school, hence are part of the Turkish labor force. The majority of these children work in informal jobs without any social security protection.

¹⁵ This paper is first presented at the International Forum on Migration Statistics, organized by OECD in Paris on 15–16 January 2018.

¹⁶ İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management) (2018).

Table 3 The Number of Syrian Immigrant Children Aged 0–18, Registered in Turkey in 2018

Age	Male	Female	Total
0-4	265,029	247,535	512,564
5-9	248,625	233,137	481,762
10-14	194,105	178,392	372,497
15-18	161,241	129,889	291,130
Gn. Total	869,000	788,953	1,657,953

Source: Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, 2018.

Despite significant differences between the qualitative aspects of the work of immigrant children, fieldwork data demonstrate that an important number of these children work in small service and production workplaces and do different jobs according to their gender. Like the adults they do independent jobs like garbage collection, marketing, working for small shop as shopkeepers which don't need any qualification, or work in textile and weaving industry, auto repairing, building painting, ironworking, and furniture manufacturing workshops, or as porters for shops. In some cases, there are similarities between the work of an adult member of the family and that of the children. It has been observed that there is no relationship between children's gender and working or staying out of the working life. However, we observed during fieldwork that girls participated relatively less than the boys.

Methodology and Scope of the Study

The fieldwork conducted on the three selected provinces is mainly related to the preliminary findings about the Syrian migratory child labor. The fact that fieldwork is done in a limited area and is more qualitative than quantitative will lead to a careful evaluation of the findings.

Under the scope of this research, we tried to observe the relationship of Syrian migrant children workers with working life and their interest for working under two groups determined according to their ages. ILO defines individuals under the age of 18 as "children and adolescents". In our field study, we divided the children according to this definition in two categories depending on their age: one between 6–14 years old and the other between 15–18 years old. Different questions were asked to migrant families and their children, depending on whether they continued with their schooling or had it been interrupted.

The majority interviews with children were conducted in the presence of their families. Only nine children (six in İstanbul, one in Şanlıurfa, and two in Mardin) were interviewed outside the family. At the beginning we planned to conduct the fieldwork only in Şanlıurfa and Mardin, but then we included İstanbul under the scope of the research. Interviews were held with the help of translators who spoke Arabic or Kurdish. A large part of interviews in İstanbul took place in the Association of Damascus Scholars of the Syrian Immigrants. With the help of NGOs operating in these areas and that of the translators working with us, we could contact the families of these children. In general, snowball method was used to reach interviewees.

A total of 62 families in three cities (22 in İstanbul, 30 in Şanlıurfa and 10 in Mardin) and 165 children were interviewed; 62 of the 165 children interviewed (36 percent) were working, 44 (71 percent) of the working children were males and 18 (29 percent) were females.

Table 4 Number of Children Reached under the Scope of Research

İstanbul		Mardin		Şanlıurfa		Total	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
43	40	13	9	19	41	75	90

All the Syrian migrant children workers and their families, interviewed under the scope of the fieldwork conducted in Mardin, Şanlıurfa and İstanbul, declared that they were working in an informal manner. Except a small number of families who did not send their children to work, because their financial situation was good or the adults were working, it was observed that at least one child was working in each of the interviewed families. Just like adult workers, the Syrian minor workers were paid very low wages. Behind their acceptance of working with low wages there were the serious needs of their families for the money they earned.¹⁷

¹⁷ For more details see, Lordoglu & Aslan (2016).

Table 5 Working Situation of Interviewed Children in Three Cities

City	Number of Children				Number of Working Children			
	Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female	Total	%
İstanbul	43	40	83	50,3	17	7	24	38,7
Mardin	13	9	22	13,3	4	5	9	14,5
Şanlıurfa	19	41	60	36,4	23	6	29	46,8
Total	75	90	165	100	44	18	62	100

Limits of the Study

One of the important constraints of this study is that the data collected is limited only to the information obtained from the parents and children. The sources we have reached have been the families in general and their working children. The sources we evaluated were based on qualitative interviews and the information given by interviewed persons. In order to test the reliability of data no control survey has been conducted. For example, no contact had been established with employers of the workplaces where migrant children were working. The reason is to prevent the migrant children workers from eventual ill-treatment of their employers and protect their interests at the workplaces.

The second constraint of the study is the lack of statistical data for Syrian children aged between 0–18 years, both in terms of their working status and education level. In this regard, the numerical data concerning the education of migrant children workers is contradictory. The only data source in our hand is gender-based data of the Directorate General of Migration Management for those under the age of 18 years. However, there is no indication of how many of these children are going to the school and are working at the same time or how many of them are working only.

Likewise, there is no published official data on the number of Syrian children registered in the schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. In this point also there are only some estimates. Concerning the situation of children both in terms of their working and educational backgrounds, there are some research results limited to one area or province. However, these results are insufficient to give a reliable idea about the general situation of Syrian immigrants. This has been another important constraint in the collection of data for the present research.

Syrian Minor Workers in Turkey

According to a report published in 2013 by the ILO, in 2012 there were 168 million children workers in the world (ILO, 2013. p. vii). This number has decreased during the last four years; 151,622 children still continue to do the worst jobs in the world (ILO, 2016, p. 6). Article 3, paragraph (d) of ILO Convention No. 182 qualifies child labor as the worst forms of “work which, by its nature or the circumstances and in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children”. Turkey signed Convention 182 in 2001 and is engaged to eliminate, “in the frame of programme depending on time child labor for all children until 2015” (Kalkınma Atölyesi, 2014, p. 11). Similarly, Article 71 of the Turkish Labor Cod No. 4857 prohibits employment of children who have not completed 15 years.

Despite all legal and legislative measures, more than half of the school-aged children continue to join the labor market.¹⁸ It is possible to claim that with the arrival of Syrian immigrants in Turkey since 2011, the number of child workers is increasing and their working conditions are worsening in every aspect. But it is wrong to say that this is caused by the arrival of Syrian immigrants or that Syrian immigrants are the source of the problem. Child labor problem in Turkey is related to the structure of the labor market rather than to the arrival of Syrian immigrants.

The more important finding of the fieldwork conducted for this research is that a significant proportion of Syrian immigrant families accept their children to work and even encourage them to work because of economic difficulties. Children, like adults, work on extremely difficult and hard conditions. Referring to the data obtained during field work about the economic conditions of the families, we can say that these children are participating largely in the Turkish labor force market or have the desire to do so. According to a recent study, more than 70 percent Syrian migrant children work six to seven days a week, and are commonly subjected to physical and verbal abuse at work (Yalçın, 2016, p. 33). Such was the case of the 10 and 12 year-old brothers living in İstanbul, A. and M. who went to school in mornings and to work between 13:00–20:00 pm, were paid 150 TRY (approximately 23 USD) per week, and had to face violent and bad treatment at work.

The results of various researches made on the issue in different regions of Turkey point out that nearly half of the Syrian immigrant families do not send their children to school because of economic difficulties.¹⁹ In a statement during the 1st International Conference on

¹⁸ The TÜİK child labor survey, which was held every four years until 2012, was not conducted in 2016. For this reason we refer the survey of 2012

¹⁹ 46.9 percent of Syrian families' children living in İstanbul do not go to school either because they have to work in order to help their families (26.6 percent) or for their families can not afford school expenses (20.3

Migration and Security, on 11 November 2016, Undersecretary of Ministry of National Education, Yusuf Tekin said that out of 900 thousand Syrian immigrant students in Turkey, about 509 thousand (57.4 percent) were enrolled at school.²⁰ This meant that half of the remaining students were deprived of the right to education or were not willing to continue to go to school. Finally, according to a research conducted by Murat Erdoğan in 2017,

(...) at the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, from 1 million 10 thousands Syrians immigrant children at the age of compulsory school, 612 thousand were enrolled in Turkish school. (...) By the end of 2017, the number of Syrian children who are not enrolled in school was more than 400 thousand. Considering those who were in compulsory school age in the previous years but did not figure in the statistics anymore, one can easily estimate that at least 700–800 thousand Syrian immigrant children were affected by this situation, i.e. ‘lost generations’ (Erdoğan ,2017, pp. 8–9).

So there is an important relationship between Syrian immigrant children’s access to school and their participation in the labor market. In other words, as stated in the report of Trade Union DİSK / Genel-İş, "the children who can’t benefit from educational opportunities are working in the informal sector” (DİSK / Genel-İş, 2017, p. 7).

Some Findings on the Living and Working Conditions of Syrian Minor Workers

Children between 6–14 years and studied under the scope of this research are working to seek a living for their families or because adults members of their families are unable to undertake work for various reasons. The situation of the Syrian immigrant M. whom we interviewed during fieldwork is a typical example. M. was working as moulder in Aleppo. One day a missile fired from an unknown direction, hit the building where he owned an apartment. The building was destroyed. M. had to leave Aleppo and settle in a village near Kobanê city. Few months later the ISIL attacked the whole region and with thousands of immigrants like himself M. had to come to Turkey and settle in Şanlıurfa. As the hernia from which he was suffering from before coming to Turkey had gotten worse, M. had to quit work. Therefore, presently he tries to find job for his two boys aged 9 and 11 years. Both of them has found employment in a bakery. This is also the case of N. who came from the Gouta district of Damascus and settled in İstanbul. Having lost her husband in the war before coming to İstanbul, she could not work due to a cervical disc hernia. Therefore, her two daughters aged

percent). Again, 27–28 percent Syrian immigrant families declared to the investigators that they send their children to work in state of school because they are in economic difficulties (Kıraç & Kaya, 2016, pp. 27–28).

²⁰ See Milliyet (2017).

17 and 15 had to work as cleaners in a textile workshop. Similarly, Z. who is from Aleppo and living in İstanbul had to give up her job because of her disc hernia, and her 14-year-old daughter had to work instead of her. Many other Syrian children older than 9 years are working and helping financially their families. It should be noted that there is no difference between boys and girls for working.

The economic situation of families is the determined criteria: families whose financial situation is not good are forced to send their children to work regardless of their gender. In other words, due to the economic problems that their families encounter, Syrian migrant children are participating in labor market to a considerable extent. In a sense, Syrian migrant children workers are at the bottom of the backup labor force. They are ready to work in any sector where they can find a job. For them, the main criterion is that they get paid for the work they undertake. As we observed during fieldwork, the fact that they are paid less than the domestic workers is not contested by them. In some cases, employers even did not pay their wages partly or completely saying that they have become bankrupt or claiming that the workers did not perform their job one day. For example, a young girl named S. worked with her mother at a textile workshop for 750 TRY per month. After working for a month, the employer fired them under pretext of having become bankrupt and avoided payment of their accumulated wages. Similarly, 3 years ago, A. was working in İstanbul as a pressman for a monthly salary of 1250 TRY. The Turkish pressman who did the same job as him was working legally and receiving a monthly salary of 1800 TRY. But even A. never objected to this difference of salary; an after-noon he did not go to work because he was unwell, the employer fired him and his brother who was working too and paid them 750 TRY, half of salary, even though they had worked for 27 days of the month. Similarly, two Syrian sisters aged 17 and 16 worked in a textile workshop with a monthly salary of 750 TRY, while local workers who did the same work as them were provided insurance as well as a monthly salary of 1250 TRY. According to the parents, their daughters were working harder than domestic workers. As they were obliged to work, even if they were aware of the reality, they stated considering themselves lucky to some extent, comparing themselves to workers who had never been paid.

As one can notice from the above examples, Syrian immigrant children accepted the long working hours for very low wages and reconciled with their condition that prevented them from going to school. The difficult economic conditions also hampered the education of these children. All of the families interviewed during the fieldwork declared that they were obliged to send their children to work for economic reasons. This is the case of a large

proportion of Syrian minor immigrant workers, aged between 6 and 14 years. As it's the cases of Ali, Quteybe, Raman, Dara and Aram, who were part of this study, the families either sent their children to work instead of sending them to school or kept them at home in hope that they would find a job.

The working hours for immigrant minor workers vary between 12 and 14 hours per day. This is the case of the two young girls, 14 and 17 years old, and working in Mardin 12 hours a day. On the other hand, a 14-year-old girl living in Şanlıurfa said she was working 12 hours a day (09:00-19:00) in a cosmetic shop. The working hours of Dara and Aram brothers (9 and 11 years old) start at 07:00 am and continue until 21:00 pm. They are doing all sorts of work during these long hours. For example, when Aram does not serve bread to the houses, he makes tea for other workers, wash glasses, and wipe the floors. In the same way, when his brother Dara finishes the task of weighing the dough balls, services tea to the workers, brings the bread to houses, as well as carries wood inside the bakery, washes tea glasses and dough cauldrons.

Stating the obvious, the Syrian minor workers are paid low wages for long working hours. For example, the son of F. who lives in Şanlıurfa works in a bakery for a salary 20 TRY per week; 12-year-old T. also works at the bakery, serving bread to the houses from 08:00 am to 12:00 noon and is paid 4 TRY per day. L., 14 years old, works in a textile workshop from 10:00 am to 05:00 pm and receives 65 TRY per week. The 14-year-old sister of R. works as packer in a pasta factory. She starts at 18:00 pm and finishes at 06:00 am for a daily salary of 35 TRY. Another girl, named R. and aged 15 years, works as shopkeeper in a store. She works six (sometimes seven) days a week, starting at 08.00 am and finishing at 20:00 pm for a salary of 60 TRY per week. A., 15 years old, works in a furniture workshop from 08:30 am to 19:30 pm for a salary of 100 TRY per week. It is also worth mentioning that he spent 30 TRY of his salary for going to work.

In a similar manner, 17-year-old tailor M. is working in a textile workshop in İstanbul, five days a week from 08:00 am to 19:30 pm and Saturday from 08:00 am to 15:00 pm for a monthly salary of 1.500 TRY. When he first started, his salary was 500 TRY per month. A year later he started receiving 1000 TRY. It has been three months that he received a payment of 1.500 TRY per month. However, the employer does not pay his salary regularly. Z.'s 14-year-old daughter, who has come from Aleppo and settled in İstanbul, works 6 days a week from 08:00 am to 20:00 pm is paid a monthly salary of 1250 TRY. When she first started, her salary was 750 TRY, then 900 TRY. Since two months she is paid a salary of 1250 TRY per month. Again in İstanbul, M.'s 14-year-old son is both myopic and cross-eyed. He works in a

textile workshop in İstanbul between 08:00 am to 20:00 pm and is paid 200 TRY per week. The 17 and 15-year-old brothers work similarly as cleaners in a textile workshop and each earns 1000 TRY per month. When they first started, the employer paid them 800 TRY per month. Only since 2 months they are paid 1000 TRY per month.

Eleven-year-old H. living also in İstanbul, works as cleaner in a textile workshop between 08:00 am to 20:00 pm and receives a salary of 300 TL per month. Like him, his two sisters 17 and 16 years old, work as cleaners in textile workshops between 08:00 am to 20:00 pm and receive a monthly salary of 750 TRY each. Previously their salary was 700 TRY per month. Two months ago, the employer raised their fees. Sometimes they work up to 22:00 pm and are paid only 4 TRY each for this extra-work. The 14-year-old son of H. who came to İstanbul from Qamishli, north of Syria, is working as cleaner in a textile workshop. He is paid sometimes 200 TRY per month and sometimes 300 TRY per month. Faside's 13-year-old son and Fatima's 11-year-old son work both six days a week between 08:00 am to 20:00 pm and are paid a monthly salary of 600 TRY each. Finally, nine-year-old grandson of S. is working as cleaner in a textile workshop between 08:00 am to 20:00 pm, and is paid a salary of 100 TRY per week.

Conclusive Remarks

This short and preliminary research based on direct observations and interviews made on three regions has been taken with the aim of issuing some general information about the current situation of Syrian minor workers. In this respect, the information obtained during fieldwork cannot be adapted for all Syrian migrant families and their children. But, we also know that the children of some Syrian families who came and settled in Turkey did not meet any financial difficulties and had learned Turkish and continued with school. We should add here that these families are not included under the scope of the research.

A significant number of Syrian immigrants interviewed, like the majority of those who have been forced to leave and suffered the war, have expressed that they did not plan to return to their country. This low probability of their return means that Syrian immigrant and their children will be involved in different forms in Turkish labor force market. We expect that this involvement will bring the current unemployment rate to an even higher level, especially in provinces like İstanbul, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Hatay, where Syrian immigrants are most numerous. We think that the institutions responsible of regulation of the workforce market must register these workers so that the effect of unemployment can be partially reduced.

Not only with reference to immigrant children, but all children who work at a young age, get affected negatively as their health and development suffers immensely. They are deprived of education, which is a basic human right. In addition, starting to work at an early age makes them the most fragile points of low-wage and precariousness in working life.

On the other hand, field observations and interviews released during fieldwork prove that only a small part of Syrian immigrant children in Turkey desire to continue their education up to university level. As recent research results on Syrian immigrants has shown, the fact that an important part of Syrian young people are unemployed while a small proportion of them can continue their education to the university level, may be considered as a pessimistic expectation for future generations. The only positive aspect of this pessimistic expectation for the employers is that the Syrian minor immigrant workers, aged 10-14 years, who had to leave school early, make up a cheap and “obedient” labor category.

In general, local workers who share the same labor force market with immigrant workers think that the last ones constitute an "unfair competition" element against them. As elsewhere in the world, this is not the working class who is responsible for the competition between the foreign immigrant workers and the domestic workers of that country.

Nevertheless, a negative perception is tried to be created, on the basis of racism and separatist policy, among the local workers, by blaming the immigrant workers to be the cause of low wages and the narrowing of job opportunities in the country. This misunderstanding increases the possibility of conflict between domestic and immigrant workers. One of the important points in this regard is the economic problems of the Syrian immigrant workers who want to work in an informal economy with low wage. For this reason, they are paid a salary about 50 percent less than domestic workers. This low payment of wage is again lower for minor workers.

On the other hand, Turkey signed Convention No. 182 of ILO “for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor in 2001”. Article 2 of this Convention considers that “the term child shall apply to all persons under the age of 18” but does not make reference only to domestic children. On the contrary it means that this term concerns all the children in the world (Lordoğlu, 2017, p. 27). Despite this convention and the engagement of Turkey as signer of it, we see that the Syrian immigrant minor workers continue to work under conditions worse than the working conditions of Europe in 19th century, were the industrial revolution took place. We must say that these conditions are sometimes created by the Syrian families themselves. These families, who are in a total poverty and economic difficulties, have to take their children from school and send them to work in the worst

conditions. The fact that even the families receiving financial aid are willing to send their children to work in these conditions, shows the seriousness of the problem.

Also, we know that the number of children per Syrian family is higher than the average number of children per family in Turkey. This means that Syrian minor workers will continue to participate in the labor force as crowded Syrian families will always need the money earned by their children. However, this cannot be argument justification offered by employers subjecting Syrian children to bad working conditions. The working of Syrian immigrant children 15 years old or younger must be limited only to certain jobs and under strict control. For example, they need to complete at least secondary school and should be prohibited from night jobs or other similar jobs that could affect their development negatively. Finally, the entrepreneurs employing Syrian immigrant minor workers must respect the weekly working hours of children as stipulated by legislation.

As noted before, the government must intervene to ensure that Syrian immigrant children complete their schooling. A circular of the Ministry of National Education published for this issue prescribe the admission of all Syrian children in Turkish schools, and since February 2017, these children are taught 15 hours of Turkish language lessons per week. Thus, starting from the academic year 2017–2018, it is obligatory for Syrian children to follow the Turkish school whose course curriculum is fully Turkish. The positive side of this circular is that the Syrian children will be educated with a clear course curriculum. But on the other hand, the fact that education is fully in Turkish will create some difficulties for the families. In other words, as Syrian children would only need to learn Turkish at school, they will be deprived of their parents' help who are unable to read and write Turkish.

Finally, the granting of citizenship or asylum to Syrian immigrants is a serious requirement in order to ensure their protection against the abuse of employers and permit them to work in legal conditions. By granting the Syrian immigrants a legal status and taking them out of the “refugee” situation, they will be prevented from isolation according to the local culture and it will be easier for them to live together peacefully. We need to stand with the children, regardless of their nationality or ethnicity, not only because they need our compassion but also because they are the common future of all of us.

References

- DİSK (Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey) / Genel-İş Sendikası (Turkey General Services Workers Union). (2017). *Türkiye’de çocuk işçi olmak*. Ankara: DİSK / Genel - İş.
- Erdoğan M. (2017). *Suriyeliler barometresi: Suriyelilerle uyum içerisinde yaşamının çerçevesi, değerlendirme ve politika önerileri*. Ankara: Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Center (HÜGO).
- Hayata Destek Derneği. (2016, October). *Göç yolunda geçen çocukluk*. Retrieved, November 1, 2017, from http://hayatadestek.org/belge/BICOD_bulten3.pdf.
- International Labor Office (ILO). (2013). *Marking progress against child labor: global estimates and trends 2000–2012*. Geneva: ILO.
- International Labor Office (ILO). (2017). *Global estimates of child labor: results and trends, 2012–2016*. Geneva: ILO.
- İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management) (2018, June 25). Yıllara göre geçici koruma kapsamındaki Suriyeliler. Retrieved March 12, 2018, from http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/gecici-koruma_363_378_4713_icerik.
- Kalkınma Atölyesi. (2014). *Fındık hasadının oyuncuları: Batı Karadeniz illerinde fındık hasadında yer alan mevsimlik gezici tarım işçileri, tarım işçilerinin çocukları, tarım araçları ve bahçe sahipleri temel araştırması*. Ankara: Kalkınma Atölyesi.
- Kaya A. & Kırarç, A. (2016, April). *İstanbul’daki Suriyeli mültecilere ilişkin zarar görübilirlik değerlendirme raporu*. Retrieved April 6, 2018, from http://hayatadestek.org/yayinlarimiz/2016_Istanbul_rapor.pdf.
- Lordoğlu, K. (2017). Türkiye’de çocuk işçiliğine ilişkin değerlendirme ve saptamalar. *Mesleki Sağlık ve Güvenlik Dergisi*, 62–63, 18–28.
- Lordoğlu K. & Aslan M. (2016). En fazla Suriyeli göçmen alan beş kentin emek piyasalarında değişim: 2011-2014. *Çalışma ve Toplum*, 49, 789–808.
- Milliyet. (2016, November 11). 1. Uluslararası göç ve güvenlik konferansı. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1-uluslararasi-goc-ve-guvenlik-konferansi-antalya-yerelhaber-1642286/>.
- Yalçın, S. (2016). Hatay ve Urfa’da yaşayan Suriyeli çocukların eğitim ve çalışma durumları. In *Türkiye’de çocuk işçiliği sorunu: Suriye’den gelen mülteciler sonrası mevcut durum ve çözüm önerileri konferans raporu* (pp. 31 - 34). İstanbul: Hayata Destek Derneği ve Bilgi Üniversitesi Göç Çalışmaları Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi. Retrieved from http://www.hayatadestek.org/yayinlarimiz/Turkiyede_Cocuk_Isciligi_Sorunu_2016.pdf.

Part II: ‘Locals’, labour market and Syrian refugees

New Actors and New Conflicts in Construction Labor Market: Syrian Construction Workers from the Perspective of Native Workers in Turkey²¹

Sidar Çınar

Introduction

Immigrants have emerged as a major source of male labor in the global construction sector and first-generation rural-to-urban migrants comprise a major proportion of construction labor in developing countries; the construction sector provides an access point to the labor market (ILO, 2001; Jason, 2007; Mitullah & Wachira, 2003; You-Jie & Fox, 2001). The sector largely demands low skilled labor and this provides an opportunity for unskilled migrants (Abdul-Aziz, 2001; Fellini, Ferro&Fullin, 2007).

Immigrant workers are particularly defenceless in their host countries: they work informally and thus cannot benefit from legal rights (ILO, 2009; Harroff-Tavel & Nasri, 2013; Toksöz, 2008). The appalling working and living conditions are also more visible and pronounced, such as exposure to work place accidents (Abdül-Aziz, 2001) and to poor housing environments (Harroff-Tavel & Nasri, 2013; Olimova & Bosc, 2003; Toksöz, 2008; You-Jie & Fox, 2001). As presented by various studies, language barriers also obstruct immigrant construction workers' advancement into skilled/half-skilled jobs in their host countries (Abdul-Aziz, 2001; Deborah & Ofori, 2001).

There is a limited number of studies addressing the working experiences of international immigrants in the construction sector in Turkey. According to Toksöz, prior to the outbreak of the civil war in Syria and the ensuing migration wave to Turkey, immigrants (particularly from Turkmenistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Afghanistan) had been employed in the Turkish construction sector, principally as unskilled labor (Toksöz, 2008). In recent years, the arrival of Syrian immigrants, as a result of the civil war in Syria, has deeply impacted the construction labor market in Turkey. Researches on Syrian immigrants show that Syrian workers have become a new source of labor supply, thus allowing employers to reduce their labor costs. Therefore, native workers are deeply concerned with the presence of the Syrian immigrants in the labor market (Bidinger, 2015; Erdoğan, 2014; Lordoğlu & Aslan, in this volume). This study aims to examine the impact of the Syrian migration on the construction sector in Turkey by exploring the current situation of Syrian workers in the

²¹ I would like to express my thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saniye Dedeoğlu, who revised this article and offered her suggestions before publication, and to my dear friend Assist. Prof. Dr. Nurdan Atalay.

construction labor market and the attitude of native workers towards the presence of Syrian workers in the sector. This analysis will illuminate how ethnic stratification of the construction labor market in Turkey reproduces itself within the dynamics of the sector and of the country in general.

Research Methodology

The field research was conducted in the city center of Diyarbakır between March–June 2015 within the frame of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK)-funded research project. Diyarbakır is a largely Kurdish-populated city in southeastern Turkey and was selected because Diyarbakır was known to be one of the cities that supplies extensive seasonal labor migration, including construction labor. Moreover, it is one of the less examined places, particularly in the field of labor market research, as seasonal labor migration research is usually conducted in destination places, especially big cities such as İstanbul, İzmir and Ankara.

An in-depth interview method was employed in the field study, interviewing 32 workers in total. Cafés, workers' tea houses, construction sites, and homes of workers were selected to conduct interviews. The length of the conversations varied from 60–70 minutes. Interviews, which were conducted at construction sites, were held in areas providing administrative and recreational facilities and tea spots within the sites. Some of the participants were reached through referrals from their acquaintances or relatives. The first tea-house visit was made on this basis.

Worker profile required by the subcontracting system in the construction sector

One of the motives behind the practice of subcontracting in the construction sector is the desire for construction firms to avoid permanent employment of construction workers (Chiang, 2009; Eccles, 1981; Manu, Nii, David & Suresh 2013; Üsdiken, Sözen & Enbiyaoğlu 1989). Since the institutional structure of large firms does not allow them to remove, when necessary, their idle capacity out of the formal economy, these firms may reduce labor costs only by establishing subcontracting relations with smaller firms. When the aim of reducing labor costs “is combined with the sector’s structure that relies heavily on small enterprises, informal employment is facilitated” (Toksöz, 2008, p. 7). Therefore, subcontracting in the construction sector “leads to informalization as it increases the number of informal firms and of informal workers employed in these firms” (Wells, 2007, p. 90). Due to this network of informal relations, small firms “relieve the firm above them of the work

overload, equipment and labor costs, and time pressure” (Sözen & Küçük, 1999, p.216). The subcontractors’ desire to transfer responsibilities may lead to deficiencies in social security and occupational safety, which may not be afforded by labor-only subcontractors.²²

Through subcontracting, construction firms indirectly employ construction workers and many studies reveal that subcontractors emerge as a significant employer category for construction workers (ILO, 2001; Krings et al., 2011; You-Jie & Fox, 2001). In some cases, the chain of subcontracting reaches workers through labor-only subcontractors (Winch, 1986); labor-only subcontractors essentially find, employ, and pay workers. In other words, they bring together workers with the required skills and supervise them throughout the work process. The competition among labor-only subcontractors for undertaking a particular construction work results in considerably reduced prices for the work in question, which is the main factor that negatively affects labor wages and working conditions. The only way a subcontractor operating for a lower price can secure a profit is by reducing labor costs.²³ A similar competition for securing more work for less pay arises among workers as well. The subcontractor, who is undertaken to finish the work for a lower price, will thus opt for low-wage workers to minimize production costs. On the other hand, workers offer their labor for even lower wages than their fellow workers are prepared to accept, pulling down the average wage level; this creates a competition among workers which further decreases the wage level. While this competition undermines class solidarity among workers, it also paves the way for other solidarity forms based on kinship, city-origin, and ethnicity linkages. The construction workers, in particular, work in teams and these teams are organized on the basis of these linkages²⁴. The statement below demonstrates how likely it is that increased tensions, caused by the competition among migrant worker teams coming from different places and now working at the same construction site, may easily turn into an ethnic skirmish at any moment:

²² Labor only subcontractors are those workers who turn into subcontractors by the help of their accumulated capital and relations of confidence they have managed to forge with contractors and subcontractors. It is an entirely informal economic activity. While contractors or subcontractors supply all production input but labor power, the latter is supplied only by subcontractors. For instance, provided that subcontractors or contractors supply the required construction materials, labor-only subcontractors undertake the painting and plastering work of an under-construction building on a “minus materials” basis, as they call it. This process of undertaking is governed entirely by market conditions. The labor-only subcontractor that offers the lowest price to the contractor or subcontractor is given the job.

²³ One way to reduce labor costs is to make workers work faster for the lowest wage possible. Another way is to minimize expenses that arise from labor safety, housing and nutrition, which are vital for workers.

²⁴ The aforementioned ways in which worker teams are formed, combined with the inter-team competition that lowers the wage level, give rise to tensions mostly based on ethnic and city origin. For instance, wage reductions initially offered by worker teams to eliminate other teams and get the job later manifests into ethnic tensions between different worker groups.

(Worker No. 5) We did beat each other up terribly.... We, 750 workers, were waiting in the food queue. Before I knew it, I heard noises coming from the tent. And then a crowd gathered. We went to see what was happening and saw that a Laz (an ethnic identity which is from Black Sea region of Turkey) and a worker from Kars (most likely he is native Kurdish) were fighting for a place in the queue. Because of them, 750 workers there started to fight tooth and nail. Some had a broken skull, some a broken arm. You cannot even imagine what happened!

Consequently, the construction labor market assumes a multi-layered, hierarchically stratified structure that is defined in terms of identities, allegiances, and places of origin. A statement of a worker below clearly reveals the class dimension of ethnic tensions. The fact that the economic conditions in Diyarbakır fail to offer alternatives for construction workers living in this city, or that the prospects for class mobility are rather low, confines these workers to the construction industry. Thus, while ethnic discrimination becomes a significant vehicle for the stratification of the construction labor market, workers are locked into certain strata due to economic deprivation in their cities.

(Worker No. 6) Let's say we do the decoration work at a rate of 5 million per meter. If someone from the West does it for 6 million and I offer 4 million, they give the job to him, not to me. His performance is not the same as ours. We start work at half past six in the morning and go on until seven or eight in the evening. They, on the other hand, come from home at eight... Moreover, they stop working at four. He (the employer) finds out that the work is not progressing, and so gives the job to me in the end.

The workers from Diyarbakır who were interviewed within the scope of this research perceive that they have an inferior status than that of other local worker groups because of their Kurdish identity. Kurdish workers believe that they are given poorer food and accommodation facilities and are disregarded or alienated from the network of relations at the construction site as well as from the work environment. In the same vein, since these workers are forced to do much heavier work for longer hours, these criteria have come to constitute the key determinants of being at the bottom of the multi-layered labor market hierarchy.

During the interviews, several grievances like living and working under poor conditions, being ostracized for various reasons including language barrier, and working for longer hours on heavier tasks with lower wages were expressed by Syrian workers. Under conditions of fierce competition, Syrian workers, who worked for longer hours at lower wages, stirred up resentment among native workers by becoming part of the already tense relationship between different local worker groups. However, as will be explained in detail,

Syrian workers' status as newcomers to the construction labor market and their lack of legal protection leave them vulnerable vis-à-vis local groups.

The subcontracting system plays a critical role in incorporating construction sector workers who would agree to work faster for less pay and ignore other working conditions. The latest comers to this market are the least advantaged. For this very reason, the incorporation of vulnerable new immigrant groups into the construction labor market helps to keep the wage fixed at the lowest levels in the market.

Syrian Workers in the Construction Labor Market

In general, native workers have more advantages in negotiating their basic rights compared to Syrian workers. Native workers perceive the presence of Syrian workers in the construction labor market in terms of “declining labor wages”. The said impact of immigrant workers on the labor market may also be observed in numerous similar cases in other countries. There are two reasons why employing immigrant workers, instead of native workers, reduce labor costs. First, immigrant workers have less bargaining power and tend more often to accept lower wages, when compared to native workers. Second, legal requirements, including provision of social security, do not apply to immigrant workers, which in turn reduces labor costs (Fellini et al., 2007).

Certain factors, including Syrian workers' readiness to accept lower wages and longer working hours, and their lack of social security coverage, make them more preferable than native workers in the eyes of subcontractors. Among the interviewees, a subcontractor who informally employs Syrian workers defined giving jobs to these workers as “backing them up, embracing them” and presented employing Syrian workers under these conditions as a favour done for them.

(Worker No. 21) ...We see their suffering. After all, they put their labor into this. They came here; they immigrated, so we should help them. In fact, we had a couple of them work here; we welcomed them and helped them. They didn't have a job. We thought we could give them a job and help them earn their bread. We offered the same pay, believe me. There are also foremen among them, but very few. Generally, they are manual workers. They cannot easily become foremen here because... they don't work persistently...

Syrians, regardless of their ethnic identities, are in a more disadvantaged position when compared to native Kurdish workers. However, now Kurdish workers themselves state that Syrians work longer hours for less pay. Additionally, employing Kurdish workers does

not mean evading legal requirements on the part of employers. Moreover, the fact that Kurdish workers have been present in this sector for a long time now has allowed them to obtain the necessary instruments to strengthen their position within this network of labor relations. As they have acquired the vocational knowledge and experience required for skilled labor, they have developed relations of mutual trust with subcontractors and contractors. For instance, rather than hiring Syrian workers, some subcontractors or contractors may be willing to pay higher wages to Kurdish worker teams that they had worked with before with satisfactory results so that they can ensure work quality.

Migrant workers who have newly arrived in their host countries and have insufficient knowledge of the local language as well as limited working experience in their countries of origin will have difficulties furthering their skill levels. Abdül-Aziz (2001) claims that one of the main reasons why newly arrived immigrants are employed as unskilled labor is that they lack past experience in construction labor in their countries of origin.²⁵ Additionally, since immigrants cannot join the teams that have been formed among native workers on various grounds (including kinship, city-origin, and ethnicity), they do not benefit from the informal vocational training through which skill transfer is achieved. In the construction industry, informal vocational training is realized predominantly through master–apprentice relationship. For this reason, disadvantaged groups, such as women and ethnic minorities, rely on the extensiveness of formal vocational training opportunities available to them in order to increase their skill levels in construction work and advance to better paid jobs (Byrne, Clarke & Van Der Meer, 2005). The workers from Diyarbakır, interviewed during the field research, mainly stressed the parameters of low skills and low wages in their statements regarding the presence of Syrian workers in the construction of the labor market. According to these workers, Syrian workers mostly work as unskilled day labor, and thus fail to occupy a central position in the construction labor force. As also suggested by the worker statement above, they participate in the labor market as “manual workers”, making them less visible.

The subcontractors’ desire to reduce labor costs creates a favourable environment for new coming worker groups, thus disturbing the informal vocational training system that facilitates skill transfer from generation to generation among native workers and allows the latter to secure higher wage jobs. This fact is vividly portrayed by a worker as stated below.

²⁵ This research, which was conducted in Malaysia, revealed that only 11.6 percent of the foreign immigrant workers that participated in the research had previous experience as construction labor in their countries of origin. The most frequent responses given by the interviewees as to why they worked as construction labor in Malaysia are as follows: nature of construction work as requiring unskilled labor (41.1 percent), having friends and relatives working in the construction sector (37.9 percent), high labor demand in the construction sector (34.1 percent), willingness of employers to employ them (31.1 percent) (Abdül-Aziz, 2001).

This statement does not specifically refer to Syrian workers, but it points to the risks of declining labor quality in the construction sector. The general view that Syrian workers have not yet acquired the necessary skills and are therefore employed in low-skilled jobs, should be taken together with the following statement that points out the tendency to pay Syrian workers less even if they have become skilled workers.

(Worker No. 5) (They work) as regular manual labor. Even if they are (skilled), they will be paid 50 while I will be paid, let's say, a hundred. I've seen this before. Last year we were doing the exterior thermal sheathing of a sports complex in Viranşehir. While the workers that had worked there before got a daily wage of 60, 65 liras, the Syrian workers got 25, 30 liras.... I'm already having a hard time finding a job. If someone else comes and stands in my way. If I can't find a job, and then someone else comes along, what would you do if you were in my place?

As seen in the final remarks above, when a new group joins the labor market where native workers are constantly faced with the problem of unemployment, the labor market develops a multi-layered, multi-polar character. According to a study that focuses on the employment of foreign workers in the European construction sector, the scarcity of labor force and the aspiration to minimize labor costs constitute two interrelated reasons why companies choose to hire foreign workers (Fellini et al., 2007). Under these circumstances, native workers' declining interest for working particular jobs in certain sectors, including construction, in Europe makes these sectors more accessible for immigrant workers. At the same time, immigrants and ethnic minorities tend to concentrate at the bottommost level of the construction labor market, which offers low-paid, low-skilled, and temporary jobs (Byrne et al., 2005).

The main reason behind the preference for foreign workers in Turkey's construction sector is the desire to reduce labor costs further, certainly not scarcity of labor. In the same vein, the native workers, quoted earlier, claimed that the arrival of Syrian workers has led to a 50 percent decline in labor wages. Certainly, a significant factor that differentiates the position of Syrian workers in Turkey's construction labor market from the labor market segmentation patterns and the market positions of immigrants/ethnic minorities in developed countries is that there still exists native worker groups in Turkey's labor market that are ready to accept low-skilled, low-paid jobs. As suggested by the worker statements on the increasing ambiguity regarding skill level differentiation, Syrian workers may soon advance to higher skilled/better paid jobs owing to market irregularities. On the other hand, there are native worker groups in Turkey who have to still accept low-paid/low-skilled jobs. The fact that

workers lacking experience in construction work can well be employed in skilled jobs stirs up fear among native workers. As indicated by the final part of the worker statement cited earlier, the question “what would you do if you were in my place?” reveals how the interviewees’ anger towards Syrian workers for agreeing to work for lower wages, and the polarization in the construction labor market, incited by the competition among workers, are reproduced.²⁶ The workers interviewed stated that unemployment rates among native workers had increased because of Syrian workers and that they had to settle for lower wages. One example given below shows the negative impacts of Syrian workers’ presence on the wage levels and how the bargaining power of native workers escalates the societal hostility and the ensuing violence towards Syrians.

(Worker No. 12) They work for nothing. With 20 liras, you can only buy cigarettes.

Another indicator of the intensity of the polarization among workers is the native workers’ “fear” that Syrians will never return to their home country. This concern, which finds voice in the undermentioned remark “*they will never leave here*”, denotes the “fear” of a future: rather than being a temporary “issue”, the phenomenon of Syrian immigrants/workers will become an unmanageable, extraneous challenge that will increasingly affect their lives in an adverse way, and may someday deprive them of their jobs. Certainly, such concerns are fed by the social reactions displayed in different parts of the country against Syrian immigrants. Since Syrian immigrants work in unskilled jobs particularly in labor-intensive sectors, such as agriculture and construction lead to the conclusion that the increasing competition in these sectors and the resulting polarization are significant factors that breed social tensions.

(Worker No. 26) They have seen this abundance, they will never leave here.

Some of the interviewees expressed their empathy towards Syrian immigrants as they referred to their own forced migration experiences as a common ground. Conducting the field study in Diyarbakır, in particular, as one of the places where the effects of the process of forced migration have been felt the most, allowed for such a “comparison of experiences”.

²⁶ The following statement is from an interview conducted as part of a research about the impact of Syrian immigrants on the labor market: “... The informal employment of Syrians creates social unrest. Native workers file written complaints about this. Many of these complaints are submitted to us through the ALO 170 line. They report that there are illegal workers working at the so-and-so construction site. They complain that they (Syrians) deprive them of their jobs. Most of these complaints come from native workers” (Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2015: 262).

Nevertheless, the interviewee statements oriented towards the view that “it is better that they work, rather than be idle and cause further social problems” still constitutes the main premise here.

All arguments above should not be taken to conclude that Syrian immigrants are “welcomed” in Diyarbakır, or in the South-eastern region in general. As illustrated by the statement below, the new coming immigrants’ desire to secure the few jobs available in an already limited job market in Diyarbakır, a city where unemployment already manifests itself heavily, adds to the previously discussed concerns of native workers.

(Worker No. 18) There are many workers in Diyarbakır. In this region, many people are unemployed... There is no investment. If there were a factory here, would these young people spend time at coffee houses? What happens then? No job and the man is idle. He has to bring home the bread. He agrees to work for 10 million or 20 million less. This is why things are like this in Diyarbakır. Many people migrated from the villages to the city; all of them are unemployed now. If they had stayed in their villages, they could have at least been doing stock farming or working in their fields.

The initial common ground of “empathy and sympathy”, shown by the native workers towards Syrians in more general conversations, was subsequently shaken by their concern of possibly losing their jobs to Syrian workers. As understood from the parallel comments of the workers, the employers and the state authorities that regulate and monitor the labor market, Syrian immigrants are evidently seen as “a vast source of cheap labor for the country’s labor reservoir”. While this source is met by resentment on the part of native workers because of increasing competition and declining wages, it provides a long-term cheap labor source for employers.²⁷ From the perspective of the state authorities, Syrian immigrants are a group that can more easily be managed and prevented from posing a threat to public order if their informal employment is tolerated, and they are thus allowed to take care of themselves.

(Worker No. 14) It is good that they work; they are wretched. If they don’t work and remain in poverty, they may do bad things. It is better for us that they work. We’ve gone through similar hardships, we understand. We were a family of 13 when we came from the village. My elder sister and her family were also staying with us, which makes eight more people. We had three rooms. We put our stuff in one room and were left with two rooms only. We barely had room for sitting down. We know how it is; we’ve gone through it all.

²⁷ For instance, an interviewee from the same study is reported to have stated the following: “Before the Syrian migration, Gaziantep’s labor market, particularly the agricultural and construction sectors, had difficulty to find unskilled labor. Syrian immigrants have positively influenced the private sector labor market in Gaziantep as they have met this demand (Lordoğlu and Aslan, this volume).

According to a study on foreign informal workers in the construction sector, workers of Kurdish origin, whose numbers are estimated to constitute a significant portion of the construction labor market, are in a position to defend their rights as Turkish citizens, citizens whose rights are under legal protection (something that is generally not the case for foreign informal workers) (Toksöz, 2008). As mentioned earlier, subcontractors even consider hiring Syrian workers as a favour for them. Therefore, in the eyes of employers, Syrian workers form a worker category that has a much more limited bargaining power, and thus is more convenient to employ. Consequently, native workers witness that not only their wages but also their bargaining power in labor relations are diminishing.

Conclusion

The presence of Syrian workers in the construction labor market has led to further intensification of labor competition, which thwarts solidarity among workers. Given that one of the motives behind subcontracting as an entrenched ensemble is to reduce labor costs, it is evident that a potential source of cheap labor can upset all the balances in the construction labor market. This is exactly what happened when Syrian workers joined the workforce in the construction sector. Syrian workers have, for now, “won” this competition where those who agree to work for the lowest wage can get the “prize” of employment.

At this stage of the informalization of labor relations via labor-only—a stage where subcontracting chains have come to involve workers—the main determinants of labor relations have become kinship and city-origin. Syrian workers have also been incorporated into the ethnically based polarization that is shaped by the structural dynamics of labor relations, as discussed earlier, and is fuelled by labor competition. Consequently, the presence of Syrian workers has added, in both explicit and implicit ways, a new dimension to the already existing ethnic tension in the labor market. The initial perception of Syrian immigrants as “helpless people fleeing the war” and the empathy shown to them on grounds of similar experiences of forced migration may be replaced by anxiety and resulting anger when these immigrants began to get involved in the labor market competition.

Moreover, the subcontractors’ depiction of Syrian employment legitimizes the low wage levels and informality, and deepens the inequalities arising from these insofar as their employment is depicted as kindness or blessing. Therefore, in order to prevent the competition-induced ethnic tensions from reaching extensive dimensions, it is crucial to devise social policy interventions to regulate and supervise the integration of Syrians into the labor market. Such policy interventions in return, pose a question of state capacity and will.

References

- Abdul-Aziz, A.R. (2001). Foreign workers and labor segmentation in Malaysia's construction industry. *Construction Management and Economics*, 19 (8): 789–98; doi: 10.1080/01446190110072022.
- Bidinger, S. (2015). Syrian refugees and the rights to work: Developing temporary protection in Turkey, *Boston University International Law Journal*, 33 (223): 223–49.
- Byrne, J., Clarke, L. & Van Der Meer, M. (2005). Gender and ethnic minority exclusion from skilled occupation in construction: a Western European comparison. *Construction Management and Economics*, 23 (10): 1025–34. doi: 10.1080/01446190500310759.
- Chiang, Y. H. (2009). Subcontracting and its ramifications: A survey of the building industry in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Project Management*, 27: 80–88. doi: 10.1016/j.ijproman.2008.01.005.
- Deborah Y. W., & Ofori, G. (2001). Subcontracting, foreign workers and job safety in Singapore construction industry. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 8(1): 145–66. doi: 10.1080/713999129.
- Eccles, R. G. (1981). Bureaucratic versus craft administration: The relationship of market structure to the construction firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 26 (33): 449–69.
- Erdoğan, M. (2014). *Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler: Toplumsal kabul ve uyum araştırması*. Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Centre.
- Fellini I., Ferro, A. & Fullin, G. (2007). Recruitment processes and labor mobility: the construction industry in Europe. *Work, Employment & Society*, 21 (2), 277-298. doi.org/10.1177/0950017007076635.
- Harroff-Tavel, H. & Nasri, A. (2013). Tricked and trapped human trafficking in the Middle East. Retrieved February 11, 2014, from http://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_211214/lang--en/index.htm.
- ILO. (2001). The construction industry in the twenty-first century: Its image, employment prospect and skill requirements. Retrieved September 12, 2013, from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/gb/docs/gb283/pdf/tmcitr.pdf>.
- ILO. (2009). Preventing forced labor exploitation and promoting good labor practices in the Russian construction industry. Retrieved November 24, 2013, from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcm_041904.pdf.
- Jason, A. (2007). Informal construction workers in Dar Es Salam, *Tanzania*. Retrieved September 12, 2013, from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/--sector/documents/publication/wcms_160790.pdf.
- Krings, T., Bobek, A., Moriarty, E., Salamonska, J. & Wickham, J. (2011). From boom to bust: Migrant labor and employers in the Irish construction sector. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 32 (3): 459–76. doi: 10.1177/0143831X10387651.
- Manu, P., Nii, A., David, P., & Suresh, S. (2013). Mitigating the health and safety influence of subcontracting in construction: The approach of main contractors. *International Journal of Project Management*, 31: 1017–26. doi: 10.1016/j.ijproman.2012.11.011.
- Mitullah, W. & Wachira, I.N. (2003). *Informal labor in the construction industry in Kenya: A case study of Nairobi*. Retrieved September 12, 2013, from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_policy/@invest/documents/publication/wcms_asist_8175.pdf.
- Olimova, S. & Bosc, I. (2003). *Labor migration from Tajikistan*. Retrieved November 28, 2013, from http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Labor_Migration_Tajikistan.pdf.

- Sözen, Z. & Küçük, M.A. (1999). Secondary subcontracting in the Turkish construction industry. *Construction Management and Economics*, 17 (2): 215–20. doi: 10.1080/014461999371718.
- Toksöz, G. (2008). Türkiye’ye yönelik düzensiz göçler ve göçmenlerin inşaat sektöründe enformel istihdamı. *Ankara Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma Projesi Kesin Raporu*.
- Üsdiken, B., Sözen, Z. & Enbiyaoğlu, H. (1989). Örgütlerin sınırları: İnşaat firmalarında alt yüklenici kullanımı. *Boğaziçi University Institute of Social Sciences Research Report*, SBE/AD 89-02, İstanbul.
- You-Jie, L. & Fox, P.W. (2001). *Construction industry in China: its image, employment, prospect and skill requirements*. ILO, Geneva.
- Wells J. (2007). Informality in the construction sector in developing countries. *Construction Management and Economics*, 25(1): 87–93. doi: 10.1080/01446190600601339.
- Winch G.M. (1986). The labor process and labor market in construction. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 6(2): 103–16. doi: 10.1108/eb013010.

Refugees, Labor and Capital: The Political Economy of Labor Market Access of Syrian Refugees in a Border City in Turkey

Serhat Yalçın

Meral Gezici Yalçın

Introduction

The labor market access of refugees has been one of the salient topics of public and academic interest in recent times. In this chapter, we assert that it is possible to adopt a theoretical perspective to address the phenomenon of labor market access of refugees. To do that we have relied on, first, the theoretical insights provided by comparative research on labor migration and, second, the central concepts from a critical political economy perspective. To test our assumptions, we ran an empirical research in Turkey by adopting a theory-driven methodology. We conducted interviews with local and refugee workers as well as with employers and employer associations in the border city of Mardin (Kızıltepe). We considered taking a border city as an important case, because such cities have been largely neglected although they were not only important “entry points”, but also host a large number of refugees. Our aim is, therefore, to explore the labor market access of Syrian refugees in a specific context, namely, in the case of the border city of Mardin (Kızıltepe). The main argument is that the political economy of the labor market in Turkey is characterized by high levels of informal employment and the lack or insufficient implementation of necessary regulations further facilitates in the making of a fertile ground for the informal employment of Syrian refugees. We further argue that the large number of Syrians as a “surplus population” had an important impact on the labor market leading not only to significant intra-class differentiations within the working class, but also causing substantial differences between different factions of capital. In the following sections, we will, first, explore our theoretical framework, second, present the research context, and then, summarize the results of the analyses of the interviews.

Theoretical Framework

The outflows of Syrian refugees since 2011 have moved the topic on refugees to the center of public and academic debates. But until recently, studies on the labor market access have primarily focused on migrants generally and largely failed to consider refugees as a separate group (see on this Lundborg, 2013; Mamgain & Collins, 2003; Migration Policy Centre &

Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016). Additionally, refugee studies generally tend to be descriptive and “atheoretical” (Healey, 2006) or to remain “under-theorized” (Black, 2001; see also Gill, 2010), especially if closely tied to policy concerns. Our contention is that this theoretical lack can be partly overcome by resorting to theoretical insights provided by comparative studies on migration regulation. We argue that comparative research on labor migration (Menz, 2010, 2011; Menz & Caviedes, 2010) can be seen as a convenient starting point. We especially consider the theoretical assumption that the different models of political economy and related differences in economic and labor market structures account for different strategies for labor recruitment as relevant. In the same manner, the assumption that employer preferences regarding labor migrants “are shaped by the system of political economy [...] they are embedded in” (Menz, 2011, p. 538) is equally pertinent.

The focus of this theoretical perspective has been of course on the admission of labor migrants from abroad. But our claim is that the related theoretical assumptions can be also resorted to in the specific case of refugees. The analytical differentiation between the reasons for and the processes of migration in the case of refugees and labor migrants can indeed be useful for an analysis of migration processes. Thus, refugees can be considered as migrating out of humanitarian reasons whereas labor migrants can be considered as migrating out of economic reasons. However, despite the possible usefulness of this analytical differentiation for an analysis of migration processes, we think that the labor market access of refugees offers a case to consider refugees as part of the migrant working class. We also think that the increasing influence of economic considerations within the context of refugee policies (Bojadžijev et al., 2017) is also implicating that we can assume the labor market access of not only migrant workers but also of refugees to be highly related to the specific political economy of a certain country and to the employer preferences.

We further assert that this theoretical perspective can be broadened by resorting to central concepts provided by a critical economy perspective. The first important implication of such an approximation is that an analysis of the refugees’ labor market access has to take into account class structures, especially inter-class and intra-class differentiations. This basically means to take into account the differentiation between workers and employers on the one hand, and the differentiation within the group of workers (in our case, refugees and locals) and within the group employers (different factions of capital), on the other hand. We also assert that the concept of “surplus population” has to be considered as helpful in this context and that refugees can be indeed considered to constitute a “surplus population”

(Rajaram, 2018).²⁸ Based on the application of these concepts, we assume the labor market to be a contested field characterized by competition which highlights significant intra-class and inter-class differentiations.

Research Context: The Labor Market in Mardin (Kızıltepe)

Mardin, a city at the Syrian border, not only served as an “entry point” for refugee flows but was also affected by these flows on different socio-economic dimensions. The impact on the labor market in the city constitutes one of the most important dimensions of this impact. The most important economic sectors in Mardin consist of agriculture, services, construction, and manufacturing sector. With an average share of 0.46 percent, the share of Mardin’s contribution to the total GDP of Turkey has been relatively low between 2004–14. At the sector level, the average share of the city’s manufacturing sector (0.25 percent), service sector (0.46 percent), and agricultural sector (1.15 percent) at the related sectors in Turkey have been also very low, with the agricultural sector accounting for the highest share. During the same period, the most important sectors in the city in terms of their share at the city’s overall contribution to the GDP have been the service sector (53.95 percent), followed by the agricultural sector (19.9 percent), and then the manufacturing sector (14.26 percent).²⁹

The agricultural sector has been for a long time the most important sector but witnessed a decrease since the 1990s. Thus, the share of those employed in the agricultural sector decreased from around 75 percent in 1990 to 70 percent in 2000. As for 2009, this share was reported to be 22 percent. The share of those employed in the service sector, on the other hand, has witnessed an increase from around 23 percent in 1990 to almost 28 percent in 2000 and further to more than 56 percent in 2009. The share of those employed in the manufacturing sector has been, with around 2 percent, relatively low between 1990 and 2000. But as for 2009, this share is reported to have increased to reach more than 21 percent. But it is commonly considered that the manufacturing sector in Mardin (and the broader region) is underdeveloped whereas, for instance, the agricultural sector of the city, especially in Kızıltepe, constitutes an important part of the economic structure in the region (Dicle Kalkınma Ajansı, 2010).

²⁸ The concept of “surplus population” as used here basically builds upon what Marx has called the “relative surplus population” which “Independently of the limits of the actual increase of population, [...] creates, for the changing needs of the self-expansion of capital, a mass of human material always ready for exploitation” (Marx, 1968: 661). Importantly, Marx (1968) considers the existence of this “mass of human material always ready for exploitation” as having far reaching impacts on the labor market, especially considering working hours and wage rates.

²⁹ The average shares are calculated based on data provided by TÜİK (2018). See “Tablo 1: İl Bazında Gayrisafi Yurtiçi Hasıla, İktisadi faaliyet kollarına göre, NACE Rev. 2, 2004-2014”.

The labor market in the city of Mardin (Kızıltepe) constitutes a contested field characterized by competition between locals and refugees on the one hand, and by diverging attributions towards or perceptions of refugees by the different factions of capital on the other hand. First of all, the high number of Syrian refugees is an omnipresent topic in the city. The existence of Syrian refugees as a “surplus population” absorbed by the employed labor force has an important impact especially on wages as we will see below. Moreover, important is also the emergence of public “job markets” in the city. Most prominently, the Freedom Square (Özgürlük Meydanı) and the agricultural center (HUBUBAT) have started to establish themselves as spatial spots where Syrian refugees cue up early in the morning to be hired. Furthermore, the active search for jobs by Syrians on the “job markets”, or through friends and relatives, as well as on their own are also important indications in this context.

The analysis of Mardin (Kızıltepe) as a case is, in this context, relevant for many reasons. Mardin is not only one of the most important cities at the Syrian border but it also hosts a large number of Syrian refugees. As for May 2018, the city was hosting 92,825 Syrians and was ranked as the 11th city in Turkey hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees. Additionally, with a share of 11.46 percent the city was also ranked as the sixth leading city in terms of the share of Syrian refugees at the local population.³⁰ But the city is also worth considering for research because of its labor market situation. Between 2009–17, the south-eastern region of Turkey to which Mardin belongs had, on average, a relatively low labor force participation rate (36.2 percent) and employment rate (28.7 percent) and a relatively high unemployment rate (21.7 percent). Statistics for Mardin, available only from 2008 to 2013, show, on average, similar rates: a labor force participation rate of 34.4 percent, an employment rate of 29.1 percent, and an unemployment rate of 15.5 percent. According to official data, the unemployment rate in Mardin witnessed an immense increase from 12.3 percent in 2011 to 20.6 percent in 2013.³¹

It has also to be added in this context that the share of informal employment is much higher in the eastern and south-eastern parts of Turkey, ranging between 50–60 percent (DİSK/GENEL- İŞ, 2017). Considering the relatively low education levels of Syrian refugees there is no surprise that the big majority of them are employed informally. Additionally, considering that the working age population within the group of Syrians is more than 2 million, the number of the granted work permits is disproportionally low. In the case of

³⁰ İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management) (2018b).

³¹ The indicated averages are calculated based on the annual household and labor force statistics published by TÜİK, www.tuik.gov.tr (accessed on March 28, 2018). In the case of Mardin, data also refers to TÜİK (2010).

Mardin, it is striking to see that only 47 work permits were granted to foreigners in 2016 (Ministry of Labor and Social Services, 2016; Dicle Kalkınma Ajansı, 2017).³² Importantly, the results of our fieldwork also show that Syrian refugees mainly perform low - or unskilled jobs, frequently change jobs/employers and are almost exclusively employed informally. Our assumption on informal employment is also reinforced by another study according to which formal employment only accounts for one percent of the employed Syrian refugees in the city (Gezici Yalçın, Yılmaz, Batu, & Kan, 2017).

Methodology

Our study on the labor market access of Syrian refugees can be considered to make three important contributions. First, the big majority of studies on the topic largely remain descriptive. We, however, aim to introduce a theoretical perspective and to adopt a top-down research process. Second, our study explicitly aims to draw attention to the relevance of the social/class composition. We consider class structure, especially inter-class and intra-class differentiations as far too important to be neglected. Third, we focus on Mardin (Kızıltepe), a city at the Syrian border which is not only among the leading cities mostly affected by the Syrian refugee flows, but which is also belonging to the leading cities with low employment and high unemployment rates. Despite this fact, there has been only a few studies on the labor market access of Syrian refugees in the city (e.g., Gezici Yalçın et al., 2017; Özkarslı, 2015).

To test our assumptions, we have conducted semi-structured interviews on the labor market access of Syrian refugees during a fieldwork in Mardin (Kızıltepe) in April and May 2018. The interviews were realized in Turkish, Kurdish and, in a few cases, in Arabic with the help of a translator. One of the main researchers of this study speaks both Turkish and Kurdish and he made interviews in these languages. Interviews lasted between 15 and 51 minutes. The voice recorder was used when the participant approved it. All interview questions were asked in the same order. In the case of locals, some of the main questions included: “Did the inflows of Syrian refugees have an impact on the labor market?”; “Where do Syrian refugees most commonly work and do they work formally or informally?”; “Were the inflows of Syrian refugees accompanied by a decrease in wage levels and an increase of unemployment?”; “What would you propose as a solution to what you see as a problem”. In the case of Syrian refugees, some other modified questions were included: “Where do you work and how did you do find a job?”; “Are you working formally or informally?”; “Does

³² Unfortunately, we could not find any breakdown of the work permits in nationalities in order to find out the share of Syrians.

your working conditions, including wage levels and working hours, differ from that of the local workers?"; "Is there any social exchange between you and the locals especially on the working conditions?". Refugees too were asked what they would propose as a solution to what they see as a problem in the context of their labor market access. After completing the interviews, demographic information as age, education level, ethnicity, employment status, and migration background was gathered.

Interviews were conducted either with individuals separately or with a group of individuals together (2 to 5 persons) at workplaces, businesses, shops, and the center of employer associations. Fourteen individual interviews were realized. Two other interviews were conducted within group interactions. One of these was conducted with a group of neighborhood representatives, i.e., *muhtar* (five people) at their union center (Kızıltepe Muhtarlar Derneği). The other one was conducted with a group of Syrian Arab refugees (four workers) in a local shop run by a Syrian Arab refugee. A last interview was realized with two Syrian Kurdish refugees. The individual interviews include interviews with three local employers as well as interviews with a representative of the Chamber of Merchants and Craftsmen (Mardin Kızıltepe Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Odası) and with a representative of the agricultural center (HUBUBAT) which is mainly active for or on behalf of landowners and agricultural traders. All 25 participants were men. The age range was between 25 and 60. Out of the 16 locals taking part at the interviews, only two were local Arabs with the remaining 14 participants being local Kurds. Out of the nine Syrian refugees taking part at the interviews, four were Syrian Arabs and five Syrian Kurds. Table 6 summarizes the status, profession, and ethnicity of the participants of our study.

Table 6 Participants of the Study

	<i>Number and profession of participants</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Interview type</i>
<i>Locals</i>	3 Employers <i>Restaurant owner, industrialist, tradesman</i>	Kurd	Individual
	2 Workers <i>Salesperson, restaurant worker</i>	Kurd	Individual
	2 Public servants	Kurd	Individual
	1 Representative of the Chamber of Tradesmen and Craftsmen	Kurd	Individual
	1 Representative of the Agricultural Center	Kurd	Individual
	5 Neighborhood representatives (<i>muhtar</i>)	Kurd	Group
	2 Workers <i>Porter, truck driver</i>	Arab	Individual
<i>Refugees</i>	2 Workers <i>Construction workers</i>	Kurd	Individual
	1 Worker <i>Unemployed</i>	Kurd	Individual
	2 Workers <i>Salesperson</i>	Kurd	Group
	4 Workers <i>Salesperson, construction workers, Unemployed</i>	Arab	Group

The fieldwork faced two important difficulties. The first difficulty relates to the more general situation prevailing in Turkey, namely, the state of emergency lasting from July 2016 to July 2018, and to the more specific situation in the Kurdish regions, namely the declaration of autonomy in many Kurdish cities in the summer of 2015 which was accompanied by an intense armed conflict and curfews and resulted in an increased state repression in the wake of the declaration. The influence of both incidents on the reluctance of the local population to talk was obvious and often also explicitly raised by the interview partners. The second

difficulty relates to the fact that it was very difficult to get access to local as well as refugee Arabs. In the case of local Arabs, we were only able to conduct two interviews. In the case of Syrian Arab refugees, we could conduct only one group interview. In both cases, the interview partners were, despite the mediation of persons who they knew and trusted, skeptical about the purpose of the study and suspiciously asked whether our research has any official/governmental link. They also strongly opposed any recording of the interviews.

Results

Labor vs labor? Work, wages, and reproduction

One of the most important impacts attributed to the presence of Syrian refugees at the labor market by locals is the change in the wage levels: “[T]here are lots of workers out there, those who are refugees. As an employer you have to seal the deal. Instead of 100 TRY you can pay 50 TRY” (Interview 2; 50 years old, local, worker at a restaurant). Employers are facing a larger scope of supply of labor force and making use of it. Referring to one of his relatives a local said:

They showed him the door, the bosses. Look, they said to him, we can find someone else for 500 or 1000 TRY. What kind of a mood are you in? [...] For your price we can find two or three Syrians (Interview 12; 42 years old, local, public servant).

Worth mentioning is that the impact of decreasing wage levels is probably felt more as wage levels of locals have been low anyway: almost 50 percent of the locals earn less than 2000 TRY monthly; the share of those who earn from less than 350 to 900 TRY alone is 33 percent (Gezici Yalçın et al., 2017). Another important impact attributed to the increased inflows of refugees has been increased levels of unemployment. “In the past,” one local worker said, “you could earn a living, you could easily find a job. But now we have friends who remain unemployed for days, months and years” (Interview 8; 40 years old, local, salesperson). As the neighborhood representatives have noted, the decrease in wages and the increase in unemployment have resulted in many “personal dramas” including increased indebtedness and divorces (Interview 17; neighborhood representatives).

Closely linked to decreasing wage levels and increased unemployment has been the increase in rents for housing. It was also noted that some property owners have even remodelled their animal stalls and woodsheds in order to rent them. Some attribute rent increases to the inflow of Syrian refugees: “In fact, they have refused the facilities offered to them by the state. Actually, there are camps with all the facilities to satisfy their needs”

(Interview 12). Others hold the landlords responsible: “You have a shed worth nothing and 10 people are asking for it. The demand increases immediately. And you are a property owner, so you increase the price” (Interview 3; 48 years old, local, industrialist). A local worker explicitly noted, “If am a landlord, it is my fault. Why should I demand more rent? It is my fault, not the fault of Syrians” (Interview 2). However, although there is a certain perception that rent increases are related to the inflow of Syrian refugees, the impact on locals in terms of increased reproduction costs can be considered as limited, because official data provided by the district governorate displays that 80 percent of the local population of Mardin (Kızıltepe) lives in its own housing.³³

Strategies the locals have adopted during this process are, increasing the numbers of working household members, readiness to work for lower wages, indebtedness and reliance on credits, and resorting to properties including housing and farmland. Another important strategy often mentioned has been return migration to villages or migration to Western cities with some noting that locals “have become refugees in their own country” (Interview 12).

Syrian refugees in the city of Mardin (Kızıltepe), mainly Syrian Kurds, for the most part migrated because of oppression, the war, and the related downturn of the economy. The geographical proximity of Mardin to Syria, relatives and friends already living in the city, and the spoken language being mainly Kurdish, were the main reasons to migrate to the city. As regards the decrease in wage levels, Syrian refugees indeed confirmed this trend. But holding Syrian refugees responsible is strongly rejected as they work for lower wages “out of poverty. [...] They are bound to work for less money. Life here is too tough. If they don’t work, they have to go begging” (Interview 9; 41 years old, refugee, salesperson). “In the beginning, as I was new here,” said a refugee, “the daily pay was 35 TRY. Our people [the Syrians] were employed for 10 TRY. They would have even worked for 5 TRY³⁴ in order to cover their expenses for food” (Interview 14; 23 years old, refugee, construction worker).

Low wages, usually accompanied by long working hours, appear as a serious problem in making a living, so many Syrian refugees are indebted. But the effects of informal employment and of diverging wage levels between locals and refugees seem to be a more salient topic for refugees. As a result, the demand for formal employment and equal pay were often put forward. “The solution,” said one of them, “is equal payment for us and the locals. [...] Sometimes I work better than them but I don’t get the same money. We are not equal”

³³ Kızıltepe Kaymakamlığı (2018).

³⁴ The USD/TRY exchange rate has been very volatile. Between July and November 2018, the lowest and highest exchange rates were 4,57 TRY (July 6, 2018) and 6,54 TRY (August 31, 2018). See <https://www.bloomberg.com/quote/USDTRY:CUR> (accessed on November 9, 2018).

(Interview 13; 26 years old, refugee, construction worker). At the same time, taking the employers as the person of contact in this regard is seen as “useless” as they “see the opportunity and employ them [Syrians] cheaper” (Interview 13). “Employers think,” another one said, “why employing someone from Turkey for 2000 TRY instead of employing a Syrian for 700 TRY. They make profit out of the Syrians.” (Interview 16; 38, refugee, unemployed). It is, in this context, also acknowledged that unemployment has emerged as a serious problem which makes living in the city more difficult. Making Syrians responsible for unemployment was, however, seen in a more differentiated way: “Unemployment,” said one refugee, “serves the purpose of employers. But Syrians have got to work” (Interview 15; 25 years old, refugee, salesperson).

Equally important is that rent increases, considered to be very high and being increased each year, constitute a serious problem for refugees: “So we came here and we have to have a place to sleep. They have increased the rents. They say rents went up because of you [Syrians]. That’s right. Rents have become very expensive” (Interview 14). But rent increases also constitute a problem for refugees with the effect that many have to let themselves on living under bad conditions: “I can show you the houses they live in. They are all desolate and poor. They are not in such a situation to enjoy life. They work on a daily basis to cover their expenses” (Interview 9; 31 years old, refugee, salesperson). If landlords are approached because of rent increases, refugees are told that they can move to another place if they wish.

Although the labor market access is something that concerns both locals and refugees and although there are socio-economic points of intersection, there is a clear absence of interaction between locals and refugees. Whereas almost all of the locals interviewed confirmed that they do not have any personal contacts with refugees, many of the latter noted that “we have nothing to do with each other” (Interview 13) but that they hear that locals “talk behind our back” (Interview 9). The lack of social contact, but especially the lack of support by locals is seen as discouraging by refugees:

They [the locals] are not mindful of the fact that Syrians have fled a war. To them, Syrians get money, a salary, and enjoy themselves. Do they enjoy themselves because they get 500-600 TRY monthly? They don’t consider that Syrians have come here because they had to leave their country (Interview 14).

In the case of locals, however, there was a generally more distanced approach and no desire to get in contact with refugees. It has been only once that the demand was put forward that Syrians should be employed formally (Interview 17). Most commonly, however, the

solution was seen in taking out the Syrian refugees and accommodating them in camps or that Syrians “should return to their country and fight there” (Interview 11; 55 years old, local, truck driver).

Capital vs capital? Profits, competition and market share

The inflows of Syrian refugees and their impact on the labor market seems to have had an influence on businesses in different ways. In the case of industrialists, in the aftermath of the inflows, Syrians were employed at factories. Their employment was primarily justified as an act out of humanitarian concerns:

We felt sorry for them. They have been displaced, they are hungry. As a businessman I have given 15–20 of them a job. This lasted like this for 1–2 years. We employed them although they were not workers; we did it as an act of humanity (Interview 6; 57 years old, local, industrialist).

One of the interesting points is that employment in the industrial sector of the city is mainly formal employment. However, refugees were said to be employed informally because of the absence of necessary legal regulations.³⁵ At the same time, that Syrians have been resorted to as a source of cheap labor is strongly rejected:

They are employed out of emotional reasons, because they feel sorry for them. Our people here are sensitive, they don't put the business to the forefront. I don't believe this [that refugees are employed as cheap labor force]. For us industrialists there is no such thing. We pay what the minimum wage is. The working conditions for Syrians and locals is the same (Interview 6).

However, it can be assumed that Syrians were preferred more than locals out of certain reasons which may not only include their informal employment, despite the implementation of legal regulations one has to add, but also, as noted by one of the interview partners referring to one manufacturer, because Syrians “are taking more care of the factories than our locals” (Interview 5; 50 years old, local, representative of the agricultural center). Further evidence of this is that following the increased employment of Syrians “ours, the local workers, have started to put pressure on us. [...] [They] have started to be worrisome. Now, they were not able to find a job” (Interview 6).

³⁵ This points to the fact that “informality” should also be seen as a process although the usage of the term “informal sector” has dominated public and academic debate.

The leading sector in Mardin (Kızıltepe) in terms of absorbing Syrian refugees as a labor force has been the agricultural sector where Syrians are mainly employed informally on a daily basis. At the “job market” at the agricultural center (HUBUBAT), Syrians gather early in the morning to be hired as porters by agricultural traders or by landowners in order to be employed at the fields or at the irrigation wells. In this sense, inflows of Syrian refugees are seen as something that has been “extremely positive for employers” (Interview 5). It was also positively referred to the fact that the refugees did not remain in the camps but that “they have come here to work freely” (Interview 5). Compared to local workers who were continuously demanding wage increases because of the dependence of landowners on them and who, for this purpose, were also engaging in spontaneous strikes, Syrian refugees are considered to be better workers allowing employers to get rid of “the opportunism of the local workers”:

Believe me, if the Syrians didn't come here, local workers would have become partners of the landowners. They were setting the bar higher each year. [...] You know, the employers, those who employ Syrians, sometimes say, may they not go away, may they stay here. If they go, we will fall into the clutches of our workers. [...] Because if they go, the agricultural workers will get a 50 percent–50 percent partnership (Interview 5).

Although it was strongly rejected that wages in the agricultural sector decreased because of Syrian refugees, it is nonetheless admitted that it has resulted in a stagnation of wages and that the absence of wage increases has prevented the sector from a crisis. The discontent of local workers in the agricultural sector is mainly attributed to “jealousy” and to the reasoning of the local workers that “we would make them [employers] kneel down” if the Syrians were not here (Interview 5).

The third important sector in the city of Mardin (Kızıltepe) is the sector of *esnaf* (small businesses). In contrast to other employers, owners of small businesses explicitly emphasized that employers take an advantage at employing Syrians as a source of cheap labor and that this had a serious impact on local workers in terms of decreasing wages and increased unemployment. Interestingly, however, this sector in which businesses are mainly run by family members is the one least employing Syrian refugees. As a result, the perspective in this case is more similar to that of local workers than to that of the employers in the industrial or agricultural sector. It is primarily the increased number of informal businesses run by Syrians in the city which is seen as a serious problem. The increased competition is seen as having disturbed the balance of demand and supply as the number of businesses have increased immensely. The representative of the Chamber of Tradesmen and Craftsmen noted that they

as a result face a huge pressure from member businesses because they “don’t want to share the profit” (Interview 4; 55 years old, local). The businesses set up by Syrians are not seen as creating more employment opportunities so that “there is no benefit here, but rather harm” (Interview 4).

What makes the sector of small businesses interesting, in this context, is that it allows to grasp diverging economic structures in different sectors. The sector of small businesses is more open to competition and to investments by Syrians. But it is more difficult for this sector to absorb refugee workers. For the industrial or agricultural sector, however, it is easier to absorb refugee workers who are obviously more preferred than local workers. But these sectors are not open to investments by Syrians, i.e., they are difficult to be accessed by those Syrians who want to get into the business and who want to compete with local companies. In order to compete, Syrians need to have capital on a scale enough to be invested either in land and in the wheat market or in an industrial company. But Syrians in the city do not seem to have the capital required for such an undertaking so far. As a result, investment in a small business is more common. The interviews support this perspective, also evident from the fact that neither the agricultural nor the industrial sector has witnessed an investment in factories, land, or agricultural products by Syrians.

Discussion and Conclusion

We have tried to analyze the labor market access of Syrian refugees in the case of the largely neglected border city of Mardin (Kızıltepe). For this purpose, we have resorted to theoretical insights provided by comparative research on labor migration and to concepts provided by a critical political economy perspective. The political economy of Turkey is characterized by structural changes since the 1980s and is marked by the existence of a large informal sector and by high levels of informal employment. This specific context has provided a fertile ground for the informal employment of Syrian refugees. Legal developments, opening the way for formal employment, were only introduced more recently. As such they not only lag behind real developments but also largely remain without any effect.

The findings of our fieldwork show that the presence of Syrian refugees as a “surplus population” has an important impact especially on wage levels and that locals and refugees have, without developing any form of social interaction, strongly diverging perceptions on this topic. From this backdrop, both locals and Syrians can be considered as “competitors” at the labor market. The effects on employers, on the other hand, diverge according to the sector. The employment of Syrian refugees as an alternative source of labor has been referred by

industrialists as being largely positive, while agricultural employers are especially “enthusiastic” about it. “Immobilizing” local agricultural workers by resorting to Syrian refugees has been an economic “benefit” especially for landowners and agricultural traders. But it has simultaneously turned Syrian refugees into the new “bracciantato”³⁶ of Mardin (Kızıltepe). Owners of small businesses, on the other hand, are more worried about the increased competition by small informal businesses set up by Syrians which inevitably reduces their market share and earnings.³⁷ As a result, our research does not only point to important inter-class differentiations in the context of the labor market access but also reveals important intra-class differentiations between different factions of capital which we consider as far too important to be neglected. To conclude, beyond our aim to provide a new theoretical perspective on the labor market access of refugees, our intention with this research is also to encourage a critical deliberation on theoretical approaches and to induce further analysis especially by widening the spatial scope of the research and by adopting a comparative perspective including two or more cities. This, we believe, will result in a refined and more cohesive understanding of the labor market access of refugees in Turkey.

³⁶ Gramsci (1971, p. 75) refers to the “bracciantato” as the landless agricultural laborers who do not possess any lands and live by day-labor.

³⁷ Class differences within the group of Syrian refugees is a topic in need for more research as the number of Syrian refugees with capital invested in different sectors and in different cities seems to have witnessed an increase during the last years (e.g., see ORSAM, 2014; Çakıcı, Yılmaz, & Çakıcı, 2016; Finans Gündem, 2016; Kuyumcu & Kösematoğlu, 2017; Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2016).

References

- AFAD (2013). Türkiye'deki Suriyeli sığınmacılar, 2013. Saha araştırması sonuçları. Ankara: AFAD. Retrieved from https://www.afad.gov.tr/upload/Node/17947/xfiles/syrian-refugees-in-turkey-2013_baski_30_12_2013_tr_1_.pdf.
- AFAD (2014). Türkiye'deki Suriyeli kadınlar, Ankara: AFAD. Retrieved from https://www.afad.gov.tr/upload/Node/17934/xfiles/turkiye_deki-suriyeli-kadinlar_-2014_2_.pdf.
- Black, R. (2001). Fifty years of refugee studies: From theory to policy. *International Migration Review*, 35(1), 57-78.
- Bojadžijev, M., Mezzadra, S., Altenried, M., Höfler, L., & Wallis, M. (2017). Migration und Logistik: Politiken und Vermittlung mobiler Arbeit. Berlin: Berliner Institut für empirische Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (BIM), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.
- Dicle Kalkınma Ajansı (2010). Dicle bölgesi stratejik gelişme raporu. Retrieved from <http://www.dika.org.tr/photos/files/Dicle%20Stratejik%20GeliÅme%20Raporu.pdf>.
- Dicle Kalkınma Ajansı. (2017). İstatistiklerle Mardin, Ankara. Retrieved from http://nusaybintso.org.tr/site/dosyalar/Mardin_istatistik.pdf.
- DİSK/GENEL-İŞ (2017). Kayıtdışı istihdam raporu, Kasım 2017, Ankara. Retrieved from <http://cloudsdomain.com/uploads/dosya/15805.pdf>.
- Duruel, M. (2017). Suriyeli sığınmacıların Türk emek piyasasına etkileri. Fırsatlar ve tehditler. *Uluslararası Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 3, 207-222.
- Esen, O., & Binatlı, A. O. (2017). The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish economy: Regional labor market effects. *Social Sciences*, 6(4), 1-12.
- Finans Gündem (2016). Suriyeli patronlardan Türkiye'ye tam gaz yatırım. 20 September 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.finansgundem.com/haber/suriyeli-patronlardan-turkiyeye-tam-gaz-yatirim/1119599>.
- Gezici Yalçın, M., Yılmaz, N., Batu, M., & Kan, Ö. (2017). Mardin'deki Suriyelilerle yerlilerin gruplararası algıları araştırması sonuç raporu. doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.28292.22405.
- Gill, N. (2010). New state-theoretic approaches to asylum and refugee geographies. *Progress in Human Geography*, 34(5), 626-645.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- Healey, R. L. (2006). Asylum-seekers and refugees: A structuration theory analysis of their experiences in the UK. *Population, Space and Place*, 12(4), 257-271.
- İçduygu, A. (2016). Turkey: Labor market integration and social inclusion of refugees. Brussels: European Parliament. Retrieved from [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/595328/IPOL_STU\(2016\)595328_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/595328/IPOL_STU(2016)595328_EN.pdf).
- İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management) (2018a, March 12). Yıllara göre geçici koruma kapsamındaki Suriyeliler. Retrieved March 12, 2018, from http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/gecici-koruma_363_378_4713_icerik.
- İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü (Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management) (May 10, 2018b). Retrieved 2018, May 18, from http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/24-gecici_koruma_kapsamindaki_suriyelilerin_illere_gore_dagilimi_10_05_2018.jpg.
- Kızıltepe Kaymakamlığı (Kızıltepe Governorship) (2018). Retrieved 2018, May 30, from <http://www.kiziltepe.gov.tr/sosyal-durum>.

- Kuyumcu, İ. M., & Kösematoğlu, H. (2017). The impacts of the Syrian refugees on Turkey's economy (2011-2016). *Journal of Turkish Social Sciences Research*, 2(1), 77-93.
- Lordoğlu, K., & Aslan, M. (2016). En fazla Suriyeli göçmen alan beş kentin emek piyasalarında değişimi: 2011-2014. *Çalışma ve Toplum*, 2, 789-808.
- Lundborg, P. (2013). Refugees' employment integration in Sweden: Cultural distance and labor market performance. *Review of International Economics*, 21(2), 219-232.
- Mamgain, V., & Collins, K. (2003). Off the boat, now off the work: Refugees in the labor market in Portland, Maine. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 16(2), 113-146.
- Marx, K. (1968). *Das Kapital*. MEW Bd. 23. Berlin: Dietz Verlag.
- Menz, G. (2010). Employers, trade unions, varieties of capitalism, and labor migration policies. In G. Menz & A. Caviedes (Eds.), *Labor migration in Europe* (pp. 53-76). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Menz, G. (2011). Employer preferences for labor migration: Exploring "varieties of capitalism"-based contextual conditionality in Germany and the United Kingdom. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 13, 534-550.
- Menz, G., & Caviedes, A. (2010). Introduction: Patterns, trends, and (ir)regularities in the politics and economics of labor migration in Europe. In G. Menz & A. Caviedes (Eds.), *Labor migration in Europe* (pp. 1-22). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ministry of Labor and Social Services (2016). Work permits of foreigners, Ankara. Retrieved from <https://www.csgeb.gov.tr/media/7315/yabancilarin-çalışma-İzİnleri-2016.pdf>.
- MMD (2017). Türkiye göç raporu 2016. Ankara: İçişleri Bakanlığı. Retrieved from http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/2016_yiik_goc_raporu_haziran.pdf.
- Migration Policy Centre & Bertelsmann Stiftung (2016). From refugees to workers. Mapping labor-market integration Support Measures for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in EU Member States, Vol. 2. Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/from-refugees-to-workers-mapping-labor-market-integration-support-measures-for-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-in-eu-member-states>.
- ORSAM (2014). Suriye'ye komşu ülkelerde Suriyeli mültecilerin durumu: Bulgular, sonuçlar ve öneriler, ORSAM Rapor No: 189. April 2014. Retrieved from http://www.orsam.org.tr/eski/tr/trUploads/Yazilar/Dosyalar/201452_189tur.pdf.
- Özkarslı, F. (2015). Mardin'de enformel istihdamda çalışan Suriyeli göçmeler. *Birey ve Toplum*, 5(9), 175-191.
- Rajaram, P. K. (2018). Refugees as surplus population: Race, migration and capitalist value regimes. *New Political Economy*, doi: 10.1080/13563467.2017.1417372.
- TÜİK (2010). Bölgesel göstergeler TRC3 Mardin, Batman, Şırnak, Siirt 2010. Ankara: TÜİK.
- TÜİK (2018, November 8). İl bazında gayrisafi yurtiçi hasıla, iktisadi faaliyet kollarına göre. Retrieved November 8, 2018, from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=24920>.
- UNHCR (2017). Mid-year Trends 2016. February 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/58aa8f247/mid-year-trends-june-2016.html>.
- UNHCR (2018). Mid-year Trends 2017. March 2018. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5aaa4fd27/mid-year-trends-june-2017.html>.

The Syrian Refugees and Temporary Protection Regime in Turkey: A Spatial Fix for Turkish Capital

Cenk Saraçoğlu

Daniele Bélanger

Introduction

The inflow of 3.5 million asylum seekers from various cities and towns of Syria since 2011 has made Turkey the host of the world's largest refugee community in the world. This unprecedented influx has sparked some significant debates in academic and political circles about the socio-economic conditions and legal status of Syrian refugees as well as the respective institutional arrangements and international politics of the Turkish state. At the crux of these discussions has been Turkey's Temporary protection regime that was designated as a legal framework in 2014 to define the terms and conditions and rights of the Syrian refugees in Turkey (UNHCR, n.d.). The temporary protection law requires Syrian refugees to register with Turkish authorities, a procedure that gives access to free state-funded social services (including education, medical, and social assistance) in their place of registration only. Prior to January 2016, the temporary protection status of Syrians did not include a work permit. Only Syrians who had resident permits were granted the right to work, which represented a handful of early arrivals belonging to the wealthy upper classes. The 2016 regulation requires employers to apply for the work permit of the individual Syrians that they want to employ, to prove that there is no Turkish citizen to fill the job, and to ensure that no more than 10 percent of their employees in any given workplace are Syrian (Kadkoy, 2017). As such, Syrians have had, on paper, a decent bundle of rights provided by the Turkish state since 2014.

The existing research typically discussed the extent to which Syrian refugees could have access to the rights designated by the temporary protection and problematized the discrepancy between the precariousness and temporariness implied by the temporary protection regime and the Syrians' long-term stay in Turkey, and the absence of the convenient conditions of return to Syria. In this literature temporary protection has been predominantly treated as a legal relation and a problem of status between the Turkish authorities and the Syrian refugees (Baban, Ilcan, & Rygiel, 2017; Kutlu-Tonak, 2016, p. 124; İçduygu, 2015; Memisoglu & Ilgit, 2017). This chapter departs from this literature with the assertion that a more comprehensive understanding of temporary protection regime could

have been possible if it is also treated as a relation between the Turkish capital (business, land, and capital owners) and the Syrian refugee labor power. The temporary protection does not only define the recent legal status of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, but it also structures the framework and material conditions in which the social relations of production and of exploitation between the Syrian labor and Turkish capital is regulated. It is not only the relationship between the Turkish state authorities and the refugees but also the relationship between the Turkish capital and the Syrian refugees under a neoliberal context that shapes the living conditions of the overwhelming majority of the Syrians in Turkey (Canefe, 2016; Şenses, 2016).

Syrian Refugees as Displaced Migrant Workers

Such a perspective that incorporates the Turkish capital into the framework of analysis of the Syrian refugees in Turkey could be possible only when the Syrians in Turkey is treated as “displaced migrant workers” as well as refugees. The word “refugee”, as a legal status whose scope and conditions are defined by international law, denotes the circumstances that forced the asylum seekers in their country of origin and their legal rights and obligations with respect to the recipient country. It does not express any social and economic element with regard to their modes of survival in their new social context. Considering that the Syrians in Turkey has been in Turkey for eight years at the time of writing this chapter, that they were not granted any refugee and citizenship status yet and that around 650,000 Syrians work informally under highly exploitative conditions (Erdoğan, 2018, p. 6), they need to be treated also as migrant workers who were forced to leave their country because of the war conditions. Given the heterogeneous class structure of the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey “being a displaced migrant worker” does not define the conditions of those Syrians who could have the chance to use their economic and cultural capital and do not take part in informal labor processes. This, however, characterizes only a small minority of the Syrians in Turkey considering the above-mentioned number of Syrian workers are employed informally. This means that the scholarly discussions about the Syrians in Turkey should not be confined to the predominant subject matters, contentions, and problems associated with “refugee studies” but it needs to be also situated within the context of academic discussions pertaining to international migrant labor because *a)* this will make the “temporary protection regime” in Turkey comparable to the policies and practices developed in other social contexts where “temporary migrants” without any citizenship rights are utilized as a labor force; *b)* this will enable us to benefit from the

insights and observations generated from the scholarly analysis of the temporary migrant workers in other countries.

At this point, we need to state a fundamental difference between the Syrian migrant laborers in Turkey and so-called temporary migrant workers in other countries. The inclusion of the Syrian labor force into Turkish labor market did not happen as a result of the Turkish state's deliberate choice to seek "guest workers" from outside its borders. This was the case however, for many other countries such as Germany, USA, Canada, and Gulf countries who made in the 20th century necessary legal and institutional arrangements in advance for utilizing international migrant labor for the exigent needs of their national economy (Ferguson and McNally, 2015, p. 5; Hahamovitch, 2003, p. 70). It was not predominantly economic but a political motivation and calculation that led the Turkish state to host the Syrian asylums in its soil in the first place. It was assumed by the Turkish authorities that with their and other international powers' support to the opposition forces in Syria, the Assad government would fall in a few months after the start of the uprising and that the Syrian asylum seekers who were kept temporarily in the camps would return their country under a new regime and leader. Nevertheless, the trajectory of the war turned out to be at odds with such an over-optimistic expectation. The number of Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey has increased tremendously in years, dispersing across different cities in the country in search of work and survival. Rather than them being deliberately selected or invited to the country as temporary workers, they were transformed in due process into a migrant labor force as the war did not allow them to return.

Spatial Fix and Syrian Laborers in Turkey

Despite this striking difference in the context of Turkey, it happened to be the case that the Syrian refugees in Turkey have played a role similar to that of the temporary workers of other countries: an *in situ* "spatial fix" for the capital of the receiving country. The concept of spatial fix, as coined by David Harvey (1981), has been utilized by a few international political economy and migration scholars to illuminate the functions of migrant workers that were devoid of citizenship status for the wealthy capitalist countries (Hanieh, 2015; Anderson, 2005; Scott, 2013). The same concept would be useful for grasping the distinctive position of Syrian refugees in social relations of production in Turkey and to ensure a more comprehensive scrutiny of the temporary protection regime in this country.

David Harvey (1981) uses the concept of spatial fix to address the tendency of the capital to engage in novel spatial arrangements to overcome certain barriers against capital accumulation. The arrangements in question are designed to prevent or stave off the inevitable economic crisis stemming from the inherent contradictions of capitalism. He addresses the capital's tendency to go beyond the national borders and to invest in new geographies with lucrative economic opportunities such as new markets and cheap labor as a classical aspect of spatial fix. In relation to the geographical/spatial expansion, according to Harvey, the transformation of the urban or rural space by means of dramatically restructuring the built or natural environment in such a way so as to open up new terrains of investment and accumulation for capital (the large-scale urban transformations are very-well known contemporary example of this) is another moment of spatial fix (Harvey, 2006; Harvey, 1990, p. 232). Some scholars rightly pointed out the need to expand the scope of "spatial fix" to include the movement of people across national borders (i.e., international migration) (Anderson, 2005, pp. 16–17) as it is a spatial process that "becomes a potential means to facilitate and overcome potential barriers to accumulation" (Hanieh, 2015, p. 68). Hanieh discussed this third aspect of spatial fix in the context of Gulf Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar, where the millions of "temporary, precarious and easily deportable" migrants particularly from Southeast Asian countries (Hanieh, 2015, p. 68) helped these countries to avert the effects of global economic crises since the early 1990s. Such a spatial shift from the Middle East to Asia in recruiting labor force enabled the capital owners of these countries to fill the most labor-intensive, degrading and humiliating works with a labor force which is alienated from the local population and are devoid of any legal or collective instrument to defy the conditions of extreme exploitation and abuse. It was predominantly the differential status of these temporary migrants with regard to the local population that made such a spatial fix through migration to work out (Hahamovitch, 2003, p. 73).

Up until the Syrian crisis in 2011, the "spatial fix" through amassing temporary immigrant labor force has never been an option to facilitate capital accumulation in Turkey. Despite some examples of the utilization of the labor force of irregular migrants in some sectors (İçduygu & Yüksek, 2012; Kirişçi, 2007), a large body of "foreign workers" has never been part of the working class. This was largely due to the semi-peripheral position of Turkey in the global capitalist order, which makes it labor exporter rather than labor importer. Turkish capitalism has never suffered from the scarcity of reserve labor army inside its borders that satisfies its labor-intensive and exploitative sectors. The need for cheap and

informal labor force for such sectors as construction, textile, and agriculture have been met by the influx of rural migrants from inner Anatolia into capital-rich metropolises and particularly by the forced migration of the Kurds throughout the 1990s, who had to leave their original place of residence due to the intensification of the conflict between the PKK and Turkish state forces (Yılmaz, 2008). Nevertheless, despite their desperate conditions that made them susceptible to unfettered exploitation in the early years of their arrival, these migrants holding their citizenship status improved in time their capacity to develop solidarity ties amongst themselves and local population, to utilize some legal channels to seek their rights and to act collectively to demand an enhancement in their conditions (Çelik, 2005). As such, despite the lucrative opportunities that Turkey's local reserve army of labor offered for Turkish capitalism, there were still some legal and social limits to their full-fledged exploitation, subservience, and control. Such seemingly insignificant limits to capital could be of critical importance for such countries as Turkey, the growth of which is dependent mostly on the capital inflows, hence, is highly susceptible and vulnerable to the fluctuations in the world economy (Tutan and Campbell, 2016).

The meaning of the influx of more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees into Turkey for Turkish capitalism, since 2011, needs to be contextualized within such specific conditions of Turkey. The presence of millions of Syrian refugees in Turkey does not only put further strains on already limited financial resources of the Turkish state, which expended a considerable share of its resources for the sustainability of the services designated by the temporary protection regime. It also did not only generate some political risks for the ruling AKP government, whose initial open-door policy for the Syrians have been increasingly unpopular among overwhelming majority of the Turkish population (Hale, 2015). The absence of citizenship status and collective political power give an opportunity for the Turkish capital of overcoming the aforementioned seemingly minimal limitations to the control and exploitation of the local working class. As such, the unexpected and uncalculated stay of the Syrian refugees in Turkey has functioned in due process as an in situ spatial fix for some Turkish capital owners, who have been always prone to be vulnerable to economic crises and fluctuations, the latest example of which is the still-ensuing foreign exchange crisis and devaluation of Turkish liras that reached its zenith in the summer of 2018.

At this point, the question is how Syrian refugees under temporary protection regime fulfil the function of "spatial fix" for Turkish capital and business owners. There are three mechanisms through which such a large population with no citizenship rights enhanced the capacity of the Turkish business owners to overcome their historical limits to capital

accumulation. The first is that Turkish capital owners benefit from a reduction in the cost reproduction of labor power in Turkey when employing the Syrian refugees informally, which ultimately leads to a decline of the already slim overall real wages. The second is that the precarious conditions and status of Syrian workers enable business owners to develop the practice of seasonal hiring of labor power even in those sectors where the norm was annual contracts and long-term and relatively secured employment. Third, the inclusion of Syrian refugees in the workforce as informal workers with no citizenship rights facilitates the control and subordination of working class at large. These three mechanisms also operate with some nuances in other social contexts where the temporary migrants are recruited as a substantial part of the labor force. In this chapter, we will focus particularly on the *first mechanism* in real-life context by benefiting from the findings of the ethnographic fieldwork that we have been carrying out in İzmir since 2016. The other two mechanisms will be covered in the works that would follow this one. This still-evolving ethnographic fieldwork consists of workplace and neighborhood observations as well as 58 in-depth interviews with Turkish business owners, Turkish and Kurdish workers, and 35 interviews with Syrian migrant workers in Işıkkent, Limontepe, Çankaya, Basmane districts, and the town Torbalı adjacent to İzmir. Each of these fieldwork sites have been purposefully selected to reflect different forms of relations between the Syrian refugees, Turkish workers, and Turkish business and capital owners.

The Reproduction of Syrian Labor Power as Spatial Fix

The reproduction of labor power is essential for the sustainability of capitalist production. Michael Burawoy (1976) points out two interrelated aspects of the reproduction: *a)* the maintenance of labor power, which refers to the provision of the necessary expenditures for day-to-day subsistence of the workforce; *b)* renewal of the labor power, which addresses the necessity of filling the vacancies and/or new opening positions with new recruited workers (ibid., 1051). The provision of food, housing, urban amenities such as transportation and health are concerned with the maintenance of the labor power as they are essential “for the day-to-day sustenance of the productive worker” (ibid., 1052). Some of these facilities and activities for the reproduction of labor power (“labor’s subsistence level of consumption”) entail the utilization of certain goods and services as commodities, meaning that the reproduction of labor power requires the deployment of some labor time to produce these goods and services (Bryan, 1997, p. 434). In Marxist analysis of capitalism, the value of labor power as a commodity itself is determined by the socially necessary labor time to reproduce

it. The matter of the fact is that the cost of reproduction of the supply of labor power can vary across time and space as both the socially recognized scope and cost of these goods and services necessary for the maintenance of the work-force could be designated differently at different times and places (Bryan, 1997, p. 436). This leads to a variance of the value of labor power across nations (and in some cases across regions) depending on their historically specific social and political landscape on which the course of social struggles to define the quality and range of essential necessities of laboring people. As such, the value of labor power “contains a historical and moral element” and is subject to the effects of context-specific dynamics (Marx, 1867, 1976, p. 275).

As the cost of the reproduction of labor power and the value of labor power is internally related to the level of wages in a spatial-temporal context, capital and business owners are naturally inclined to search for narrowing down the socially agreed scope and costs of goods, assets and activities necessary to reproduce the laboring classes. It is their natural tendency to overcome the historical and social limits to the minimization of the cost of the reproduction, value of labor power, and hence, wages. In wealthy capitalist and oil-rich countries the utilization of a foreign labor force with no citizenship status has become one of the methods of circumventing the “national” and historical limits posed against the minimization of the cost of reproduction of labor power. Thanks to the treatment of foreign and temporary migrant workers as non-nationals, the capital transcends the limitations of “national space” by incorporating into the “national economy” the economically favorable historical and social conditions of a “foreign space” where the socially necessary labor-time for the reproduction of labor power, hence, the value of labor is lower. The temporary migrant labor paves the way for the formation of a new segment of working class, whose cost of reproduction and value of labor is measured along the lines of the conditions of their original country of residence, hence, differently than the local working class (Azeri, 2017, p. 13). Hanieh (2015) aptly explains how this “spatial fix” works in contemporary Gulf countries:

The value of labor power in the Gulf is not measured by the cost of reproduction in the Gulf States themselves, but relative to the cost of labor power in the home country of the worker. If all workers in the Gulf had parity in terms of their labor and citizenship rights, then this difference would disappear. There are no minimum wages in the private sector – where most migrant workers are found in the Gulf –and there are vastly different wage levels between citizen and non-citizen labor, which are even greater if non-wage costs are included (such as access to education, health, housing and other social rights for citizens) (p. 66).

In Turkey, a similar spatial fix is conducted through the incorporation of the Syrians as an informal labor force into certain sectors of Turkish economy. It is a well-documented fact that the Syrians are exposed to lower wages, longer working hours and more abusive working conditions than the Turkish citizens who are already subject to the highly exploitative conditions in the informal sectors (Erol et al., 2017; Daniş, 2016, pp. 562–86; Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2016, pp. 789–808). Driving the already slim wages even further down becomes possible by determining the requirements for the reproduction of the Syrian labor power according not to the socially agreed *subsistence* level of consumption of a Turkish citizen but to the assumed minimal expectations of a war-exile from a Middle Eastern country. This means that the socially necessary labor time to reproduce the Syrian labor power is surmised along the lines of a socially constructed “*survival* level of consumption” rather than the subsistence level of consumption imagined for Turkish citizens. The common-sense images of the war refugees in general and the Syrians in particular as people who flooded into the hosting country just to save their lives and hence would be content with the conditions of bare survival enables the capital and business owners to impose lower wages and more precarious and exhausting working conditions. As such the spatial movement of the Syrian movements permits the Turkish capitalists to overcome certain spatial/national limits to exploitation and accumulation. This leads to the emergence of two different segments of working class in certain sectors: the citizens who minimally expect the conditions that would ensure their “subsistence level of consumption” and those who are under the temporary protection regime for whom the bare survival would suffice for the reproduction of their labor power. This discrepancy drags the Syrian migrants into the conditions under which it would be socially unthinkable for a Turkish laborer to live. The filthy houses with unhealthy conditions, the extensive employment of child labor and workplace abuses, which were reported in our interviews with the Syrian workers and were documented by some research reports, are the reflections of such a discrepancy.

Having stated this, both our fieldwork and some research articles demonstrate that the conditions of local working class might be gradually altered with the emergence of this new segment of temporary migrant labor, as has been in other countries recruiting temporary migrant workers (Hanieh, 2015, p. 67; Rosewarne, 2010, p. 106). They could be forced either to concede to the devaluation of their labor or to displacement. Thus, the spatial fix by means of Syrian refugee inflow also endows these capital owners with more capacity to further depress the wages, to lay off the local workers when necessary, and/or to repress their

demands. In our interviews in Işıkkent, an industrial zone of İzmir the Turkish and Kurdish workers stated that exploitative working conditions experienced by Syrian workers led to a deterioration of their own. They explained that Syrians earned half of their already very meagre piece-meal wage. Interviewees' income had declined significantly over the past decade, thus reducing their purchasing power and quality of life. Some Kurdish workers earned so little that they could no longer afford city life and were, in desperation, considering a return migration to their parents' province of origin.

The business and capital owners that we interviewed in Izmir utterly acknowledged the significance of “this spatial fix” for their prospects. A textile company owner stated this in following words.

If the Syrians were taken out from these sectors today, the textile sector would shrink by 50 percent. There are five floors in this building. Except the third floor – where they do office work- in all remaining four floors half of the workers are Syrians. I also hire Syrian workers in my workshop.

Another textile company owner, which also employs Syrians in his workshop, imagined a “new system” of recruitment through which the extent of this spatial fix is pushed to extreme.

Instead of wandering on the streets, they [i.e the Syrians] could contribute to something. Instead of leaving them on their own, our state could keep them in certain camps and then ask the chambers of trade in different cities if they need workers and then send to the companies what they need from these camps. For example, Izmir Chamber of Commerce would tell the state that I need ten thousand men in such and such fields. In this way the places of these Syrians, where they live, where they work will be clear and will be better controlled. For instance, suppose that our firm asks 10 people from these camps. We could provide them with places to stay during their work period. In this way, we would also be able to control them.

The reason why this business owner addresses the state or government for the realization of his “project” of transforming the Syrian refugees into an “enclosed labor force” is obvious. Like in other historical cases where migrant labor was used as a regulatory force in the domestic labor market (Burawoy, 1976, p. 1076), without state interventions and regulations, the existing rearrangement of the reproduction of labor power would have been unthinkable. It was through the choices, discourses, and actions of the government that a spatial fix through the Syrian refugees could have been possible. The state policies have become constructive of this spatial fix for capital in various respects. First of all, it was the government which designed and enforced the terms and conditions of the temporary

protection regime that prepares a favorable ground for such a rearrangement in labor relations. Under this system, the Syrians were not given a work-permit until 2016 and they had to seek for works informally in various sectors. Only Syrians who had resident permits were granted the right to work, which represented a handful of early arrivals belonging to the wealthy upper classes. The new 2016 policy granting work permits to all Syrians under the temporary protection regime has yet to result in any significant legalization of this workforce; only 15,000 permits had been delivered as of December 2017 (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2018). The 2016 regulation requires employers to apply for the work permit of the individual Syrians that they want to employ, to prove that there is no Turkish citizen to fill the job, and to ensure that no more than 10 percent of their employees in any given workplace are Syrian (Kadkoy, 2017). This regulation is unrealistic and ineffective given the structural conditions of Turkish labor market: work opportunities in the formal sector are limited, the informal sector accounts for a large portion of the overall national economy (21 percent) and the existing work conditions in the informal economy are already insecure and highly exploitative for Turkish workers (Tumen, 2016, pp. 456–60). Under these circumstances, the Syrian refugees had to agree to sell their labor power informally for very low wages and under extremely precarious conditions in such sectors as textile, agriculture, construction, and service provision (Erol et al., 2017; Daniş, 2016, pp. 562–86; Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2016, pp. 789–808).

The other aspects of the temporary protection regime such as the right to benefit from health services need to be reconsidered in light of the Syrians' above-explained conditions in the labor processes. In our interviews with Syrian refugees there appeared an almost unanimous sense of satisfaction and gratitude for the health services provided by the Turkish health institutions. In fact, health has been a major concern for the Syrian population that suffered from war in their home countries and have been subject to extremely difficult socio-economic conditions in Turkey. Nevertheless, this gratefulness about the health services goes hand in hand with extreme grievances pertaining to the working and living conditions that they face in urban life. Some of our Syrian respondents reported to have visited health clinics very often because of the extremely unhealthy conditions at workplaces and at homes. This is an outcome of the fact that the free health service provided by the temporary protection regime is exercised under the conditions where the value of Syrian labor (i.e., the socially necessary labor time to reproduce their labor power) is determined in the market by their “survival level of consumption”. As such the health services provided by the state contributes,

in the last analysis, to the maintenance and the renewal of a workforce that is seen in the market as people who would deserve or demand nothing but survive in a foreign land.

The Syrian refugee workers are undoubtedly not passive, indulgent, and unconscious recipients of the conditions that were dictated to them by Turkish capital. However, one needs to recognize the presence of some insuperable impediments that obstruct them from engaging in any collective action and from seeking any collaboration with the Turkish working class against such a rearrangement of the conditions of reproduction and hence value of labor-power. This is concerned with the fact that non-national “migrant workers are clearly more vulnerable to additional *extra-economic*—political, cultural, ideological—compulsions” (Anderson, 2005, p. 24). Our interviews with a lawyer of an NGO working in the field of asylum seekers and irregular migrants stated to us that the absence of citizenship status and the fear of deportation deter the Syrian refugees from engaging in any individual or collective right-bearing activities. Our interviews with the Syrian workers strongly confirmed this observation. Our observations in Işıkkent have shown to us that some attempts of the working class activists to bring together the Syrian and Turkish/Kurdish workers alike under a rally against the stagnating or falling wages was ineffective. One of the reasons for this failure was the presence of anti-Syrian sentiments on the part of some groups of workers who perceived the Syrians as responsible for their worsening working conditions and depreciating bargaining power against their bosses. Another reason was concerned with a fact that holds true for the other countries where temporary migrant labor has been used extensively (Hanieh, 2015; Basok, Bélanger, & Rivas, 2014, pp. 1394–1413): the fear of dismissal and even deportation which deterred many Syrians from engaging in any collective action and even initiating any individual initiative for their rights. These disciplinary measures and the threat of deportation deprive the Syrian refugees of the legal and political means to challenge the Turkish capital’s rearrangement of working conditions.

Conclusion

Considering their long-term stay in Turkey without a refugee or citizenship status and their incorporation into the Turkish informal labor market extensively, the Syrian refugees need to be treated and examined not only as refugees but also as displaced temporary migrant workers. Such a shift in the discussions would help us to investigate how the Syrian refugees functioned for the Turkish capital as the tools of a “spatial fix” necessary for overcoming the domestic limits to profit maximization and capital accumulation. In the case of Syrian refugees, spatial fix operates through valuing the labor of the Syrians not according to the

socially necessary labor time to reproduce the labor power of a Turkish national but to an image of a war exile that needs and be content with mere survival in a foreign country. This helps the Turkish capital to utilize the war conditions in the Syrian soil as a means of going beyond the spatial boundaries of Turkey, i.e., as a means of circumventing the “conventional, historically negotiated minimum” (Bryan, 1997, p. 440) conditions of the reproduction of labor power in Turkey and of minimizing the value of labor and wages. This spatial fix also helps the Turkish capital to further entrench its control and discipline over the labor force in general. Such a spatial shift could be possible by the Turkish state’s temporary protection regime as its terms and conditions deprive the Syrians of citizenship status and curb their power to use the legal and political channels to raise and organize their demands as per their idiosyncratically drastic conditions in the labor processes. The temporary protection regime also contributes to this spatial fix by designating strict and unpractical rules for the formal employment of the Syrians with social insurance. These rules drag the Syrians into informal and extremely exploitative work processes through which a spatial fix for the Turkish capital could operate. Under such circumstances rights granted by temporary protection such as health coverage becomes functional in the reproduction of a non-national labor force, by means of which Turkish capital transcends the spatial limits to accumulation.

References

- Anderson, J. (2005). Borders, fixes and empires: territoriality in the new imperialism. *Centre for International Borders Research (CIBR), Electronic Working Paper Series*, 15.
- Azeri, S. (2017, November). Surplus-population and the political economy of fear, *Critical Sociology*, 17; <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920517737143>.
- Baban, F., S. Ilcan, & K. Rygiel. (2017). Syrian refugees in Turkey: Pathways to precarity, differential inclusion, and negotiated citizenship rights. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43(1), 41–57; doi:10.1080/1369183X.2016.1192996.
- Basok, T., D. Bélanger, & E. Rivas. (2014). Reproducing deportability: migrant agricultural workers in south-western Ontario. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40(9), 1394–1413.
- Bryan, D. (1997). International capital and the valuing of labor. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 27(4), 431–44.
- Burawoy, M. (1976). The functions and reproduction of migrant labor: comparative material from Southern Africa and the United States. *American Journal of Sociology*, 81(5), 1050–1087.
- Canefe, N. (2016). Management of irregular migration: Syrians in Turkey as paradigm shifters for forced migration studies. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 54(1), 9–32.
- Çelik, A.B. (2005). ‘I miss my village!’: Forced Kurdish migrants in Istanbul and their representation in associations. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 32, 137–63.
- Danış, D. (2016). Konfeksiyon sektöründe küresel bağlantılar: göçmen işçiler, sendikalar ve küresel çalışma örgütleri, *Alternatif Politika*, 8(3), 562–86.
- Erdoğan, S. (2018). Syrian refugees in Turkey and trade union responses. *Globalizations*, 15, 1–16; doi: 10.1080/14747731.2018.1474038.
- Erol, E., A.E. Akyol, C. Salman, E. Pınar, İ. Gümüşcan, K.Y. Mısırlı, & P. Mutlu. (2017). Suriyeli sığınmacıların Türkiye’de emek piyasasına dahil olma süreçleri ve etkileri: İstanbul tekstil sektörü örneği. *İstanbul: Birleşik Metal-İş Yayınları*.
- Ferguson, S., & D. McNally. (2015). Precarious migrants: gender, race and the social reproduction of a global working class. *Socialist Register*, 51(51), 1–23.
- Hahamovitch, C. (2003). Creating perfect immigrants: guestworkers of the world in historical perspective 1. *Labor History*, 44(1), 69–94.
- Hale, W. (2015). Turkey’s domestic politics, public opinion and Middle East policy. *Palgrave Communications*, 2(1), 2–3.
- Hanieh, A. (2015). Overcoming methodological nationalism: spatial perspectives on migration to the Gulf Arab States, in A. Hanieh & A. Khalaf (eds), *Transit states: Labor, migration and citizenship in the Gulf* (57–76). London: Pluto.
- Harvey, D. (1981). The spatial fix—Hegel, von Thunen, and Marx. *Antipode*, 13(3), 1–12.
- Harvey, D. (1990). *The condition of postmodernity*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Harvey, D. (2006). *The limits to capital*. London: Verso.
- İçduygu, A. (2015). *Syrian refugees in Turkey: the long road ahead*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- İçduygu, A. & D. Yüksek. (2012). Rethinking transit migration in Turkey: reality and re-presentation in the creation of a migratory phenomenon. *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), 441–56.
- International Crisis Group [ICG]. (2018). *Turkey’s Syrian refugees: defusing metropolitan tensions* (Report No. 241). Available: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central->

- asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/248-turkeys-syrian-refugees-defusing-metropolitan-tensions; accessed on 10 July 2018.
- Kadkoy, O. (2017, July 5). Syrians in Turkey: Is work permit regulation enough? *Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey*. Available: http://www.tepav.org.tr/en/blog/s/5929/Syrians+in+Turkey_+Is+Work+Permit+Regulation+Enough.
- Kirişçi, K. (2007). Turkey: a country of transition from emigration to immigration. *Mediterranean Politics*, 12(1): 91–7.
- Lordoğlu, K. & M. Aslan. (2016). En fazla Suriyeli göçmen alan beş kentin emek piyasalarında değişimi: 2011-2014 [The changes in the labor markets of the five cities hosting the highest number of Syrian immigrants], *Çalışma ve Toplum*, 49(2): 789–808.
- Marx, K. (1867). *Capital*, vol. I. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.
- Memisoglu, F. & Ilgit, A. (2017). Syrian refugees in Turkey: multifaceted challenges, diverse players and ambiguous policies, *Mediterranean Politics*, 22(3), 317–38; doi:10.1080/13629395.2016.118947.
- Rosewarne, S. (2010). Globalisation and the commodification of labor: temporary labor migration, *The Economic and Labor Relations Review*, 20(2), 99–110.
- Scott, S. (2013). Labor, migration and the spatial fix: evidence from the UK food industry, *Antipode*, 45, 1090–1109; doi:10.1111/anti.12023.
- Şenses, N. (2016). Rethinking migration in the context of precarity: the case of Turkey. *Critical Sociology*, 42(7–8), 975–87; doi:10.1177/0896920515606503.
- UNHCR (n.d.). Temporary protection in Turkey. Retrieved from <https://help.unhcr.org/turkey/information-for-syrians/temporary-protection-in-turkey/>
- Kutlu-Tonak, Z. (2016). “Endless Escape: from Syria to Turkey, then to Europe”, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 16(1), 121–34; <https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.12167>.
- Tumen, S. (2016). The economic impact of Syrian refugees on host countries: quasi-experimental evidence from Turkey. *American Economic Review*, 106(5), 456–60.
- Tutan, M.U., & A. Campbell. (2016). Foreign private capital-led growth: the recent rise and fall of Turkey. *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 48(4), 595–602.
- Yılmaz, B. (2008). Entrapped in multidimensional exclusion: the perpetuation of poverty among conflict-induced migrants in an Istanbul neighborhood. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 38, 205–34.

Part III: Power, class, discourse and identity

Being Immigrant in a Conflict-Ridden Society

Gaye Yilmaz

Introduction

Much of the literature on Syrian refugees in Turkey overlooks their ethnic and religious heterogeneity and its effect on labor market participation. There are differences in their socio-economic status, religion, and political views. The religious and ethnic diversity among the refugees can determine both the way they are treated by the Turkish state and the society, and their access to labor markets. Firat (2015) states that the Yazidi community, for instance, which escaped the ISIS-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria massacre in Mount Sinjar in 2014, is the least welcomed and protected among the “guests”. Alawite and Christian Syrians are also not welcomed, which explains why most of the Christians preferred to seek refuge in Lebanon in the first place. Different ethnic and religious affiliations within the refugee community may also shape their relations among themselves, as they continue to reflect the confrontations they had encountered in their home country. The relation between Kurdish and Arab Syrian refugees can be thus based on mistrust and discrimination rather than cooperation and solidarity (Firat, 2015).

However, unintentionally, Syrian immigrants, by escaping to Turkey, had opted for a country that has been experiencing similar religious and ethnic conflicts as encountered by them in their own territories.

Existing studies describe Syrian refugees either by their position on the labor market alone, or simply by their ethnic and religious/sectarian diversity.³⁸ However, there are no studies that analyze the effect of these ethnic and religious differences on the position of Syrians in the Turkish labor market. This study aims at overcoming this neglect by exploring different levels of conflicts and discriminations in Turkey following Syrian immigration. Here I must remind readers that Syrians in Turkey are referred as refugees by scholars despite the fact that Turkey treated them as “guests”.

In the first part, I map out ethnical and religious conflicts and discriminating practices prevailing in Turkey before the arrival of Syrians. The second part presents examples from different levels of discriminative practices that the Syrians, belonging to various ethnic and religious affiliations, are exposed to. The essay ends with concluding remarks.

³⁸ See Aşan (2015); Betts et.al. (2017); Çınar (2018); Çoban (2018); Dedeoğlu (2018); Erdoğan (2017); Erol et.al. (2017); ICG (2018); İstanbul Fikir Enstitüsü (2014); Kirişçi (2014); WANA Institute (2017).

A Country Profile: “Native and National”

Racism in Turkey is institutionalized through state discriminatory practices against those who are not ethnically defined as Turkish. Adopted in 1992, Article 1 of the United Nations Minorities Declaration states that one can be referred as falling in the minorities category based on one’s national or ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identity, and accordingly protection is provided by the state (UN, 2010, p.2). Accordingly, in Turkey, racial discrimination is mainly aimed at non-Turkish ethnic communities such as Kurds, Armenians, Romans, Greeks, and Zazas, although Kurds are not included in the official definition of minority in the Turkish state. Turks reject the true identity of Kurds and accept them as Turk.³⁹ Unlike other non-Turkish communities who seem to accepted being defined as minority, the Kurds reject and fight against them being categorized both as minority as well as being placed under Turkish identity.

Multiculturalism and integration are two concepts that constantly exclude each other. While multiculturalism emphasizes preserving authenticity of differences; integration is often perceived as the level of adoption of the host country's culture. Guiterrez-Rodriguez (2010) also states that in the UK, there is a shift from “multiculturalism”—recognition of existence, identity and rights of multiple cultural and racial groups and their traditions—towards a focus on foregrounding British identity and the need for migrants to integrate with British culture. A similar trend was evident in Germany, when in 2007 its National Integration Plan was announced (Yılmaz and Ledwith, 2017, p. 109). The Turkish version of this tendency towards “integration” is depicted in its association with Sunni-Turkish identity which has recently been labelled by the governing party (AKP) and President Erdoğan as being “native and national”.

Persistent Conflict between Turks and Kurds of Turkey

Despite being the most intense ethnic group, Kurds are numerically estimated as 15–25 percent of the general population (Totten, 2015). A classification or statistics based on the ethnicity of the population in Turkey does not exist. It should be noted that in 2014, the European Commission assessed the Kurdish population of Turkey in a range of 14 to 18 million (www.institutekurde.org). Reflection of this refusal policy of the state against the Kurdish population has caused the birth of a culture of hostility among some nationalist Turks. Moving from the findings of their field research, Lordoğlu and Aslan (2012) quote one of their interviewees: “Turks living in the Southeast Anatolia region live without being subjected to any

³⁹ See Saraçoğlu (2014)

discrimination, whereas Kurds in the West are seriously subjected to discrimination and even exposed to physical lynchings from time to time” (Lordođlu and Aslan, 2012, pp.119, 135).

There is limited data regarding racial discrimination in the labor market in Turkey. Both Article 10 of the Constitution and Article 5 of Labor Law No. 4857 and Article 18 of the Labor Law prohibit discrimination on grounds of language, race, color, sex, marital status, disability, political thought, philosophical beliefs, family obligations, pregnancy, religion, and sect. It is emphasized that everyone is equal according to the law and any discrimination and/or termination of work contract in connection with these factors are not accepted (Alp and Tařtan, 2011, p. 22). However, although the law prohibits racial discrimination in Turkey, the minority population experiences all kinds of problems in practice, as put by Lordođlu and Aslan (2012, pp. 136–37):

...In a job interview when I was talking about the start date, I said I wanted to use weekend holidays within working week. I added that I need this to visit my political convicted brother in jail. They just told that they would inform me. Of course my application was rejected.

Chemistry technician H. also tells a similar story:

I wrote English and Russian in the foreign language part of the CV I filled out in a job application. After I saw that the manager seemed happy for I am able to communicate in these two languages I also added that I speak Kurdish as well. As soon as he heard this, he turned down the application and told that they would not have any business with Kurds” (Lordođlu and Aslan, 2012, pp. 136, 137)⁴⁰.

Since Kurdish workers are mostly identified with the PKK, they are subjected to serious discrimination both in terms of working conditions and the employment they are offered. For instance, governorships in the Black Sea provinces prohibit accommodation of agricultural workers coming from the Kurdish region for gathering nuts (Bianet, 2018; UIDDER, 2012). Alp and Tařtan also point out that the identity of seasonal agricultural workers need to be provided to the security forces even before reaching the city, and the minutes are kept. According to the decision taken by the governorships, Kurdish workers are banned to enter the city and district centers. Kurdish workers who come to the Black Sea region for gathering nuts are paid 18TRY daily. If the accommodation of the workers and the cost of eating and drinking are covered by the nuts owner, this wage can be reduced to 15 TRY. However, local workers are paid 25TRY on the pretext that locals are more productive (Alp&Tařtan, 2011, p. 24).

⁴⁰ English translation belongs to the author

Lordoğlu and Aslan (2012) also assert that an interviewee points out that ethnic discrimination in the workplace is not important in an atmosphere where human life is threatened: “workers do not complain when they are overworked at the workplace, because violation in employment is not the first priority for people when their life is threatened”. A non-governmental organization (NGO) representative in Siirt describes that “being a business owner in a region where unemployment is at its highest level is seen as a privilege by workers. This is why employees believe that their bosses are benefactors of them” (Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2012, pp, 133-4).

Sunnis versus Alevis

First, I must draw the attention of the readers that those I refer as Alevi⁴¹ in this chapter are the people who define themselves different from Alawites, and are Arabic supporters of Hazrat Ali. Dudek (2017) states that the main religious group outside Sunni Islam in Turkey is the Alevis, a group that makes up an estimated 15–25 percent of the population. Some of the differences between Alevis and Sunnis include their places of worship. Sunnis worship in mosques; Alevis worship in cem evi. Mosques and cem evi are fully separate entities that have little to do with each other. Alevis do not separate by gender during worship, as women and men worship together, a feature of the Alevi belief that has historically been one of the major sources of friction, as Sunni men and women worship in separate rooms in the mosque, allegedly making them more “pure” and subsequently justifying harassment against Alevis (Dudek, 2017). Kayabaş and Kütküt (2011) claim frequent discrimination against the Alevis during their recruitment process (Kutunis and Ulu, 2016, p. 366). Alevis are the ones who have been exposed to various discriminations in daily life and in employments:

I made a job application for the post of a security officer. There were total five candidates for this post including me. We were taken to the interview room one by one. Among the questions I was asked were those on religious rituals such as fasting and praying, and smoking or alcohol drinking habits. I explained that I do not smoke or drink alcohol, but I don't pray or fast because of my Alevi identity. Then, I learned that only my application was rejected (Lordoğlu and Aslan, 2012, p. 137).

Indeed, the most common complaint within the Alevi community is related to the lack of the ritual of fasting during Ramadan. In a variety of researches, Alevis have repeatedly stated

⁴¹ Çağatay (2012) argues that Alevis are not Alawite. Despite semantically similar names—both Alawites and Alevis derive their names from their reverence for Ali, a close relative of the Muslim prophet Mohammed—Alevis and Alawites represent different strains of Islam. The Alawites are Arabs and the Alevis are Turks.

that they are not allowed to have lunch or to smoke at the workplace during Ramadan (Gölbaşı and Mazlum, 2010, p. 329). Non-Sunni Muslims complain that they face difficulty obtaining exemptions from compulsory religious instruction in primary and secondary schools, particularly if their identification cards listed their religion as “Muslim” (UK Home Office, 2017, p. 17). Alevi say they are frightened that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is moving to remake Turkey into a place with little room for dissent or even different lifestyles. They accuse the government of kicking them out of their historic strongholds by replacing them with Sunni Syrian refugees. In Anatolian Turkey, thousands of Syrians, funded by international donors, the AKP, and themselves, have been relocated to Alevi neighborhoods where rents are cheaper. In March 2016, for instance, the government demolished homes in Küçükarmutlu to make way for new development sites, which would push out many of the local residents (UK Home Office, 2017, pp. 20-1).

Sunnis versus Syrian Orthodox/Süryanis

The discrimination of faith community encompasses also Turkey's Syrian Orthodox population (Süryanis). Süryanis are not included in the category of minority defined by the Treaty of Lausanne (Oktav, 2013, p.13; Turgut, 2016, p. 277; Güç Işık, 2014, p. 743). Before the Syrian migration, it was estimated that the number of Süryanis living in Turkey was roughly between 20 and 25 thousands. A significant majority of this population has been in İstanbul and the rest in Mardin (Çağlar, 2007; Demir, 2002; Bülbül, 2005; Thomsen, 2007). They could not claim minority rights because they were not minorities and felt constant pressure because they were not accepted as full citizens (Güç Işık, 2014, p. 743). First, because of the nationality criteria, the Süryanis face difficulties to work for certain churches. But, similar to the problems of other non-Muslim minorities, the Süryanis are not permitted to establish schools and elect the heads of their churches as it is subject to strict conditions. Their clergy continues to have difficulties in visa matters and residence/work permits. They face serious pressure particularly after the recent attacks against clergy and places of worship of non-Muslim religious communities. However, their main problem is related with property rights. The Süryanis suffered a lot under the quasi-civil war situation in the Southeast and emigrated to European countries in the past decades (Punsmann, et al., 2008, p. 8).

The discriminatory practices of the state against Süryanis are sometimes based on administrative regulations. For instance, soon after Mardin was given the metropolitan status, together with many other cities, the commodities and places belonged to Suryanis were transferred to the city municipality by the concerned commission. At the same time, places of

worship which were thousands of years old and belonged to the Süryani community, cemeteries, and many other properties were transferred to the Treasury. Tenancy rights of all these properties were granted to the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey.⁴²

Syrians in Turkey: a Homogeneous or Diverse Group of Immigrants?

A detailed demographic characteristic of the population who emigrated from Syria to Turkey has been documented in a recent report by Tolga Tören.⁴³ Since 2013, Turkey finalized almost a decade-long process of building more formal national institutions for refugee and migration management. The new legislation created regulation to manage the entry and exit of foreigners, and also set out four international protection categories—refugees (from Europe), conditional refugees (from outside Europe), subsidiary protection (individual, human-rights based), and temporary migrants (for mass influx situations) (Betts et al., 2017, pp. 19–20). The last category of protection was offered to Syrian refugees or conditional refugees, providing a work permit for six months, valid from the date of lodging a claim for international protection (Erol et al., 2017, pp. 15–16).

Meanwhile, in January 2016, the Regulation on Work Permits of Refugees under Temporary Protection was passed, allowing work permits to be granted to Syrians under certain conditions and with certain restrictions. But in practice, the restrictions have been significant—employers of Syrian employees must apply to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security for a work permit six months after registering for temporary protection status; employment must be found in the city of registration; and in any given workplace, the number of temporary protection workers cannot exceed 10 percent of the Turkish citizens employed. Around 20,000 Syrians were granted work permits between 2011 and 2016, which comprises nearly 1 percent of the total working age population. The estimated number of informally employed Syrians in Turkey range between 500,000 and 1 million. Formal and informal employment mainly center around agriculture, construction, textile, and service sectors (Betts et al., 2017, pp. 19–20).

As Loescher (1986) points out, too often refugees are perceived as a matter for international charity organizations, and not as a political and security problem. Yet refugee problems are in fact intensely political: mass migrations create domestic instability, generate

⁴² By 2008, minorities were not entitled to possession. For this reason, the real estates belonging to Süryanis were registered on behalf of the villages, the legal entity of which was in the borders of governorships. However, when Mardin city won the status of the metropolitan, the villages lost their legal personality and turned into a neighborhood. According to the law, properties belonging to the villages had also to be liquidated. See Bozarlan, (2017). 23 June 2017 <https://www.amerikaninsesi.com/a/suryaniler-binlerce-yillik-ibadethanelerini-kaybetti/3913399.html>

⁴³ Tören (2018)

interstate tension, and threaten international security (Malkki, 1995, p. 504). Instances of Sunni majority of the refugees from Syria coming into conflict with Kurds and Alevis of Turkey have been increasing. Olson (2016) claims that the major bone of contention is Turkey's purported intention to settle some of the refugees in largely Kurdish regions, alarming Kurds who are still living with the consequences of Turkey's ethnic cleansing operations in the 1990s. Even more frightening for Kurds is the fact that Turkey has renewed such practices in its recent war against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and Kurds in the southeast, killing 5,000 Kurds and displacing 200,000 more. İbrahim İnceoğlu, head of the Alevi Cultural Association also emphasized that Kurdish Alevis were not opposed to the refugees per se but feared that the Islamic State (IS) and al-Nusra militants would "infiltrate the camps and harm the Alevis in the region" (Olson, 2016).

Similarly, politically marginalized groups and opposition parties also believe that the government uses some groups of Syrian refugees to advance political goals, both domestically and in foreign policy.⁴⁴ The current Turkish Law on Settlement allows only refugees who are of "Turkish descent and culture" to settle in Turkey. The government would have to adopt special legislation to be able to extend mass naturalization for the Syrian refugees in Turkey. This would be a very controversial and divisive issue and a politically treacherous decision especially at a time when Turkey finds itself in a difficult politically polarized election cycle. Opposition politicians have feared that if indeed Syrian refugees were able to vote, they would most likely be voting overwhelmingly for the political party in power and the current prime minister not only because of the "open door" policy the party pursues but also because of the stand it has taken against the regime in Syria (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 20).

The ruling party promotes the notion that Turkish citizens should "help Muslim brothers and sisters in need" (BBC, 4 July 2016). This concept of faith-based solidarity has been at the center of efforts to contain and counter negative sentiments toward refugees. "It is thanks to religion that we do not see much violence," said an official working with an Islamist charity in İstanbul. Indeed, the government of the period supported different radical Islamist groups within the Sunni-Islamic line of Syria during different periods, while taking a stand against the Assad regime. Other motivation of the Turkish government to interfere in the civil war of Syria was to prevent Syrian Kurds to exercise their right for self-determination and preclude them to gain independency or autonomy in the region (Aşan, 2015, p. 60).

⁴⁴ See BBC (5 July 2016)

Identity Conflicts and Discrimination

The implicit functionalism of much work in "refugee studies" is especially clear when one is dealing with questions of identity, culture, ethnicity, and "tradition". Again and again, one finds in this literature the assumption that to become uprooted and removed from a national community is automatically to lose one's identity, traditions, and culture (Malkki, 1995, p. 508). Identity is both rooted in attribution and within self, and is both learned and socially constructed. Each social division has a different ontological basis, which is irreducible to other social divisions. However, as cited in the book by Yılmaz and Ledwith (2017), Yuval-Davis (2006) maintains that it is equally important to recognize how in concrete experiences of oppression, being oppressed is always woven in with other social divisions, immigration status, race, sexuality, age, class, nationality, geography, and so on. Identity is diverse and is also temporal and spatial. McDowell (2013) also argues that although migrant identities might be expected to be shared, and often are, these too are various and complex. They come together in cross-cutting ways for particular individuals and at particular historical moments in particular geographical locations (Yılmaz & Ledwith, 2017, p.106).

Germans do not like Turks... What is more, ... Germans behave very well towards immigrants from rich countries such as France, Italy or the US. So this is not something related to being an immigrant, this is something about the country you migrated from. If it is a backward country nobody in [the] hosting country likes you. If you are from a developed country you deserve and receive respect (Turkish woman in Berlin) (Yılmaz & Ledwith, 2017, p.112).

Although these words of the Turkish woman in Berlin reflect a specific part of the fact, that the Turkish society to some extent has displayed solidarity towards Syrian refugees, their compassion is waning. Host communities, particularly those who feel marginalized by ethnic, sectarian or ideological cleavages, perceive Syrians as a threat to their political and economic interests (ICG, 2018); they are apprehensive about how they would behave if immigrants were citizens of a wealthy country. The strain of integrating such a massive exodus is compounding tensions in a country already struggling with socio-economic strains and political tensions. Turkish citizens feel that Syrians threaten their access to jobs in an economy with high unemployment, even under-employment. Economic competition becomes especially bitter when it pits newcomers against groups that have long felt marginalized, such as the Kurds (ICG, 2018).

On the other hand, forms of discrimination are slippery, fluid, and changeable, and the detection and elimination of discrimination becomes a moving target, with success against one of its forms and often shifting to other and perhaps more subtle forms (Gachter, 2010, p. 40). If, for

example, the target to eliminate discrimination in employment against immigrants is achieved under the conditions for which demand for labor power is not increasing, this ends with another discrimination against domestic labor power.

I am a citizen of this country, but I cannot enjoy with basic rights because of the Syrians. Without them, I would be served better as a citizen. Now I felt a second-class citizen in my own country (Arabic Christian woman) (TTB Raporu, 2013, pp.113–114).

Similarly, if refugees and migrants benefit from the same public services before new investments are made in the field of public services, the quality of services would be reduced, which would lead to another deprivation. Just like how Arabic Christian male university student reported: “Unlike Turkish citizens, Syrians do not have to line up to enter into the hospital. They argue that they have influence from President Erdoğan” (TTB Raporu, 2013, p.123).

Sunni Syrians vs. Alawite Turks and Syrians

Among left-leaning or secular communities, the ruling party’s discourse of Sunni Muslim solidarity has deepened antipathy toward both the government and Syrian refugees. Alevis, as mentioned above, feel particularly vulnerable. “We perceive a systematic effort to divide society on the basis of religion, using sectarianism,” said a representative of the community in İstanbul:

We Alevis already feel like we do not have belonging. Our houses of worship are not recognized in the constitution. It is no secret that the president has no regard for our faith. ... We cannot help but think Ankara is conducting demographic politics. In a place like Gazi neighborhood that is around 50 percent Alevis who are concerned that Syrians will be settled to reduce the Alevis to a minority (Genocidewatch, 29 January 2018).

The situation was also aggravated when the prime minister referred to the people who were killed by a bombing in Reyhanlı in 2013 as “my 53 Sunni citizens” and then went on to accuse Alevis in Turkey of supporting or sympathizing with the Assad regime in Syria (Doğruel, 2013, p. 97). These developments raise concerns that the crisis in Syria and the way the Turkish government handles it could complicate minority–majority relations within a region otherwise historically recognized as one where different ethnic and religious groups lived in harmony. While the population of Gaziantep and Kilis is predominantly Turkish and Sunni, in these two provinces there is a delicate balance between Arab and Kurdish populations. In the case of Mardin, there is also an Assyrian minority, belonging to the Syrian Orthodox Church, who had

fled the region in the 1990s because of the violence between the Turkish security forces and Kurds and had recently begun to return to the province (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 31).

The influx of a large number of Sunni Arabs always risks disrupting these local balances and raises the specter that the conflicts within Syria could duplicate themselves on the Turkish side of the border (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 31). Heterodox Shiites, like Alevis a minority group, feel that Syrians are granted rights denied to other religious or ethnic groups. “We Alevis still do not have equal citizenship,” said the representative of a cultural centre. “In some cases, rights that Turkish citizens do not have are being granted to Syrians” (ICG, 2018). Also the BBC (4 July 2016) made the following statement: Opponents are accusing Erdogan of attempting to support the ruling Justice and Development Party, giving Syrians the right for citizenship.

You may think that we are paranoiac. But we have concrete reasons. Electricity is cut off near the border gates. Why is it being cut? Meanwhile, there is a rumor that war materials are being dispatched (Arabic Christian male) (TTB Raporu, 2013, p. 118).

Kirişçi (2014) states that major political challenge results from the fact that the overwhelming majority of the refugees are Arab Sunni Muslims and they have arrived into a region of Turkey that is ethnically and religiously quite diverse. The province Hatay accommodates significant numbers of Alevis, who are closely related to their co-religionists Alawites in Syria. As the conflict in Syria has evolved over time and radical Islamist groups have become increasingly active, Alevis have identified themselves much more openly with the regime in Damascus. They have also resented the presence of Syrian Sunni refugees in their midst and have imagined a conspiracy on the part of the government to change the demographic balance in the region (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 30).

Turkey does not collect demographic data on the basis of ethnicity, hence it is difficult to tell the size of the Alevi population in Hatay, but some estimates put their numbers at around 500,000. The tensions come at a time when the Turkish government is being criticized for emphasizing the Sunni aspect of Turkish identity. One important consequence of these tensions is that Alawite refugees from Syria have shied away from going into refugee camps that are overwhelmingly populated by Sunni Arab refugees. Instead, they have chosen to go to cities where the opposition party, the Republican People’s Party (CHP), runs municipalities or moved to İstanbul and sought the assistance of Alevi foundations (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 31).

Ethnically and Religiously Divided Syrians in Turkey’s Chaotic Labor Market

In general, when one considers the winners and losers of the Syrian migration from the perspective of labor and capital separately, unsurprisingly a direct contrast emerges. On the

capital side, sectors where labor intensive and informality is widespread (construction, textile, agriculture etc.) gain more profit; while earnings for the workers in the same sectors are being reduced and low-educated workers and women fall outside the labor market (Erol et al., 2017, p. 26). According to many researches on Syrian immigrants, Syrian workers are a new source of labor for employers to reduce labor costs. On the other hand, it is also a source of disturbance for local workers (Bidinger, 2015; Çınar, 2018, pp.122-123; Erdoğan, 2014; Erol et al., 2017; Lordoğlu &Aslan, 2015).

Various reports and hearings show that after Syrian migration the Kurdish population, in particular, has difficulty both in finding new jobs or protecting their actual jobs, primarily in western cities. The replacement of local Kurds by Syrian Turkmens and Arabs in Işıkkent/Izmir has increased ethnic friction, resulting in small clashes and two large-scale protests in 2013 and 2014 mainly led by Kurds who had lost their jobs. In Izmir, employers appear to prefer Syrian Turkmens over Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin, who are considered hard to manage in comparison to the “obedient” Syrians. Turkmens also speak adequate Turkish, so locals do not have any language advantage. “If you ask me whether I prefer a Syrian or a local Kurd, I would say Syrian, because they are really respectful. “Kurds usually behave in an unmannerly way. They pick up fights quickly,” said the manager of a shoemaking workshop (ICG, 2018).

International Crisis Group, a Washington based NGO, in its report on Syrians in Turkey ,also argues that international donors have focused most of their efforts on helping Syrians settled in Turkey’s border provinces such as Gaziantep, Kilis, Urfa and Hatay. The report says:

By and large, there is more cultural continuity and less tension between residents and refugees along the border provinces than within metropolitan areas in western Turkey. Turkish citizens along the Syrian border often speak Arabic or Kurdish, which allows them to communicate with Syrian Arabs and Kurds. Moreover, these are largely rural, culturally conservative areas, making them more hospitable to the Syrians who have settled there, many of whom come from the countryside. In major cities, the refugees’ inability to speak Turkish limits opportunities to find and build on shared values and interests. “The differences in subculture are more distinct in cities farther from the border”, said an international agency official (ICG, 2018).

WANA Institute, on the other hand, makes a more general evaluation, referring to the imbalance between protection and burden-sharing which is compounded by the fact that, in most host states in the global south, there are restrictions on refugees’ ability to enter the workforce, except in specific cases:

Refugees predominantly rely on savings and assistance from humanitarian agencies. As these resources become scarce, more refugees seek work in the informal sector, where they are exposed to exploitation, unsafe working conditions and other risks. Growth of the informal sector also has negative implications on the economic development of the host state, by undermining the tax base, distorting spending and compromising the rule of law. This situation feeds the perception of refugees as inherently burdensome on host states (WANA Institute, 2017).

Similarly, on the basis of his research, “Effects of Subcontracting on Construction Workers” carried out in Diyarbakır in 2015, Sidar Çınar points out that Syrians are more disadvantaged even than Kurdish workers. According to the researcher, prior to Syrian migration, Kurdish workers were considered as the lowest layer of the construction labor market as they had longer work hours and were paid lower wages than other workers. However, with the addition of the Syrian workers in the labor market, the Kurdish workers feel ousted as Syrian workers receive lower wages and work for a longer time (Çınar, 2018, p. 129).

Both quotations I made above confirm that the ethnic and sectarian dimensions of Syrian refugees are neglected in research which is the primary concern of this essay. When we take ICG’s remarks, for instance, it is true that refugees and the locals in the South border cities might have common cultural and language links, but the reason why Syrians escape to Turkey can neither be explained from the language nor culture context. Sectarian and ethnic cleansing existed in Syria which forced them to take refuge in Turkey and many other countries. Thus, the difference between fleeing of Syrian refugees, for instance, to Germany or Turkey does matter, because the same sectarian and ethnic conflicts also existed mainly in Turkey’s East and South East regions for decades before the war in Syria. Indeed, Aşan (2015) states that following Sincar and Kobane massacres of ISIS, majority of the Yazidis and Kurds who fled to Turkey took refuge in the camps set up and handled by Kurdish party run municipalities. Even these regions have historically been home for ongoing wars between the Turkish state and armed Kurdish guerillas, namely the PKK or assaults of paramilitary Sunni groups on the civilian Alevi population. Thus, we must underline the fact that researches have been carried out in Kurdish cities where most respondents were Syrian Yazidis and Syrian Kurds who represented the bottom level of refugees and minorities in Turkey. Hence, following the Syrian migration, Kurdish cities, on the one hand, have two worker groups at its bottom rank coming from the same ethnic root who fight against each other to get job, and on the other, are trying to overcome competition from a third but more privileged workers group (Sunni Syrians) who have consciously been allowed by the government to reside in Kurdish cities. This study, therefore,

aims to draw the attention of the academics towards the construction of a map based on the ethnic and religious differences that exist among Syrians in Turkey.

The only other research work on the same line was carried out by United Metalworkers' Union/DİSK in İstanbul textile sector. It points out that asylum seekers from Syria have ethnic and sectarian diversity and maintains that this has various impacts on their camp experience, access into labor market, as well as on the benefits they receive from state aids (Erol et al., 2017, pp. 20–21). However, this study also fails to evaluate findings according to acceptability and categorizes the results of field research only on the basis of gender differences. While participants of the research were grouped according to their ethnic roots and religious beliefs, it is not possible to see the answers of each group separately, despite the fact that most of them were Kurds. While it neglects the ethnic dimension of placement of Syrian refugees in Kurdish cities in the southern border, ICG emphasizes that the risk of social friction is especially high in low-income urban areas with other marginalized minorities, such as the Kurds: “the space previously occupied mostly by Kurds who migrated from the south east to bigger cities to work in the informal sector is now being filled by Syrians who accept less pay”. Many Kurds living in western metropolitan cities were themselves displaced owing to conflict in south-eastern Turkey and they harbor longstanding grievances against the authorities. This has caused resentment based on the perception that Syrians benefit more from public assistance and enjoy greater social acceptance (ICG, 2018).

Concluding Remarks

Along with this study, I have attempted to give an ethnic and sectarian picture of Turkey with Syrian refugees. By showing the existing discrimination in the labor markets of Turkey, based on ethnic and religious belongingness of workers even before the migration of Syrians, I wanted to explain that there was discrimination exercised against Syrian laborers, especially those other than Sunnis. I therefore call on labor researchers to include the ethnic and religious diversity existing among Syrians in the Turkish labor market within their studies. This effort, which I call as praxis, is essentially based on the fact that social research is aimed at giving a proper direction to social actors, namely to labor organizations and democratic NGOs.

Some experts believe that Syrian refugees helped Turkey's economy to grow by about 3 percent in 2016 “despite terrorist attacks, a failed coup attempt, political turmoil and a decrease in foreign capital inflows”. They also argued that Syrians are not taking jobs away from locals, but rather accepting menial positions that Turkish citizens do not want. But these discourses are mostly within political groups close to the AKP government. A similar rhetoric could have been

the case in a much developed capitalist country, like Germany or Great Britain, where unemployment is significantly lower than Turkey. But in a country where the levels of unemployment are already high, ethnic and religious discrimination cannot be executed. It is not possible to fill in the definition of "unwanted work" in a country where people are ready to do any kind of jobs, even by risking their life in the mines.⁴⁵

This brief study shows that by accepting lower wages and longer work hours, Syrians in Turkey has helped Turkey's economy and caused not only an increase in political, ethnic, and religious tension, but also a fear among local people. Of course, working for lower wages is not a choice for Syrian refugees, it comes out of desperation. The study also uncovers a fact that there is an urgent need for an ethnic and religious mapping of workers in Turkey in order to give priority to those who fall outside the government definition of the "native and national", namely, Alevis, Alawites, Kurds, Suryanis, Arabic Christians, and Yazidis. Such a map may also be helpful to provide more just public services.

⁴⁵ Turkey is quite well-known country with its fatal mine "accidents". The most recent of these is the mining catastrophe, leaving 301 workers dead in 2014

References

- Alp, S. & N. Taştan (2011). *Türkiye’de ırk veya etnik köken temelinde ayrımcılığın izlenmesi raporu* 1 Ocak – 31 Temmuz 2010.
- Aşan, E. (2015). Birlikte yaşama Suriyeli sığınmacılar dahil mi? *Kültür ve siyasette feminist yaklaşımlar dergisi*, Sayı 26, Haziran 2015.
- BBC (4 July 2016). President’s statement on citizenship for Syrians in British media. https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2016/07/160703_suriyeli_vatandaslik_basin
- BBC (5 July 2016). Turks hit back at Erdogan plan to give Syrians citizenship. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36704791>
- Betts, A., A. Ali, & F. Memişoğlu (2017). Local politics and the Syrian refugee crisis exploring responses in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. *Refugee studies centre, University of Oxford*.
- Bianet (2018). Mevsimlik Kürt işçilere Ordu Valisi’nden vize yok. <http://bianet.org/kurdi/toplum/108811-mevsimlik-kurt-iscilere-ordu-valisi-nden-vize-yok>.
- Bidinger, S. (2015). Syrian refugees and the right to work: Developing temporary protection in Turkey, *Boston University International Law Journal*.
- Birman, D. (2005). Ethical issues in research with immigrants and refugees, in J. Trimble and C. Fisher (eds), *Handbook of ethical research with ethnocultural populations and communities*. Sage/USA
- Bozarslan, M. (2017). Süryaniler binlerce yıllık ibadethanelerini kaybetti. <https://www.amerikaninsesi.com/a/suryaniler-binlerce-yillik-ibadethanelerini-kaybetti/3913399.html>
- Bülbül, M. (2005). Türkiye’nin Süryanileri. Tasam Publications
- Çağatay, S. (2012). Are Syrian Alawites and Turkish Alevis the same? <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/17/are-syrian-alawites-and-turkish-alevis-the-same/>
- Çağlar, A. (2007). Rescaling cities, cultural diversity and transnationalism: migrants of Mardin and Essen, *Journal Ethnic and Racial Studies* Volume 30, 2007 - Issue 6, 1007-1095
- Çınar, S. (2018). İnşaat işgücü piyasasında yeni aktörler ve yeni çatışmalar: Türkiyeli işçilerin gözünden Suriyeli inşaat işçileri, *Çalışma ve Toplum*, 56(1), 121-137.
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2018). Tarımsal üretimde göçmen işçiler: yoksulluk nöbetinden yoksulların rekabetine, *Çalışma ve Toplum* 56(1), 37-68.
- Demir, Z. (2002). İlklerin Milleti Süryaniler, Bianet Bağımsız İletişim Ağı 12 Ekim 2002
- Doğruel, F. (2013). Sınırdaki kültür: Türkiye-Suriye sınırında Hatay’ın ‘çok kültürlülüğü’nün koşulları, Suriye iç savaşının Hatay iline etkileri / *Fusun Sayek TTB Raporları / Kitapları -2013*
- Dudek, A. (2017). Religious diversity and the Alevi struggle for equality in Turkey, *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/02/10/religious-diversity-and-the-alevi-struggle-for-equality-in-turkey/#219f245f6d03>.
- Erdoğan, M. (2014). Türkiye’deki Suriyeliler: Toplumsal kabul ve uyum araştırması. Ankara: *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Göç ve Siyaset Araştırmaları*.
- Erol, E., A. Ezgi, C. Salman, E. Pınar, I. Gümüşcan, Y.K. Mısırlı, M. Kahveci, & P. Mutlu. (2017). Suriyeli sığınmacıların Türkiye’de emek piyasasına dahil olma süreçleri ve etkileri: İstanbul tekstil sektörü örneği/ *Birleşik Metal İşçileri Sendikası Araştırması*.
- Fırat, Ş.B. (2015). Syrian refugees in Turkey. *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*. <https://gr.boell.org/en/2015/11/13/syrian-refugees-turkey>
- Gächter, A. (2010). Discrimination against migrant workers 2007–2010: Trends and challenges. *ZSI-Center for Social Innovation*.

- Genocidewatch (2018). Turkey's Syrian refugees: Defusing metropolitan tensions (29 January). <http://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/2018/01/29/Turkey's-Syrian-Refugees-Defusing-Metropolitan-Tensions>.
- Gölbaşı, H. & A. Mazlum. (2010). Alevi-Sunni relationship focused on conflict and the percept of the other. *Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi*. <http://www.InsanBilimleri.com>
- Guitierrez-Rodriguez, E., (2010). Migration, domestic works and affect: a decolonial approach on value and the feminization of labor, *London: Routledge*
- ICG (2018). Turkey's Syrian refugees: Defusing metropolitan tensions, *International Crisis Group (ICG), Report No 248*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/248-turkeys-syrian-refugees-defusing-metropolitan-tensions>
- www.institutekurde.org (2018). The Kurdish population, Retrieved from <https://www.institutkurde.org/en/info/the-kurdish-population-1232551004> Accessed in 11th November 2018
- Kirişçi, K. (2014). Syrian refugees and Turkey's challenges: Going beyond hospitality. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Syrian-Refugees-and-Turkeys-Challenges-May-14-2014.pdf>
- Kutanis and Ulu (2016). The sources of organizational discrimination in labor markets. *Selçuk University. Social Sciences Institute Journal Periodical 2016; (35): 359–72*.
- Lordoğlu, K. & M. Aslan (2012). Türkiye işgücü piyasalarında etnik bir ayırmacılık var mıdır? *Çalışma ve Toplum, 2012/2*.
- Loescher G. 1986. Humanitarianism and Politics in Central America. Work. Pap. No. 86. Notre Dame, Ind.: Helen Kellogg Inst. Int. Stud., Univ. Notre Dame
- Malkki, H.L. (1995). Refugees and exile: From "refugee studies" to the national order of things, in *Annu. Rev. Anthropoi. (24),495–523*.
- Mazlumder Headquarters (2011). Report on ethnic discrimination in Turkey. http://Istanbul.mazlumder.org/fotograf/yayinresimleri/dokuman/etnik_ayirmacilik_raporu_2011.pdf.
- Oktav, (2013). A Thorny Issue in Turkish-EU Relations: Minority Protection, in *Human security in Turkey; challenges for the 21st century. (Security and conflict management), ed. Alpaslan Özerdem & Fusun Özerdem, Routledge, 2013*. <https://www.academia.edu/8410691/>
- Olson, R. (2016). Conflict between Kurds and Syrian refugees in Turkey? *LobeLog, July 15, 2016*. <https://lobelog.com/conflict-between-kurds-and-syrian-refugees-in-turkey/>
- Punsmann, G.B., C. Günay, R. Kastoryano, & K. Ulusoy (2008). Religious freedom in Turkey: Situation of religious minorities, *EU Directorate General External Policies of the Union, February*.
- Saraçoğlu, C. (2014) *Şehir, orta sınıf ve Kürtler inkar'dan 'tanıyarak dışlama'ya*. İstanbul: İletişim.
- TESEV (2008). A roadmap for a solution to the Kurdish question: Policy proposals from the region for the government. *TESEV Publications*.
- Thomsen, J. (2007). The Assyrians/Syriacs of Turkey: A Forgotten People. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/f09f/b051fb7f5b73b76903cc76718fa3b47a2ead.pdf>
- Totten, J., M., (2015). The trouble with Turkey: Erdogan, ISIS, and the Kurds <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/trouble-turkey-erdogan-isis-and-kurds> Accessed on 11th November 2018
- Tören, T. Syrian refugees in the Turkish labour market. ICDD Working Papers, No. 22, July 2018, <http://www.uni-kassel.de/upress/online/OpenAccess/978-3-7376-0450-5.OpenAccess.pdf> Accessed on 10 September 2019.
- TTB Raporu (2013). Suriye iç savaşının Hatay iline etkileri, in *Fusun Sayek TTB Raporları / Kitapları -2013*.

- Turgut, R. (2016). Bir Halkın Göç Hikâyesi: Süryanilerin XX. yüzyılda Türkiye'den Avrupa'ya Göç Süreci. *Mukaddime*, 2016, 7(2), 275-294
- UIDDER (2012). Mevsimlik işçilerin çilesi bitmiyor.
http://uidder.org/mevsimlik_iscilerin_cilesi_bitmiyor.htm
- UK Home Office (2017). Country policy and information note Turkey: Alevi, Version 2.0, August 2017.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635585/Turkey_-_Alevi_-_CPIN_-_v2.0__August_2017_.pdf
- UN (2010). Minority rights: International standards and guidance for implementation.
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/MinorityRights_en.pdf
- WANA Institute (2017). Refugee labor inclusion: Turkey and the Kurdistan region of Iraq.
http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication_RefugeeLaborInclusion_English3.pdf
- Yılmaz, G. & Ledwith, S. (2017). Migration and domestic work, the collective organisation of women and their voices from the city. *Palgrave MacMillan. London*
- www.haberler.com (1 March 2014). Ülke genelinde 12 milyon 521 Bin 792 Alevi yaşıyor.
<https://www.haberler.com/chp-li-ozbolat-ulke-genelinde-12-milyon-521-bin-5732812-haberi/>

What We Know and Do Not Know about Syrian Women's Labor Force Participation in Turkey: Questioning the Boundaries of Knowledge

Reyhan Atasü-Topçuoğlu

Introduction

Labor market participation is crucial for women's empowerment, allowing them to earn money and social recognition outside the home, achieve economic freedom, and improve their social status. Indeed, women's labor force participation (WLFP) has been a central demand of all feminist thinkers—Marxist, socialist, and liberal alike—and of virtually every women's movement across the globe.

The literature on women's work and development has produced a clear set of findings in relation to migration and WLFP:

- International migration, including refugee flows, tends to accelerate, as does women's international mobility, which has been conceptualized as the feminization of migration.
- The effects of the globalization of capital—especially the increase in flexible and informal work conditions—are gendered; women tend to be more disadvantaged compared to men of the same class, ethnicity, or migration status.
- In most countries, migrants tend to find work in the most disadvantaged segments of multi-layered labor markets, which are both ethnicized and gendered.
- Despite poor working conditions and the temporary nature of jobs with declining wages, women tend to spend more of their earnings on family and on their children's development.
- Women with greater education and skills earn less than men of comparable education, but their children tend to remain in education longer; highly educated women are thus the mothers of future high-skilled professionals.
- Despite the gender wage gap in skilled and unskilled work within both formal and informal labor markets, the returns of WLFP are not restricted to income.
- WLFP is not only a tool for alleviating poverty but also a tool for enhancing human development both at the local and global level, and—importantly—across generations.

These findings have prompted the mainstreaming of the demand for more female participation in the workforce. WLFP has been conceptualized as a tool of both human and economic development by the European Union and by international agencies, such as the United

Nations and the World Bank. And its importance for dealing with Syrian migration is undeniable—household income, gender equality, the empowerment of children through their mothers, as well as integration into the society more generally are all directly influenced by WFLP.

However, given the low numbers of female employees in contemporary developing regions, one can clearly see that conceptualizing WLFP as a tool for development and integration is insufficient. This is true of Turkey generally and of Syrian migrant women in Turkey in particular. There is a need to investigate WLFP, not only as a policy tool but as a product of dynamic social processes. We must detail any knowledge gaps in relation to the social determinants of WLFP, especially those concerned with patriarchal and informal capitalistic relations and those specific to authoritarian regimes.

This study is an attempt to detail the terrain of our present knowledge, focusing closely on the case of Syrian migrant women in Turkey. It tries to answer the question of what we know and do not know about Syrian migrant WLFP in Turkey. In mapping the terrain of existing knowledge, gaps in the field are revealed and directions for future research clarified. It starts by reviewing the relevant Turkish literature to summarize existing knowledge. It finds that the existing literature has been hamstrung by two key factors:

- the paucity of governmental statistics
- the distance between researchers and Syrian women due to current conditions of production of migration research and language barriers.

Reviewing the relevant literature demonstrates a possible set of knowable qualities of the phenomenon and provides a clear view of the limits of our knowledge and gives us hints about the so far omitted socio-political context. The final section of the chapter provides some working hypotheses as to why these gaps in the knowledge base exist. I suggest two possible answers:

- the internal structure of the literature itself, namely, the absence of both critical reviews of related international scholarship on the subject and studies that compare the Turkish experience to those in other countries, and
- censorship and atrophy of research interest under authoritarian regimes.

What do We Know about Syrian Migrant WLFP in Turkey? Surveying the State of the Art

Since 2012 there has been considerable growth in the literature concerning Syrian migration to Turkey. The overall research profile takes two forms:

- “non-generalizable” descriptive studies based on surveys and/or small-scale qualitative research, and
- econometric estimates of the effects on Syrian immigration on the Turkish labor market.

The temporary protection status provided to Syrians has been important in shaping the legal framework underpinning their rights. Obtaining a work permit is mandatory for all skilled jobs but is a complicated process. A government circular, however, makes work permits unnecessary for Syrians for certain unskilled jobs such as seasonal agriculture. Hence, most Syrians currently in Turkey are working in the informal sector. It is important to emphasize that the existing legal framework has the effect of directing unskilled migrant labor to informal labor markets.

“Non-Generalizable” Studies

Focusing on urban labor markets it is found that Syrian women’s participation in the labor force is very low in cities and remains varied in Adana (Çetin, 2016), İstanbul (SİG, 2013), Samsun (Assida, 2016) Kilis (Aktaş, 2016), and Nevşehir (Akşit et al., 2015). Studies of labor force participation in urban areas indicate a gap in employment outcomes between Syrian women and locals. Çetin’s (2016) study indicates a lack of labor market experience as well, with half of the Syrian women surveyed having been housewives before the war. Low wages and employers’ tendency to withhold or underpay the earned wages are strong factors hindering the economic integration of refugees in Adana. There is also a strong gender wage gap due to the different kinds of informal jobs available to men and women. In Adana, the average income of Syrian men is 393 TRY per month; the average for women is 37 TRY (i.e., 90 percent less than men). The average income varies from city to city and in many places is well below that of Adana.

Some interviews in İstanbul (SİG, 2013), indicate family budgets depending on child labor due to unemployment of both parents. Boys generally work in the textile sector and girls as home-based laborers. In addition to the absence of jobs, women stated that as they do not know Turkish and are unfamiliar with the environment they feel insecure and are afraid to leave the house and socialize outside. The SİG report also shows that women are heavily burdened by unpaid domestic work due to large number of family members occupying cramped living quarters. The virtually continuous demands of so many people crowding limited space results in continuous cleaning, cooking, and care giving, i.e., non-stop unpaid domestic work.

The main source of work for Syrian immigrants living in rural areas is seasonal agriculture. Here, jobs are temporary, informal and offer the poorest wages and working conditions. These jobs used to be filled by Kurdish people, most of whom had been forced to migrate by the government (Geçgin, 2009). Kartal et al.'s (2015) field research on seasonal agriculture carried out in the northern, southern, eastern, and western regions of Turkey provides knowledge on the general structure of the seasonal agricultural labor market and its working conditions in Turkey. It demonstrates that seasonal agriculture work is segregated according to ethnicity and gender with jobs that differ dramatically in terms of length of employment and wage levels. There is a high degree of synchronicity between job availability and migration flows. For example, short-term circular migration of men between Georgia and Turkey fills jobs in the Black Sea region, while Afghan men who typically stay in Turkey for two to three years work as shepherds in remote rural areas. Syrian women working within families in seasonal agriculture tend to circulate according to the harvest period from one place to another, their work in the fields being interrupted by unpaid domestic work such as cooking and cleaning. Children in these families also work. Most Syrian seasonal workers come from rural Syria and used to work in agriculture before the war. The Syrian Labor supply in Turkish agriculture has also placed downward pressure on daily wages as studies have reported (Dedeoğlu, 2016). Recent research (Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2016) shows that Syrian workers receive half of native workers' daily wages in agriculture.

Econometric Estimates

Econometric calculations about the effect of Syrian migration on the Turkish labor market provide contradictory results. Akgündüz et al.'s (2015) findings suggest that Syrian migration has triggered rising prices for housing (and to a lesser extent for food), though employment rates of natives in various skill groups have been largely unaffected. As the authors report: "Despite lack of screening and self-selection, the mass movement of refugees from a different culture speaking a different language seems to have had no effect on the employment of natives" (Akgündüz et al., 2015, p. 19).

Ceritoğlu et al.'s study (2017) indicates that formal employment has increased slightly, which may be a result of the increase in social services due to the increase in the number of beneficiaries brought about by mass Syrian migration. The study incorporates the informal sector in its modelling and finds evidence that immigrant workers do crowd out natives in the informal job market, with particular impacts on young and female unskilled jobseekers. However, the study underlines that this crowding-out effect is limited. The three

million Syrians who have settled in Turkey since 2011 have therefore not had any significant impact on the Turkish economy.

Del Carpio and Wagner's (2015) model suggests no effects of Syrian migration in skilled jobs, though there has been a certain extent of crowding out in low-skill and informal jobs. They explain this result as being due to the structure of the informal sector in Turkey, namely,

- less informalization in highly skilled jobs, hence less opportunity for immigrant jobseekers;
- horizontal segregation of informal jobs such as the concentration of men in the construction industry, which is the locomotive sector of the economy, hence less informal work opportunities for women as compared to men, and;
- importance of the employment structure of agriculture. In other words, before the Syrian migration, the rate of informal female employment in agriculture was 96 percent, while that for men was 67 percent, meaning all the formal jobs in agriculture were filled by men. The majority of Syrian refugee employment is concentrated in the informal sector and the increased supply has thus triggered declines in wages. At the same time, Syrian women and high-skilled workers struggle to take advantage of opportunities in the informal market (Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015).

In contrast to other research, Akgündüz's (2015) study finds no crowding out. Drawing on 2012–13 data, Ceritoğlu and colleagues (Ceritoğlu et al., 2017) determines that the negative effect of crowding out is limited. Del Carpio and Wagner (2015) use data from 2011–14 and show a considerable net crowding out and decrease in wage returns due to the “Labor supply shock”. Additionally, all studies find an increase in consumer prices in Turkey due to the increase in demand for goods and services.

These contradictory results require interpretation and critical engagement. The reliability of statistical models and the distance between models and reality should be questioned. One possible explanation is the division between qualitative and quantitative research: not comparing results with micro-qualitative studies may result in the exclusion of important variables from models. Another explanation is the possible bias in data. On the one hand, there is no reliable data on informal sector: informal jobs are not registered as well as informal production and consumption is not accounted. On the other hand, the registration of Syrians has been carried on a voluntary basis, and there is no differentiation made between individual and family registrations. However, none of the studies reviewed above have a critical approach to hardship in estimating informality or to the available data—especially the

paucity of official statistics, particularly that concerning the overall number of Syrians residing in Turkey. Hence models relying on formal job statistics may be failing to calculate real labor market effects.

The above literature review is a concrete example of the simple fact that informalization of capitalism restricts our ability to produce robust scientific knowledge of overall market effects and specific labor market issues. Hence, we lack the information to guide effective labor market policies and to undertake robust migration and development research. More concretely, informal capitalism means we do not know the precise number of Syrian women immigrants currently working in Turkey. Hence, as shown earlier, attempts to estimate the macroeconomic effects of Syrian immigrants produce contradictory results. This feeds directly into poor guidance of government policy in the areas of development, integration and gender equality, all of which depend on robust insight into women's labor market participation, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

Small scale, non-generalizable research reveals some aspects of Syrian women's relation to the labor market, such as wages and heavy domestic labor. But again we do not know the following: Do they have any job preferences? Do they have time to work outside the home? Are their cultural factors that might restrain their participation, that is, do they need family permission to work? This literature review also indicates the absence of studies on social processes effecting WLFP, especially focusing on the effects of gender and patriarchal ideology and their articulations with state policies as well as economic relations.

Revealing the gaps in our knowledge about the LFP of Syrian women immigrants in Turkey asks us to question the reasons for this gap and the limitations of our knowledge. Why has our understanding been so constrained? The remaining part of the chapter seeks to reflect on the (highly circumscribed) boundaries of Turkish research on the topic.

What Is Driving the Knowledge Gap on Syrian Women's LFP in Turkey?

I suggest two answers to this question:

- the internal structure of the literature, namely the absence of both critical reviews of related international scholarship on the subject and studies that compare the Turkish experience to those in other countries, and
- censorship and atrophy under authoritarian regimes.

Addressing the first answer, I contend, requires detailing a set of "knowable" qualities of Syrian women migrants and their relation to the labor market, drawing on insights from the

relevant international scholarship. For the second, I try to reflect on the relation between the current situation of scientific knowledge production conditions in migration studies and Syrian women.

Lack of Detailed Study of the “Knowable” Qualities of Syrian Women Migrants: Insights from Applicable International Scholarship

The Turkish literature on Syrian women’s LFP, as reviewed earlier, is tightly concentrated both spatially and temporally, focusing on current (i.e., post 2011) conditions in the country. This internal structure of the current discussion excludes relevant points that might be drawn from a wider reading of the scholarship. A review of the broader research internationally shows that we should discuss Syrian women’s LFP as more than an issue of education levels or skill sets. In so doing, I note that the following points have remained entirely overlooked in the Turkish literature.

- Culture and religion have been the core factors affecting WLFP in the international scholarship: Korotayev et al.’s (2014) survey explores the LFP of women in Arab countries (Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Algeria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco and Oman), finding it being significantly low in these countries as well as in non-European countries such as Tanzania, Myanmar, Vietnam, China, Peru, and Iceland and comparatively lower than those in the European Union. Majbouri’s (2017) macroeconomic modeling shows that in countries where Islamic family laws are present, an increase in male breadwinning capacity raises male bargaining power inside the household, making it more likely that male privilege is exercised to limit female labor force participation. Both studies concentrate on Islamic and Arabic countries. A broader question therefore arises: Is there a relation between WLFP and secularism? The religious–secular divide has been one of the main sources of political polarization in Turkey and yet has not been discussed in terms of the local culture of work.
- The pre-conflict social political context of Syria and old patterns of WLFP have brought about certain experiences and a culture of work that might have affected the current WLFP: WLFP has always been low in Syria. Urban women began to be recruited into the public sector after the first Baathist regime’s gender policies were introduced, while rural women largely remained housewives (Assaad et al., 2018). However, change in land ownership due to inheritance affected the pattern of LFP of both men and women. Abdelali Martini et al., (2003) uncovered a feminization of

rural labor in northeast Syria (Aleppo and Idlib) due to fragmentation of land via inheritance, leading to smallholdings that are insufficient to sustain rural households. This triggered increased male migration from rural to urban areas, leaving the rural agricultural work to women. Neoliberal economic policies from the 1990s saw privatization of social sectors and group dismissals. After 2000, the neoliberal model became even more dominant, leading to increases in poverty, social inequalities and growing female and youth unemployment. Women's LFP rates decreased from 21 percent in 2001 to 12 percent in 2010, whereas that of men fell from 81 percent to 72 percent (Nasser & Mehchy, 2011). This suggests that the patriarchal male breadwinner model was reinforced via neoliberal restructuring a decade before the conflict began in 2011. This articulation of neoliberalism and patriarchy went hand-in-hand with the rise of political Islam and the state becoming more and more authoritarian. It is important to note—as Alsaba and Kapilashrami pointed out that “the natural political allies of the ruling party were the traditional Islamic elites, and consequently, powers were delegated to religious institutions, giving them a growing say in governing women's lives” (2016: 8).

- Armed conflict and war have increased violence against women and reinforced patriarchal relations, thus negatively affecting WLFP: Alsaba and Kapilashrami (2016) observe that armed conflict and warfare are gendered, namely, that they affect men and women differently due to the gendered structure of the society, which reinforces the already challenging effects of violent conflict for women. Political conflicts not only amplify and increase the already existing discrimination and violence against women but also pave the way for new forms (Ettienne, 1995; Green & Ward, 2009; Jacobs et al., 2000). There is a direct relation between increase in violence and patriarchal structures. Sexual violence, forced prostitution and slavery have all been observed as war tactics in the Syrian conflict (The Lancet, 2013; UN, 2014). Therefore, one may ask: Who is expected to participate in the labor market? At the individual level, there are factors other than education levels affecting WLFP, such as trauma from armed conflict and sexual assault, women's experience of themselves under conditions of increased gender inequality and Islamic fundamentalism.
- The effects of empowerment on work need to be analysed critically: Studies note that the increased LFP of women in the rural agricultural work force had a very limited effect on their status at home. According to Abdelali Martini and de Pryck “Women in smallholder families undertake a large share of the agricultural work, which is

commonly regarded as one of their unpaid domestic duties and not ‘productive work’” (2015, p. 901). Hence, the matter should not only be LFP, it should include empowering effects of work at home and in society, especially in the contexts of patriarchy and informal capitalism, when jobs are informal, when there is little or no job security, no health insurance, no guarantee of payment of wages in full, no social status.

To sum up, the review of the pertinent international scholarship on female LFP highlights four main themes which should have been integrated within Turkish literature but were entirely overlooked:

- the effects of culture and religion
- the socio-political context of women’s labor force experiences in pre-conflict Syria
- the effects of violence and armed conflict and
- the empowerment effects associated with work

It is important to realize that the Syrian women have come from a certain historical and socio-political context that has an impact on them. While most Syrians refugees fled to Turkey, a considerable amount migrated to Jordan. Studies on Syrian LFP in Jordan clearly show that concrete “knowable” qualities have been overlooked in the Turkish country studies.

- Demographic characteristics of the Syrian immigrant population: Studies on the Jordanian labor market (Stave & Hillesund, 2015; Assaad et al., 2018) provide basic demographic information on Syrian refugees, such as rural background, age, gender, and education distributions, as well as estimates of the inter-sectoral distribution of Syrian refugees in terms of gender. Detailing the demographic characteristics of the Syrian population in Turkey would provide important background information for understanding the interaction with its labor market. However, due to the arbitrariness of the registration process and the unwillingness of the government to share data with researchers, this option has been foreclosed. For example, we should have known the percentage of men and women participating in the labor market in Syria before the war (i.e., before March 2011), as well as the current unemployment rate of Syrians over the age of 15 living in and out of camps and be able to compare these two rates.
- School enrolment rates: Another key characteristic with respect to the refugees’ interaction with the labor market is the low enrolment rate of Syrian children in primary schools, denoting the risk of child labor and possibly early marriages. While nearly 100 percent Jordanian children enroll in primary schools, in the case of Syrian children it is only 65 percent. Furthermore, while about 95 percent Jordanian children

at the age of 17 remain enrolled in school, the enrolment rate in school for Syrian children starts declining from the age of 11, and by the age of 15, it becomes less than 40 percent (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). The study compares school enrolment rates between girls and boys from age 6 to 17 in three categories (Syrians in refugee camps, Syrians outside camps, and Jordanian host community), and shows that enrolment rate of girls is very close to that of boys in all age groups among Syrian immigrants; enrolment rates among camp residents are higher than Syrians outside camps in all age categories; Syrian girls' school enrolment rate outside camp is as high as 87 percent for those aged seven years, which declines to 74 percent for those aged 12 years; 42 percent for those aged 15, and 22 percent for those aged 17, whereas boys' school enrolment rate is 89 percent at age seven, declines to 66 percent at age 12; 32 percent at age 15, and 18 percent at age 17 (Stave and Hillesund, 2015). Unfortunately, we lack official statistics for these categories of Syrian immigrants in Turkey and do not have surveys that might provide similar data. The knowledge gap is related to both absence of statistics and design of existing research.

Censorship and Atrophy

Understanding Syrian migrant WLF requires a close focus on macro-level variables (like patriarchal Islamic culture, the job creation capacity of the Turkish economy, and gender stratification in the labor market), but also on specific factors affecting women's daily lives. In other words, we must zero in on the daily practices and lived experience of Syrian women. We need to reflect on the relation between the current situation of scientific knowledge production conditions in migration studies and Syrian women. It is not enough to reveal the boundaries of the existing discussion; one must also question the limitations related to the sources of the "knowledge gap" concerning Syrian WLF. As noted earlier, part of the answer is the fact that we do not look around as much as we should. But another part is that we are prevented from seeing much.

Here, the existing bans and censorship on research and discussion under Turkey's creeping authoritarianism come into play. In June 2015, the Turkish Commissioner for Higher Education sent an official letter to universities relaying the orders of the Ministry of Interior prohibiting research on Syrians without the prior permission of the "ministries". This letter was widely circulated in universities. Later, we heard that another letter was issued in December 2015 regulating the permission and annulling the ban. However, the ambiguity endured for some time. In 2016 most of the universities established ethical committees which

decide whether any research project including thesis studies can go forward or not. And there is no mechanism to dispute committee decisions. Lack of information and communication with Syrians in general—and Syrian migrant women in particular—place extreme limits on researchers' capacity to consider and reason about current migration issues in Turkey. This produces, then, a kind of intellectual atrophy—a reluctance among researchers to fully embrace the topic and open it up for critical enquiry—that is reflected in the feeble reach and scope of the existing Turkish scholarship. The state of the art is based on studies by devoted scholars who managed to get research permission from the authorities and is dominated by descriptive studies.

There has been no strategy to reach out and register all the Syrians who came to Turkey under the initial open door policy.⁴⁶ Hence, we cannot even be sure about the exact number of Syrians currently residing in Turkey, which means we have no exact number to compare any statistics presented in various studies. Of course, there are statistical ways to compute generalizable sample size in order to make some estimates about the population in question. However, till date, there have been no such studies funded either by the government or private sector.

On the other hand, the publicly available statistics about Syrians and other migrants and refugees in Turkey is limited. So far, there have been no studies based on micro data of the Syrian registration database, which would have provided basic demographic information for scientific studies. The use of micro data was requested by many scholars during various meetings organized by the Directorate General of Migration Management to exchange ideas with academics. However, such requests were never answered.

The non-existence of generalizable data makes it impossible to connect findings of qualitative studies with even a blurry general picture, which disempowers the researcher and discourages scientists from shaping a grounded theory out of their research findings. So far, no effective scholarly connection between Syrian and Turkish social scientists has developed. Of the 392 Syrian academics who have taken positions in Turkish universities, more than 80 percent are in theology departments (Erdoğan, 2017). This forecloses the possibility of incorporating direct information from Syrian academia and of triangulating knowledge of gender and market relations in pre-war Syria.

⁴⁶At the outset of the conflict in Syria in 2011, Turkey accepted all Syrians fleeing from the war, following a de facto “open door” policy. Identification and recording of accepted Syrians, however, only began in 2013, when the policy changed. The registration process was voluntary and the data gathered depended on the willingness and ability of the applicant to declare all information fully.

There is also an ongoing distance between social scientists and Syrian women, partly due to censorship and partly due to the language barrier. This fact conceals some vital women's issues, which also affect their LFP. The following aspects have not yet been the subject of intensive analytical enquiry:

- women subjected to sexual violence in Syria, before their arrival in Turkey
- current economic, social, physical, psychological violence against women both in Syria and Turkey
- existing non-legal marriages, with men taking Syrian women as second or third wives

Conclusion

This study has sought to provide a detailed analysis of Syrian WLFP in Turkey. Reviewing what we know about the particulars shows that the literature is restricted by the paucity of government statistics, distance between social scientists and Syrian women, and silent acceptance of the previous research ban, as well as bureaucratic permission regime currently enforced on the academic community. Trying to reveal what we do not know about the issue helps to lay out possible new directions for future research.

Historical comparative studies are important to reveal similarities and differences, to determine political aspects, common solidarity, and resistance strategies. We need to see that it is not just culture and then a war occurring out of the blue that represses gender relations. Recent historical perspectives would reveal how women's rights have deteriorated in Syria since the 1980s, with the ongoing process of a combination of neo-liberalization and privatization and the cutting of social services by an authoritarian government, along with the effects of the religious elite, new corporate and militarized institutions. This would be helpful for understanding current gender issues. It should be underlined that in the case of Turkey, Syrian women have come to another patriarchal authoritarian social context with a growing informalization of the capitalist economy. We need to elaborate on these macro-level aspects and connect them with Syrian women's existence in Turkey as individuals.

In an economy whose international competitiveness depends on cheap labor and in which the labor market is becoming increasingly precarious, a basic demand for capital accumulation is the continuous increase in the working population. Under current social conditions in Turkey, some Syrian migrant women tend to be directed to a process of abridging childhood via early marriages and pregnancies within a polygamous framework, with little emphasis placed on educational attainment for girls. The patriarchal patterns in some of the communities that come from Syria are reproduced within Turkish socio-economic

context and the opportunities and obstacles therein. Those obstacles include male solidarity between local and immigrant men to limit the freedom of movement of women, including refusing to implement existing national and international laws prohibiting child marriages.

There is a discourse widely circulating in the media and sometimes occurring in scientific publications that holds certain patriarchal practices in which the Syrian women are both objects and subjects—presuming women will be and remain housewives, discouraging labor force participation and encouraging men’s polygamy – as a distinct peculiarity of the ‘Syrian nation’ and ‘Syrian culture’. Legalizing and normalizing patriarchal practices as “culture” triggers an intellectual atrophy between multiculturalism and universal human rights values, producing a cloudy silence that represses societal conscience about different forms of violence against Syrian women migrants.

Once again, we see the importance of relating with the “other” as a core dimension of relating with ourselves. We are then called to answer the following question: how is it that we know so little about the “other” in our midst? Is it a silent refusal to acknowledge what the informalization of labor markets is doing to us? Or have we somehow lost the sense of moral outrage when we see men folk demanding the right to take child brides as second and third wives before our very eyes? Or, when we observe the volume and dynamics of violence in Turkey? If we are to advance the cause of human development in Turkey it is simply crucial that we a) shift direction and resolve to pursue our research on Syrian women in ways that acknowledge the impact of time and space on their lives and that b) place the social processes that affect women’s LFP under a sharply critical gaze.

References

- Abdelali Martini, M., Goldey, P., Gwyn, J. & Bailey, E. (2003). Towards a feminization of agricultural labor in Northwest Syria. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 30(2), 71–94. Retrieved from: 10.1080/03066150412331311139.
- Abdelali Martini, M., & Dey de Pryck, J. (2015). Does the feminization of agricultural labor empower women? Insights from female labor contractors and workers in Northwest Syria. *Journal of International Development*, 27(7): 898–916. Retrieved from: 10.1002/jid.3007.
- Akgündüz, Y. E., van den Berg, M. & Hassink, W. (2015). *The impact of refugee crises on host labor markets: The case of the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey*. IZA Discussion Papers No. 8841. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA). Retrieved from: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp8841.pdf>.
- Akşit, G., M. Bozok, & Bozok, N. (2015). Zorunlu göç, sorunlu karşılaşmalar: Hisar köyü, Nevşehir’deki Suriyeli göçmenler örneği. *Maltepe Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1(2), 92–116.
- Aktaş, A. (2016). *Türkiye’de yaşayan Suriyeli kadın mülteciler: Kilis örneği* (Unpublished MA Thesis). İstanbul Bilgi University, İstanbul, Turkey.
- Alsaba K. & Kapilashrami, A. (2016). Understanding women’s experience of violence and the political economy of gender in conflict: the case of Syria”, *Reproductive Health Matters*, 24 (47), 5–17. Retrieved from: 10.1016/j.rhm.2016.05.002.
- Assaad, R., Krafft, C. & Keo, C. (2018). *The composition of labor supply and its evolution from 2010 to 2016 in Jordan*. Economic Research Forum Working Paper Series, Cairo, Egypt. Retrieved from: https://erf.org.eg/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/1183_Final.pdf (accessed on July 9, 2018).
- Assida, O. (2016). *The Economic and social impacts of forced migration: A case study of Syrian and Iraqi forced migrants in Samsun* (Unpublished MA Thesis). Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Samsun, Turkey.
- Ceritoğlu, E., H. B. G. Yüncüler, Torn, H. & Tumen, S. (2017). *The impact of Syrian refugees on natives’ labor market outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a quasi-experimental design*. *IZA Journal of Labor Policy*, 6(1). Retrieved from: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp9348.pdf>.
- Çetin, İ. (2016). Suriyeli mültecilerin işgücüne katılımları ve entegrasyon: Adana-Mersin örneği. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(4): 1001–1016.
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2016). *Türkiye’de mevsimlik tarımsal üretimde yabancı göçmen işçiler mevcut durum raporu: Yoksulluk nöbetinden yoksulların rekabetine*. Ankara: Kalkınma Atölyesi.
- Del Carpio, X., & Wagner, M. (2015). *The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper (7402). Retrieved from: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/505471468194980180/The-impact-of-Syrians-refugees-on-the-Turkish-labor-market>.
- Erdoğan, M. (2017). *Elite dialogue: Türkiye’deki Suriyeli mülteci akademisyen ve üniversite öğrencilerinin durumu, sorunları ve beklentileri araştırması-2017*. Retrieved from: <http://fs.hacettepe.edu.tr/hugo/basın%20bülteni-07082017.pdf>.
- Etienne M. (1995). Addressing gender-based violence in an international context. *Harvard Women’s Law Journal*, 18: 139–170. Retrieved from: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=664530>.
- Geçgin, E. (2009). Ankara-Polatlı örneğinde sosyal dışlanma açısından mevsimlik tarım işçiliği”. *Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 1(1): 3–35.

- Green P. & Ward, T. (2009). The Transformation of Violence in Iraq. *British Journal of Criminology*, 49(5): 609–27.
- Jacobs S., Jacobson, R. & Marchbank, J. (2000). *States of conflict: Gender, violence and resistance*. London: Zed Books.
- Kartal, F., Lordođlu, K., Atasü-Topcuođlu, R., Elçin, D., Elçin, M., Zeynelođlu, S., Zırh, B. C., Demir, R. Tezgel, O., Bařaran, K. Köse, D., Küçük, E. & Ülker, O. (2016). *Evaluating demand and supply of migrant labor in different sectors, assessing the economic and social effects of seasonal migrant workers within the framework of temporary and cyclical migration*. Ankara: Special Report to Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Directorate of Migration Management.
- Korotayev, A.V., Issaev, L.M. & Shishkina, A.R. (2015). Female labor force participation rate, Islam, and Arab culture in cross-cultural perspective”. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 49(1): 3–19.
- Lordođlu, K. & Aslan, M. (2016). En Fazla Suriyeli Göçmen Alan Beř Kentin Emek Piyasalarında Deđişimi 2011–2014. *Çalışma ve Toplum Dergisi*, 49(2): 789–808.
- Majbouri, M. (2017). Oil, Laws, and female labor force participation. *International Advances in Economic Research*, 23(1): 91–106.
- Nasser, R. & Mehchy. Z. (2012). *Determinants of labor force participation in Syria (2001–2010)*. Economic Research Forum Working Paper Series, Paper no: 698. Retrieved from: <http://erf.org.eg/publications/determinants-labor-force-participation-syria-2001-2010/>.
- SİG (Suriye’den İstanbula gelen mültecileri izleme grubu) (2013). *Yok sayılanlar raporu*. Retrieved from: <http://www.esithaklar.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Yok-Sayılanlar-Raporu.pdf>.
- Stave, S. E. & Hillesund. S. (2015). *Impact of the influx of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labor market: Findings from the governorates of Amman, Irbid and Mafraq*. International Labor Office; Fafu Institute for Applied International Studies—Geneva: ILO. Retrieved from: http://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_364162/lang-en/index.htm.
- The Lancet (2013). *Violence against Women in Syria*. (fact sheet). The Lancet, 2013; 382(9908):1858. Available at: [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(13\)62612-4.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(13)62612-4.pdf).
- United Nations (UN) News Centre (2014). *Impunity, unprecedented violence, denial of aid hallmarks of Syria conflict – UN rights panel*. 2014. June 17, 2014. Retrieved from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/06/471062-impunity-unprecedented-violence-denial-aid-hallmarks-syria-conflict-un-rights>.

Asylum Seeker Identity and the Labor Market: Syrian Asylum Seeker in Turkey

Polat Alpman

Introduction

In the relevant literature, special attention is often confined to different identities and cultural differences. It is generally argued that the problems between immigrants and the host society arise from these differences. Accordingly, integration is discussed as an agreement of differences, with class at the forefront of the issues. The identities of immigrants employed in the labor market are reproduced within class relations. This chapter suggests that inequality and discrimination towards immigrants is a consequence of the accumulation regime, focusing on class exploitation relations and mechanisms in the reproduction of the immigrant identity.

Immigrant identity is influential in the shaping of inequality and flexibility in the labor market. The breakdown of the workforce through identities generates a sort of control, which sustains the oppression on the labor force and the continuity of the capital accumulation.

Immigrant identities and the “immigrant identity” are two different constructions of identity. Immigrant identities are predicated on the relationship between the cultural, ethnic, and religious identities belonging to the person who immigrates, and the cultural and social infrastructure of the new country where they resettle. This concept, generally used in analysis related to the integration process between the immigrants and the host country, has a culturalist paradigm (Monsivais, 2004; Eckert, 2006, pp. 21–25). The immigrant’s legal recognition can also have an effect on this (Tinto, 2017).

The concept of “immigrant identity” that I will discuss in this article is a different identity that immigrants have to construct within the boundaries of the existing social, political, economic, legal, and cultural relationships in the country to which they have immigrated. Therefore, it is a term to be used to explain the identities of those immigrants who will not (or cannot) return to their country of birth and cannot truly integrate into their new country.

As a basic concept, “immigration” includes any kind of horizontal movement. Today, however, this word is frequently used to refer to international immigration⁴⁷ (Rouse, 1995;

⁴⁷ In Turkish, the word for *migrant* and *immigrant* are the same. This chapter points to the fact that in Turkish, this word, meaning both migrant and immigrant has come to refer almost exclusively to “immigrant”.

Rogers, 1986). For this reason, asylum seekers and refugees are two concepts accepted alongside “immigrants”.

This chapter will focus on the term “asylum seeker”. Interestingly, although Syrian asylum seekers have sought refuge in Turkey, they have not been given the status of “refugee”. Why this has happened and its effect on the construction of identity as well as in the labor market will be discussed in this chapter. One of the fundamental reasons why those who come to Turkey seek refuge but cannot find it, why millions cannot take advantage of refugee status, and why they find themselves in the labor market as asylum seekers, can be found in the specific conditions in which the “immigrant identity” is constructed in Turkey.

By defining “immigrant identity” and its derivative “asylum seeker” as an informal identity in the labor market, this chapter will explain the factors that lead to the construction of these terms. With reference to continuing spatial differentiation and the actions of the host workforce towards asylum seekers, the function of asylum seeker identity in the labor market will be explored.

Recognising the Immigrant Identity

La Barbera convincingly discusses that “identity has increasingly become an important keyword in contemporary human and social sciences. However, little attention has been devoted to the influence of migration on identity formation and transformation” (La Barbera, 2015, p. 1). There are various levels to the relationship between immigration and identity, the first being cultural differences; the greater the distance between the immigrant and host culture, the more immigrants—generally speaking—can be perceived as a threat to the host country’s identity and culture. Especially among populist right-wing movements, this cultural difference is one of the reasons why immigrant identity can be presented as a threat to social cohesion (Brunner & Kuhn, 2018, pp. 28–34; Davis & Deole, 2015; Lucassen, 2005, p. 106).

Immigrant identity is shaped by the distance between cultural references in their new location. Every process of immigration changes immigrants’ identity references. The asylum seeker identity exists in the space between belonging and being an immigrant. This is the experience of the immigrant, who embodies the contradictions of both societies.

Who is an asylum seeker? According to the International Organisation for Migration’s definition (2011, p. 12), they are

(...) Persons seeking to be admitted into a country as refugees and awaiting decision on their application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, they must leave the country and may be

expelled, as may any alien in an irregular situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds.

A refugee, in comparison, is classified as a person who “owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (IOM, 2011, pp. 79–80).

The identity of an asylum seeker is shaped by the country to which they migrate, inside the established relationships of that society’s social, political, economic, legal, cultural, and similar social spheres. As a result, the asylum seeker identity is an identity constructed by those social spheres’ relational dynamics. These relationships are arranged according to class oppression and domination mechanisms. Therefore, the asylum seeker identity is one of the results of inter- and intra-class tensions (Lee & Brotman, 2011; Vecchio & Beatson, 2014; Leung, 2014).

The issue of asylum seeker identity is complex because of the very nature of the migration process. There are, in a sense, multiple identities which are occasionally compliant and non-compliant with each other. International or transnational migration continues to transform individuals and the societies surrounding them, particularly the relations between migrants and their homelands or host countries (Orozco & Garcia-Zanello, 2009). For this reason, the identity displacement and resettlement periods are the processes of actualisation.

The immigration process alone does not play a role in the emergence of the immigrant identity because of the basic approach to the nature of immigration. Accordingly, every immigration process becomes labor migration, whatever the reason for immigration. After the immigration process begins, immigrants are included as part of the active or reserve labor force in the labor market. Ergo, this transformation applies to the immigrant as much as it applies to the host country. The primary condition determining the nature, content, function, and identity of the immigrant or asylum seeker identity is the labor market and its organisation.

Compared with previous migrations, the differentiating factor of the Syrian mass migration has been that it took place in a relatively short span of time; millions of Syrians entered Turkey within few years.⁴⁸ Because Turkey did not make adequate preparations,

⁴⁸ Mass migration to Turkey did not start with Syrians. Known recent mass migrations include around 120,000 Kurds escaping the massacre in Halabja in 1988; 400,000 Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria; 460,000 Iraqis fleeing the Gulf War in 1991; and between 1992 and 2001, approximately 25,000 Bosnians (1992), 20,000 Kosovars (1999), and 20,000 Albanians (2001) from former Yugoslavia (Corliss, 2003).

Syrian asylum seekers have encountered many problems. In signing the Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees in 1961 and ratifying the Protocol on the Status of Refugees in 1967, Turkey agreed to provide international protection of refugees. However, non-European immigrants were not accepted as refugees, but rather they were given a transitory status until they can be settled in a third country. Legally, those coming to Turkey from outside Europe are considered asylum seekers. Anyone who leaves their country for any reason and seeks refuge in Turkey is entitled to receive the status of “applicant for international protection”. Today, of the over four million Syrians who have come to Turkey, only three of them have obtained refugee status (Karabağlı, 2018).

The reasons behind this serious crisis are twofold. First, Turkey asserted regional conditions on an international agreement with its allies and, as a result, did not take responsibility for refugee rights. Second, Syrians came to Turkey as asylum seekers. One of the plans to overcome this crisis was the Temporary Protection Regulation issued on October 22, 2014; without giving refugee status, this regulation granted Syrians with some benefits. However, this support was designed according to the host country’s limited resources, and not as per asylum seekers’ rights, legal obligation, or responsibility (Erdoğan, 2014, p. 15). Although this regulation is entirely open to interpretation and poses uncertainty about the nature of the state’s responsibility, this issuance was important in terms of giving the presence of Syrians some kind of legal recognition.

According to the regulation in question, “Persons benefiting from temporary protection shall not be deemed as having been directly acquired one of the international protection statuses as defined in the Law”. In this way, on the one hand, Turkey is giving Syrians a legal status, while on the other they are stating that this status will not to have an effect. As a result, in this system, those who come to Turkey from countries outside Europe are not entitled to any status under international protection.

The relevant regulations present uncertainty about the concepts of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. One of the products of this continued uncertainty is the emergence of millions of people unable to find refuge or non-citizens’ status, who enjoy certain rights with certain restrictions.

The fact that Syrian asylum seekers do not have a legally realistic and effective status makes them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. The first reason for this is that legal regulations for asylum seekers provide them no protection or way to integrate themselves within the host community. Another reason for this exploitation is the extreme flexibility and informal nature of the Turkish labor market. As Gramsci (2014, pp. 142–43) said “migration

has its own economic laws. In other words, the migration waves occur in various countries in line with the different labor and technical needs of those countries”. The fact that Syrians came to Turkey in large groups reinforced Turkish employment regime’s informal and precarious structural nature.

There are two conditions that have compelled Syrians to construct a new identity: the uncertainty of asylum seekers’ legal identity and the flexible, informal employment regime of the economic sector. Identity is an experience, it is not created by itself or in an empty space. The determining processes behind the creation, emergence, significance, and place within social relations of identity are defined by class, social, political, legal, and cultural relations. For immigrants, there is always a difference between the identity before and after immigration. This difference is a product of the direction of immigration, the location of the place immigrated to, and the relations between the immigrant and the host society. It is not coincidental, but conjunctural and not structurally related. The network of cultural relations in which the identity of the asylum seeker is built is shaped by the politics of their recognition. In the construction of the identity of the asylum seeker, there are four effective factors that play a role and address this dynamic. The first of these is the subalternization of the immigration process. Second is a coercive dependency (Wolf, 1994) that forces the asylum seeker to be included as an asylum seeker in sovereign market relations. Third is anomic identity (Côté, 2000, p. 122) transition, and fourth is loss of generation. The influence of class, social, political, legal, economic, and cultural relations on the identity of the asylum seeker are realised through these four factors and dynamics, which leads to the development of the identity.

Asylum Seeker Identity and the Labor Market: Informal Identities

In the capitalist social formation, identities are bodies in which domination is materialized. The domination that exists in economic, legal, political, and related spaces operates on identities and aims to internalize inequality–discrimination. In capitalist societies, where inequality and discrimination occur in a layered fashion, the entry of the asylum seeker into the labor force is dependent on the employment regime formed by the overlapping categories of class, ethnicity, religion, law, politics, and culture. In other words, multiple dominations are often shaped as processes with objective class positions that clearly overlap and reproduce each other.

As often emphasized in class and stratification studies, identities are intrinsic to the economic struggle in cities (Siniša, 2004, pp. 24–8). According to these approaches, groups who find themselves in competition in the economic sphere include their identities in that

competition. One of the groups in competition tends to put the other groups down with regard to language, race, ethnic origin, gender, religion, physical condition etc. When one of the groups in the economic competition is able to trump any quality of the other group, the disadvantaged group tends to exhibit more of the group or cultural qualities that caused it to be excluded. This situation becomes the norm when the dominant identity or group manages to devise legal arrangements in their favour or even relying on nepotism. The economic relations are thus organised according to the needs of the dominant class and the workforce is then fragmented within itself through identities. In some cases, this situation determines who can and cannot enter the competition, and thus can create new socio-economic and socio-cultural boundaries (Hechter, 1976, p. 1164; Siniša, 2004, pp. 127–42).

Among those pushed to the bottom of the labor hierarchy and economic relations, there emerges an inter-class and inter-labor "... conflict [that] might be between, say, the regularly employed and a largely unemployed underclass, that may also be a racial or ethnic minority" (Harvey, 1985, p. 116). The same may be seen between the immigrant labor force and the domestic one. Inside the sovereign accumulation regime, because asylum seekers—just like the domestic labor force—are employed as insecure, unstable, and cheap labor, the class conflict inherent to the working class is reproduced through identity. Class inequality and discrimination practices are considered ordinary for asylum seekers, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, religious identity, because they are accepted as outsiders and people that eventually will have to go.

Inter-class conflict facilitates the realisation of competition through the domination of legal, social, and political spheres. The fact that the workforce describes itself somehow with non-labor qualifications and thus constructs racist, sexist, discriminatory, and incomprehensible sets between the other members of the same class is one of the ways that the domestic laborer makes himself advantageous in the economic sphere (Nilsson & Wrench, 2009, pp. 23–42; Omi & Winant, 1994).

Turkey is no exception: the competition of the labor market has been formed through a variety of group identities. This conflict became more intense following the Syrian civil war and the entry of asylum seekers into the labor market. In order to find a job, informal and precariously situated laborers try to maximise or minimise the impact of their identity according to the identity hierarchy. As Harvey (1985, p. 116) pointed out, the labor–capital conflict "poses a threat to the capitalist order, whereas the latter kind of conflict does not". The conflict between identities is supported by the capitalist class, as it causes class struggle to weaken and overshadow class contradictions. Thus, conflicts between identities that do not

constitute “a threat to the capitalist order” or even strengthen the resistance of the sovereign accumulation regime become the objective appearance of class-based conflict through different working ratios on each identity.

Cheap and precarious labor, which is central to neoliberal capital accumulation, is sustained by the organisation of class exploitation relations in all social spheres. Here, identities (for example, asylum seekers, or Kurds, or women, or Alevis) demanding their rights is presented as a threat to democracy by the dominant ideology. In reality, democratisation can solve these problems, but they are presented as problems which must be saved “for later”. In this way, from the point of view of the dominant identity (Sunni-Turkish), class inequalities are a reality which must be “tacitly” accepted by those who do not share this identity but live alongside it. Thus, social inequality and discrimination are defined by identity; the violence of class exploitation continues to include all segments of society, not just oppressed identities but also the dominant one.

Subaltern Labor

Mass migration, in particular, has a high potential for subalternization. The subaltern concept is used “in any social/cultural/economic/political subdivision/subdivision, for those who occupy the lower position” (Somay, 2008, p. 155). It is used to describe those who do not have the opportunity to express helplessness experienced in everyday life; those who experience economic, ethnic, religious-sectarian, or sexual inequality due to group identity; feel discriminated against; have different gestures and facial expressions to the language; have physical differences or accents or outsider opinions; and suffer from physical and emotional humiliation; all of this is in relation to the bearers of the dominant identity. Subaltern studies conceptualise a person inside a societal structure defined by relations between people and the conditions of the alterities. Therefore, the subaltern is portrayed as a language-less, non-subject. The moment a subaltern can express his subalternity in words, he ceases to be a subaltern (Spivak, 1990, p. 158). The position of communities that cannot speak, who are predestined to subalternity because they cannot speak, but who can save themselves from subalternity by speaking (Spivak, 1988), is directly related to exclusionary or discriminatory mechanisms and, opposite to social, political, and economic rights.

Coercive dependence

The asylum seeker identity is one that often fluctuates between tolerance and disdain for the host country’s workers. In overpopulated cities like İstanbul, this identity, on the one hand, is

valued as cheap labor and new consumers; on the other hand, it represents an object of hate and a scapegoat for the social, political, and economic problems of the host community. In other words, asylum seekers are desired to be part of the labor market, but they are constantly reminded of their place in the social hierarchy. In order to maintain the pressure towards cheap labor on asylum seekers, the practices of discrimination and inequality must be carried on. Asylum seekers must deal with this ambivalent attitude as part of their daily life experiences, and through their identity they create tactics to situate themselves within this daily life.

The other factor that enables asylum seekers' labor force exploitation is that they are stuck in a web of relationships that one could call "coercive dependence". Coercive dependence describes the conditions under which a precarious labor force must be connected to and be forced to work as members of the proletariat, putting asylum seekers in an even more difficult section of the labor market. The most important factor that solidifies this dependence is the removal of social rights, which is posed as a benefit to citizens. Every immigrant at the end of the day is a labor migrant, and every migrant becomes part of the production relations in the country where they settle. But those who possess the asylum seeker identity and who display coercive dependence particularities tend to work long hours without breaks. They are unable to receive their wages and unable to obtain permanent employment. They do not have any legal or personal assurance that they can claim against any abuse. It is important to recall here that it is provocatively, yet incorrectly talked over that Syrians receive access to free medical care and international telephone packages, monthly allowances, and other public benefits that keep them free from poverty.

People with the asylum seeker identity are pushed to an unequal and disadvantaged position against public institutions, the labor market, social welfare associations, judicial authorities, and law enforcement agencies, unlike holders of the dominant identity who have citizenship or citizenship rights. These conditions enforce employment at the lowest level, working conditions with all possible negative qualities, thus causing millions of Syrians unable to work outside unregistered fields. This asylum seeker work regime, with its dependence on such conditions and workers forced under arbitrary control, sometimes resembles the conditions prevailing in an enslaved system (Erdoğan, 2014; Girit, 2015).

One of the problems that created this employment regime was the rising waves of racism coming from local workers that pushed asylum seekers to work illegally and cheaply. For example, "the existence of a Syrian woman who will work in a bakery for 300 TRY a month instead of a Turkish woman at 1,000 TRY a month" (Erdoğan, 2014) creates racial and

social stigmas directed at Syrians, stigmas that continue to increase. Asylum seekers, however, cannot claim equality and cannot express any claim against the inequalities they face, because this inequality is directly regulated by law.

Identity Transition

Another factor influencing the identity of the asylum seeker, which is constructed through subalternity and forced dependence, is the transition of anomic identity. After immigrating, when joining the labor market on its lowest level, the Syrian asylum seeker experiences a period of anomy. Their identity, tied to subalternity and dependency relationships, is anonymized, and because of class decline and status loss, this identity transitions into a downward spiral. This new identity, in a sense, is constructed to cope with the ontological pain that is caused by the loss of identity. The resistance displayed against the anomic identity and losing prior identity is constructed “now” between the moment the immigrant enters the unequal and discriminatory modes of production and an individual’s aggrandised past/hopes of a better future. Anomic identity transition is related to anomie emerging with class decline and loss of status, and the loss of an individual’s previously known criteria. The asylum seeker’s new, anomic identity construction begins in the place where his understanding of himself and the group he felt he belonged to before immigrating does not find a compliment or a value in his host society. This identity, created by adding new content to the original informal identity, rather than acquiring a new identity, is one of the attempts to transcend the anomie, which is paradoxically caused by the loss of the previous identity. Damaged dignity is used by the dominant identity to create a place in the market for the asylum seeker when the latter cannot regain one’s previous identity. For asylum seekers, the transition to an anomic identity on the one hand gives him/her a way to move through daily life, while on the other hand, it burdens the body and the soul with felt inequality and discrimination (Erdoğan, 2007). This burdened meaning also leads to the development of internal resistance to the conditions in which they are located.

Generation Loss

The final result of the construction of the asylum seeker identity is the loss of generation. Not knowing *why* they cannot attain refugee or citizen status is not just a condition for asylum seekers, it also applies to those who are born in Turkey. The phenomenon of generation loss, seen frequently around the world in refugee camps, is seen in Turkey even though Syrians have spread across many cities; it is as though Turkey's cities have been transformed into giant refugee camps. As a result of Turkish society's exclusionary and discriminatory practices, as well as the normalisation of nationalist sentiments, class exploitation, and abuse that make Syrians look like the enemy, Syrians who were born and raised in Turkey have more of an asylum seeker identity than that of a member of Turkish society.

The Asylum Seeker Labor Market

Not every asylum seeker is identical to the other. Class, economic, social, and cultural differences create different levels among asylum seekers. The Bourdieuan approach argues that this is a result of the differences between groups with variant capital possession⁴⁹. For example, a Syrian Turkmen and a Syrian Kurd do not live under the same conditions in Turkey as asylum seekers. Similarly, a Syrian employer and a Syrian farm worker do not live under the same conditions. An asylum seeker identity can be viewed as an identity that is constructed by those who are the lowest in economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. Thus, just as not every asylum seeker lives under the same conditions, every asylum seeker is not affected the same in the immigration process. There are also differences in their access to national and international aid organizations.

The asylum seeker identity draws from the fact that Syrian asylum seekers, apart from their own labor, do not own any other form of capital, although this does not apply to all Syrian asylum seekers; many Syrian employers can be found in İstanbul now and all of them employ Syrians. In terms of working conditions for these workers, it can be argued that there is no significant difference between the Turkish and Syrian employers. In fact, it can even be argued that Syrian employers have more effective control over Syrian workers, owing to the cultural domination they possess.

In addition, some Syrian asylum seekers in İstanbul, due to the varied networks that they can access, based on the social capital they possess, are working as intermediaries to

⁴⁹ Bourdieu extended the notion of capital. According to Bourdieu, capital, defined as sums of money, property or wealth, could take many forms. For Bourdieu the forms of capital are economic, symbolic, cultural, and social. See for details, (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241–58).

provide informal employment. For example, “Call for a Syrian Worker” (posters containing a phone number) are plastered on walls and electric posts in various İstanbul neighborhoods. The people who call these numbers are mostly in the textile and construction industries, looking for people to work illegally for a short period of time. This shows that among asylum seekers there are ruptures to the typical path, and not all conditions are the same for all asylum seekers.

These differences among asylum seekers facilitate the exploitation and abuse of Syrians holding the asylum seeker identity, not only by Turkish capital owners, but also Syrian capital owners. The fact that the state denies labor market regulation and leaves the labor market to its “invisible hand” rules causes asylum seekers at the bottom of the labor hierarchy to be isolated in urban areas, deprived of security facilities, and not entitled to work.

The Space of Asylum Seekers

One of the hallmarks of the relationship between city and identity is market relations. The fact that the languages, cultures, and lifestyles of the asylum seekers are different, and often considered not “acceptable”, makes it easier to isolate them in the city. Generally speaking, spatial differentiation cannot be interpreted as a consequence of the asylum seekers’ or the immigrant workers’ housing preferences because it is a consequence of the dominant mode of production (Harvey, 1985). Intra-urban boundaries that arise due to spatial differentiation are not a result of the preferences of the people. The “intra-urban border” that arises for this reason also includes class stratification of the workforce. Depending on the fragmentation of the workforce in itself, internal boundaries such as outer borders of the city also emerge and these boundaries deepen the spatial differentiation. According to Herzfeld (2012, pp. 177–98), the placement of different social groups and immigrant masses in cities causes everyone to transform. However, this does not remove the intra-city boundaries, because these boundaries are based on class rather than cultural and similar differences.

Asylum seekers in Turkey, because of the nature of the urban areas where they live, are also stigmatised. This spatial stigma is the spatial dimension of making asylum seekers into marginal identities (Wacquant 2014, p. 124). The physical attributes, behaviors, and beliefs, as well as race, ethnicity, and religion of the asylum seekers are easily stigmatized, leading to the marginalization of those seeking asylum. Asylum seekers are inclined to internalise their inequalities and discriminations in order to protect themselves from violence. Thereby, in a sense, asylum seekers are ghettoised and become stigmatised by space. This stigma opens the door again to spatial differentiation (Goffman, 2014, pp. 33–6).

The realisation of spatial differentiation through ethnic, racial, or religious differences—either mandatory or voluntary—pushes immigrants into their own ghettos. Thus, outsiders stigmatise the “insiders” further and immigrant living quarters become places of social deprivation. The immigrants’ location is an isolated place where the “outsiders” do not prefer to live, do not value the homes, where the inhabitants “are not included in society” but “are not excluded from society” (Wacquant, 2013, p. 126). For this reason, the ideal success for asylum seekers is to rid themselves of the ghetto which is highlighted by the mass media as an image of constant fear and filth (Wacquant, 2003, p. 50). The dominant discourse surrounding the asylum seeker ghettos is of restlessness, theft, drugs, murder, and terrorism; in short, a place where criminal events are actualised (Wacquant, 2011, pp. 227–28).

The Privilege Hierarchy

As mentioned before, immigrants seek ways to be included in the labor market of their new country. For this reason, there is a strong relationship between the labor market, immigration, immigrant labor, and immigrant identity. Technical terms like “labor migration” found in immigration literature have an analytic value but does not sufficiently explain how quickly the immigrant—no matter his reasons for migration—becomes part of the labor force (Balch and Scott, 2011, pp. 146–65). The reason why immigrants are transformed into the active or reserve labor force is that the dominant labor force puts pressure on the wages of the immigrants, specifically the suppression of labor costs. This argument, especially debated in literature on informal labor, demonstrates that the workforce is being precariously secured on a global scale and that it is sustained by the state-capital coexistence (Castles, 2011, pp. 311–24). When immigrant laborers are employed formally or informally, and tied to the accumulation regime’s labor market’s technical arrangements, the government cannot turn a blind eye to immigrant, asylum seeker, and refugee policies. Therefore, the government is an influential actor on both the immigrant and domestic labor force and is one of the partners that regulates accumulation strategies (Haas, 2008; Engbersen & Broeders, 2011, pp. 170–86).

This phrase, “causing the Syrians to be criminalised” is heard particularly in Turkey’s media (Erdoğan et al., 2017). These stigmas are a form of racism, viewing asylum seekers outside the boundaries of society and therefore alienating them. These patterns of racism lead to a discourse about representation and differentiating ideology that ties immigrants to the cultural qualities of their home (Balibar, 2007, p. 27; Berger & Mohr, 2011, p. 107). Ethnic and religious identities conceal economic inequalities and discrimination, as well as cover up any superiority related to ethnicity and religion. Although they seem to be identifiers in the

labormarket, economic relations are in fact the cause of inequality and discrimination of identities. Therefore, the norms of the superstructure, such as law, education, and religion, which determine group behaviour, are determined within economic relations and regulations. For this reason, the inequality and discrimination practices built by "democratic" political systems in developed countries through identities are in harmony with colonial political systems (Burawoy, 1974, pp. 521–50).

As a result of these developments, the labor market is being rearranged by race, ethnicity, religious belief, and gender, and asylum seekers and immigrants are being employed with low wages and precariousness. The spatial ghettoisation is also apparent in the labor market (Piore & Safford, 2007). For example, the benefits of being white within the dominant labor market in the US and the advantages that it provides in labor employment, specifically in the production–consumption process, reinforce that whites distinguish themselves from other "colours". Similarly, in Turkey, being Turkish Sunni (and male) facilitates jobs for a significant portion of those in the private and public sectors.

Inequality and discrimination practices against immigrants and minorities within the labor market become a vehicle for maintaining the privileges of the dominant identity. The domestic worker, who is a member of the dominant culture, is legitimised through a sort of “moral panic” (Wacquant, 2003, p. 48) whose discourse legitimises the racist behaviour and unequal and discriminating political engagements directed towards asylum seekers. By masking racist practices in this way, practices that include inequality and discrimination continue to prevail while at the same time, the domestic workforce removes potential competition areas ahead of their economic and social gains. For this reason, "discrimination in terms of the working class" belonging to the sovereign identity is considered a way of maintaining an advantageous position within the labor market (Gramsci, 1996, p. 104). Owing to the informalisation of the labor market, actions included in these unequal and discriminatory practices are concealed. These actions can take many forms, such as meritocracy and the discourse of equal opportunity in the United States, while in Turkey it is being “native and national”. In the continuation of the equality assumption of the free market, one of the main concepts, the discourse of opportunity of equality, enables the reproduction of relations which causes the dominant identity-working class to be arranged upwards and the rest to be arranged downwards according to the identity hierarchy. Thus, the labor force belonging to the sovereign identity obtains a hegemonic position within the rest of the working class. This inequality in the labor market can be sustained by separating social, cultural, political, and economic practices from racial, ethnic, religious, and similar identities

to thrust self-interest into identities, and imposing inequality and discrimination as a natural practice (Omi & Winant, 1994, pp. 9–51).

Conclusion

When regional conflicts trigger domestic and international migration, it not only causes the horizontal movement of people in the established state, but also involves a process of expropriation, deprivation of social security, and exclusion from political development. When people and groups begin to seek a new life as a result of developments outside their control, they move with the traces of these problems within them. Everywhere they go, they bring a piece of this brutal process as well. This is because wars, especially for the impoverished, only bring destruction. Those who cannot bring anything other than their own labor, lose everything that belongs to them in this process; they cannot escape encountering new forms of discrimination in their new place of settlement.

One of the reasons why identities turn into a cause for discrimination is related to the nature of the economic sphere in the host society. As the fragility of the capital and relationships inside the economic sphere becomes greater, unequal and discriminatory behaviours towards immigrants become more intense. Especially in countries like Turkey, where poverty and inequality are at higher levels, immigrants settle in the wide class level inhabited by the poor. In this way, the wage pressure on active and reserve labor increases. “The immigrants took our jobs,” is a phrase heard all over the world; directing criticism of capitalism, capitalist production, and distribution scheme at immigrants is easy and requires no cost.

The immigrants’ religion, ethnicity, and cultural identity do not need to be starkly different from that of the host society, but as the differences increase, it becomes easier to hate and shun them. This process of turning all kinds of differences into reasons for otherisation is built up by the mechanisms of domination that want to confine immigrants to their identities. The dominations present in legal, social, political, economic, and other such spheres do not allow immigrants to move away from the concept of immigration. Unrealistic integration practices with ambiguities in recognition policies continue to be carried out, producing little benefit for immigrants and not integrating them genuinely in a social life (Göksel, 2018).

When we speak of refugees or asylum seekers, the destructive face of war is revealed in its bare form. Asylum seekers are people with an uncertain future. In a model of political domination where the nation-state regime prevails, asylum seekers—whether they are open or

hidden—are people who are considered less than human beings, as the first condition for being human is often being a citizen. This is why the concept of citizenship becomes inverted for both “universal human rights” and the modern nation-state regime. Those who go to live in countries where they were not born are disturbing the narrative of the nation-state. For this reason, although they did not intend to, immigrant populations are the key to deciphering the crisis of the modern nation-state model and socio-political crisis.

Wars are processes that destroy, blur, and reconstruct identities. The asylum seeker identity is a consequence of the informal labor market, where legal arrangements to protect asylum seekers are inadequate and leave them at the mercy of the market. The practices that deepen the domination over them through inequality and discrimination, imprisoning them into this identity, also supervise and control the host society in a similar way. Hence, the struggle for asylum seeker rights should not be confined to just asylum seekers, it is part of the democratic struggle of the oppressed, because a place that is hell for some, will never be heaven for others.

References

- Akçabay, C. (2016). Mülteciler ve hukuk politikası: Suriyeli sığınmacılara tanınan geçici koruma. *DISK-AR*, 4, 126–33.
- Balch, A. & Scott, S. (2011). Labor market flexibility and worker security in an age of migration. In M. Bommes & G. Sciortino (Eds.), *Foggy social structures: Irregular migration, European labor markets and the welfare state* (pp. 143–168). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Balibar, E. (2007). Bir yeni ırkçılık var mı? (Nazlı Ökten, Trans.). In E. Balibar & I. Wallerstein (Eds.), *İrk Ulus Sınıf: Belirsiz Kimlikler* (pp. 25-38), İstanbul: Metis.
- Berger, J. & Mohr, J. (2011). *Yedinci adam* (Cevat Çapan, Trans.). İstanbul: Agora.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Eds.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). New York: Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, P. (1996). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (Richard Nice, Trans.). Cambridge: Harvard University.
- Bourdieu, P. (2006). *Pratik nedenler* (Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver, Trans.). İstanbul: Hil.
- Brunner, B. & Kuhn, A. (2018). Immigration, cultural distance and natives' attitudes towards immigrants: Evidence from Swiss voting results. *Kyklos*, 71(1), 28–58.
- Burawoy, M. (1974). Race, class and colonialism. *Social and Economic Studies*, 23(4), 521–50.
- Castles, S. (2011). Migration, crisis, and the global labor market. *Globalizations*, 8(3), 311–24.
- Corliss, S. (2003). Asylum in Turkey: Today and future prospects. In E. Zeybekoglu & B. Johansson (Eds.), *Migration and labor in Europe: Views from Turkey and Sweden* (pp. 74-81). İstanbul: MURCIR & NIWL.
- Côté, J. E. (2000). *Arrested adulthood: the changing nature of maturity and identity*. New York: New York University Press.
- Davis, L. & Deole, S. S. (2015). Immigration, attitudes and the rise of the political right: the role of cultural and economic concerns over immigration, *CESifo Working Paper Series*, No. 5680.
- Eckert, R. (2006). Culture or conflict: Migration, culture conflict and terrorism. In J. D. Freilich & R.T.Guerette (Eds.), *Migration, culture conflict, crime and terrorism* (pp. 21-48). Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- Engbersen, G. & Broeders, D. (2011). Immigration control and strategies of irregular immigrants: from light to thick fog. In M. Bommes & G. Sciortino (Eds.), *Foggy social structures: Irregular migration, european labor markets and the welfare state* (pp. 169-188). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Erdoğan, M., Kavukçuer, Y., Çetinkaya, T. (2017). Türkiye’de yaşayan Suriyeli mültecilere yönelik medya algısı, Ankara: Freedom Research Association.
- Erdoğan, M. (2014). *Syrians in Turkey: Social acceptance and integration*. Ankara: HUGO.
- Erdoğan, N. (2007). Yok-sanma: Yoksulluk mâduniyet ve fark yaraları. In Necmi Erdoğan (Ed.), *Yoksulluk halleri* (pp. 47-96). İstanbul: İletişim.
- Girit, S. (2015). Suriyeli mülteciler dosyası: İstihdamda en alttakiler. BBC.com/turkce, Retrieved March 5, 2018, from <https://goo.gl/Y9mzvW>
- Goffman, E. (2014). *Damga: Örselenmiş kimliğin idare edilişi üzerine notlar* (Ş. Geniş, L. Ünsaldı, S. N. Ağırnaslı, Trans.). Ankara: Heretik.
- Göksel, G.U. (2018). *Integration of Immigrants and the Theory of Recognition: Just Integration*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gramsci, A. (1996). *Prison notebooks*, Vol. 2, (Joseph A. Buttigieg, Trans.). New York: Columbia University.

- Gramsci, A. (2014). *Hapishane defterleri*, Vol. 4, (Barış Baysal, Trans.). İstanbul: Kalkedon.
- Haas, H. (2008). *Irregular migration from West Africa to the Magreph and the European Union*. International Organization for Migration.
- Harvey, D. (1985). *The Urbanization of capital*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
- Hechter, M. (1976). Response to Cohen: Max Weber on ethnicity and ethnic change. *American Journal of Sociology*, 81(5), 1162–68.
- Herzfeld, M. (2012). *Antropoloji: Kültürde ve toplumda teorik uygulama*, (Bülent Toksöz, Trans.). Ankara: Say.
- IOM. (2011). *Glossary on migration*. Switzerland: International Organization for Migration.
- Karabağlı, H. (2018). Türkiye'de 4.3 milyon göçmen yaşıyor; mülteci statüsünde 3 kişi var, t24.com.tr. Retrieved January 25, 2018, from <https://goo.gl/569fiY>.
- La Barbera, M. (2015). Identity and migration: An introduction. In La Barbera M. (Eds.), *Identity and migration in Europe: Multidisciplinary perspectives, international perspectives on migration* (pp. 1-13). London: Springer.
- Lee, E. & Brotman, S. (2011). Identity, refugeeness, belonging: Experiences of sexual minority refugees in Canada. *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 48(3), 241–74.
- Leung, H.W. (2014). The Fragmentation, shift and adaptation of the 'asylum seeker' identity in Hong Kong. VF Research Insight Series 2.
- Lucassen, L. (2005). *The Immigrant threat*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Monsivais, George I. (2004). *Hispanic immigrant identity: Political allegiance vs. cultural preference*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.
- Nilsson, A. & J. Wrench. (2009). Ethnic inequality and discrimination in the labor market. In K. Kraal, J. Roosblad, J. Wrench (Eds.), *Equal opportunities and ethnic inequality in European labor markets* (pp. 23-46). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Omi, M. & H. Winant. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge.
- Orozco, M. & E. Garcia-Zanello. (2009). Hometown associations: Transnationalism, philanthropy, and development. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 15 (2), 1–17.
- Piore, M.J. and S. Safford. (2007). Preliminary thoughts on identity and segmentation in primary sector labor markets. *Socio-economie du Travail*, 41(6), 925–940.
- Rogers, R. (1986). The Transnational nexus of migration. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 485, 34–50.
- Rouse, R. (1995). Questions of identity: Personhood and collectivity in transnational migration to the United States. *Critique of Anthropology*, 15 (4), 351–80.
- Siniša, M. (2004). *The sociology of ethnicity*. London: Sage.
- Somay, B. (2008). *Çokbilmiş özne*. İstanbul: Metis.
- Spivak, G.C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak. In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271-312). Chicago: University of Illinois.
- Spivak, G. C. (1990). *The Post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues*. New York: Routledge.
- Temporary Protection Regulation. (2014). Objective and scope: article 1. Retrieved January 19, 2018, from <http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/temptemp.pdf>
- Tinto, E. K. (2017). Policing the immigrant identity. *Florida Law Review*, 68(3), 819–73.
- Vecchio, F. & Beatson, C. (2014). Asylum seekers' occupy movement in Hong Kong. *Race & Class*, 56(2), 96–104.
- Wacquant, L. (2003). Fransız banliyöleri ve Amerikan zenci gettosu: Karıştırma yerine karşılaştırma (B. Yılmaz, Trans.). *Toplum Bilim*, 17, 45–55.
- Wacquant, L. (2013). İleri marjinalite çağında bölgesel damgalama (Celalettin Yanık, Trans.). In Ö. Aytaç & S. İlhan (Eds.), *Kentsel yoksulluğu yeniden düşünmek* (pp. 125-142). Ankara: Birleşik.

- Wacquant, L. (2014). Neoliberal şehirde marjinallik, etnisite ve cezalandırma: Analitik bir kartografya (S.Torlak & Ö. Kulak, Trans.). In S. Torlak & Ö. Kulak (Eds.), *Mekân meselesi* (pp. 97-128). Ankara: Tekin.
- Wacquant, Loic (2011). *Kent paryaları: İleri marjinalliğin karşılaştırmalı sosyolojisi* (Mehmet Doğan, Trans.). İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Wolf, C. (1994). Dependency-bond as construct. *Symbolic Interaction*, 17(4), 367–93.

Syrian Refugees: A Part of the Working Class of Turkey

Ergün İşeri

Translated by Gaye Yılmaz

Introduction

One of the consequences of the ongoing civil war in Syria is the intense human immigration. In this process, not only in terms of Syrian asylum seekers, but also among native populations living in the cities in which they have settled, serious problems have arisen. Consequently, since 2011 from the date when the first wave of immigration got started Syrian refugees in Turkey have become the subject to various debates.

Syrian asylum seekers who tried to shelter in city squares and streets in the early periods, managed to find a solution to their problems such as sheltering, finding job and etc. on their own over time. However, this state of self-worth has not removed the conflicts that have been happening from time to time, and frequent recurring problem of xenophobia. In this context, collective lynching attempts as well as individual conflicts have been appeared in the press and media.

Intolerance towards the outsiders mostly manifests itself among the partisans of Government (Akparti) and its partner (MHP). The Syrians are also seriously affected by such polarized environment.

In this paper I will try to seek replies for below given questions:

1. What are the conditions and opportunities which have been offered to Syrian asylum seekers by Turkey?
2. How Syrian asylum seekers can manage to survive?
3. Will the placement of Syrian refugees in Turkey have been on temporary or permanent basis?
4. What are the views of the ruling party, capital and workers' organizations on Syrian asylum seekers?
5. Are there any proposals which may be offered by working class and workers' organizations of Turkey to solve these problems?

Background of the First Question

It has been stated that about 350 thousand people lost their lives during the war that lasted more than seven years in Syria. It is also underlined that this number covers only those who were registered by the authorities and the number is even higher (Deutsche Welle Türkçe, 2018). The organization that occupies an important part of Syria and defines itself in advance as the Islamic State (IS) and as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) afterwards is one of the most important

factors for the increase in immigration. So much so that, following this organization has started to lose its military strength since 2017 the migration movements have slowed down. However, the continuation of conflicts between Syrian government with its allies and jihadist organizations which are settled in the regions close to the Turkey's border have prepared the ground for the new immigration movements.

According to the data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as of May 24, 2018 the number of Syrians who had to take refugee is 5.6 million with the majority being under the age of 18 (UNHCR Refugee Situation, 2018). Considering that the Syrian population was 23 million at the beginning of the war, the proportion of Syrians who had to take refuge in another country seems to exceed 24 percent of the country's population.

There are two basic conditions for the livelihood of the Syrian asylum seekers who have to live outside the settlement camps: they must either have or accessible income that they can bring with them (or they can reach), or they need to be employed in the economy of the country where they live.

It is understood that a significant proportion of the Syrian asylum seekers belonging almost all walks of life and social classes do not have a sufficient income to survive as the United Nations analysis shows. Finding job and working for wage is a must for survival of most of Syrian asylum seekers. Naturally, employment conditions of the country in which they are sheltered also determine what they will encounter.

General Problems of the Employment in Turkey

According to the data from Immigration Administration General Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (Immigration Administration) as of May 24, 2018, 94 percent of Syrian refugees living in Turkey are outside the camps (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2018). Turkey's employment structure is therefore important for Syrian refugees. When viewed from the outline the basic problems in employment of Turkey are as follows:

a) Chronic Problem of High Unemployment:

As of March 2018, the unemployment rate is 10.1 percent and the non-agricultural unemployment rate is 11.9 percent (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2018). However, the research conducted by DISK Research Institute (DISK-AR) criticized TÜİK's unemployment rate and emphasized that the

broadly defined unemployment⁵⁰ rate was 17.7 percent for the same period (DİSK Araştırma Enstitüsü, 2018).

b) Informal Employment:

Another long debated problem and not even the smallest step is taken towards its solution is that of Turkey's informal economy. In the statistics of TUIK in March 2018, the ratio of persons working without any social security institutions was 32.4 percent. The ratio of informal workers in non-agricultural sectors is 21.9 percent (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2018).

c) Low Wages:

A study by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ÇGSB) (as of December 2017) reveals that 40.3 percent of the 14 million workers registered with the Social Security Institution receive minimum wage. Again, the same study points out that 83 percent of the employees are within the range of 1,404 and 2,808 TRY (Boyacıoğlu, 2017). According to the survey made by DISK-AR titled "The Truth of Working Class in Turkey", 77 percent of workers participated in research think that low pays is the most important problem (DİSK Araştırma Enstitüsü, 2018).

d) Long Working Hours:

In the data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as of 2016 the weekly average working time for full-time employees is 40.4 hours in member countries while it is 45 hours in Turkey in accordance with the law n.4857. However, in practice the average weekly working time in Turkey reached 49.3 hours in 2016 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018).

e) The State of Ununionization

Another weakness of the employment in Turkey is that workers are in a highly vulnerable position in terms of organizing in the Unions and collective bargaining. According to the recent statistics published by the ÇGSB (January 2018), only 12.8 percent of 13.844.196 workers are unionized (Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, 2018). In the data from ILO, the proportion of workers covered by collective bargaining agreements in Turkey in 2016 was 5.9 percent (International Labor Organization, 2018).

Syrian Asylum Seekers and Their Working Conditions

Syrian asylum seekers are increasingly vulnerable position to all kinds of problems in the countries they took refugee especially when services are not provided to meet their basic needs such as housing, health, employment and education. This situation is not very different in Turkey.

⁵⁰ By the definition of broad unemployment the DİSK-AR refers to those who lost their hope to find a job, do not seek job but are ready to work at any moment plus seasonal and underemployed workers in addition to the coverage of narrow definition.

A recent study shows that out of providing settlement camps which are housing not more than 300 thousands Syrians and general health services there is no any direct cost for maintenance undertaken by the Turkish Government for Syrian refugees (Mülteciler Derneği, 2018).

Turkey's lack of a sound policy in this area is another source of problems as it temporarily or permanently hosted immigrants from different countries in different periods since the end of 1980s. Thanks to some recent arrangements such as the identification of Syrian asylum seekers under temporary protection, the regulation of residence rules, the introduction of a new arrangement for obtaining a work permit, the data on Syrians started to become at least a clearer picture. However, doing so is far from being a solution to the main problems.

Syrian Refugees: A Part of the Working Class of Turkey

Director of Hacettepe University Migration and Political Research Center, Ass.Dr. Murat Erdoğan states that permanence in mass immigration increases under two conditions: when the duration of immigration increases and when the "homeland" to be returned is not in a good state (Duran, 2015). Assoc. Dr. Ulaş Sunata, another scholar who studies migration also reminds that immigration research shows that 60-70 percent of the incoming population is permanent.

But the rhetorics and approaches of politicians in Turkey seem as if to ignore the existence of this reality. With the exception of only a few statements, instead of accepting this reality and producing appropriate policies accordingly, the "go back home" approach has been adopted not only by right wing politicians but also among left and social democratic politicians. Chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu can easily say that *"We have embraced Syrians who escaped from civil war in Syria and took refuge in our country. But ... there is no longer a long-following term conflict situation in Syria, the war is almost over. Now these brothers and sisters must return to their own country."* (Birgün Gazetesi, 2018). However, neither conflicts is over nor a proper environment regarding housing, livelihood etc. has been formed in Syria. As we have already pointed out at the beginning of this article, it is clear that these discourses will not do anything other than to fuel the reactions and threats to the Syrians. Since these words belong to a parliamentary party that defines itself as "social democrat" this rethoric is important especially for it manifests the extent of "populism" in Turkey which is dominant in entire politics.

As mentioned above, a number of statements and researches indicate that a significant part of Syrian asylum seekers currently living in our country are permanent. Precisely because of this, it is important to understand how the Syrians can survive and what will be the next step. An INGEV research revealed that the majority (85 percent) of the Syrian asylum seekers who took

refugee in our country provided their livelihood through waged working (İnsani Gelişme Vakfı, 2017). In a study conducted on a smaller scale, 11 of the 14 children who had been in schools in pre-war Syria had to start to work soon after they escaped to Turkey (Halkların Dayanışma Köprüsü Derneği, 2016).

Approximately 62 percent of Syrian asylum seekers are at 15 years and over. When those who are between 10-14 years old are added to this walk of life the total number corresponds to a workforce of over two and a half million (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2018). In a study conducted by Professor Dr. Seyhan Erdoğan for the ILO, labor force participation rate of Syrian asylum seekers were assumed as 72 percent for men and 32.5 percent for women by November 2017 (Erdoğan, 2018, p.2) and total Syrian workforce in Turkey was calculated as 1,119,966 persons. Again in the same study, the employment rate of them was given as 64.8 percent for men and 26.7 percent for women. Accordingly, we may conclude that in Turkey the number of Syrians under employment is 984,548 persons. When the same rates are applied to the last data issued by the Migration Administration, it can be said that the employment of Syrians in Turkey has exceeded one million.

As also shown by above given surveys, a big part of Syrians who have to maintain their livelihood by working and may be assumed as to be permanent have become a part of the working class of Turkey that this majority faced with Turkey's chronic problems soon after their arrival.

a) Syrians in View of Government and Capitalist Class

There are serious doubts that the Turkish government has an integrated and programmed policy on Syrian asylum seekers. It can be said that the majority of the Syrian asylum seekers, who are forced to take care of themselves are given place neither in the government programs nor the relevant ministry programs, including economics and employment. For example, in the 10th Development Plan covering the 2014-2018 period, policy objectives for Syrian asylum seekers were addressed only within the scope of the fight against informal employment in general. In this context, the aim in point consists merely informing individuals and private-public institutions about the work permit system and to prepare a "National Immigration Policy Document" for the purpose of establishing an effective immigration management (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2017, p. 145).

The most important source for the survival of Syrian asylum seekers is undoubtedly employment, and the approaches of concerned ministries or affiliated institutions are not very different from each of them. The approach in the Activity Report (2017) of Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), one of the prominent institutions, is at the level of preparing projects with only a limited number of impacts via the funds worth millions Euro to be provided by the European

Union (Türkiye İş Kurumu, 2018). Nonetheless, various ministers claim that the ways to exploit Syrians' labor force must be found, even this workforce is needed.

On the other hand, the adopted approach on Syrian asylum seekers by the ruling party in the document for 2018 elections is as follows:

We do our best in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations to ensure that the products which are partly or fully produced by Syrian asylum seekers to be assumed as exemptions of the Most Favored Country rule of the WTO which stipulates equal treatment to all products from every country. Thus, we try to ensure the integration of the Syrian refugees whose number reached to 3 million in our country in Turkish and world markets (Akpatri, 2018).

The government is clearly aiming at using Syrian asylum seekers in the economy and achieving international trade advantage over them in the forthcoming period. A meeting recently held in İstanbul titled "The Adaptation of the Syrians under Temporary Protection to the Labor Market: Challenges and Opportunities" gave clues about the views of the relevant ministries regarding employment. In another related meeting, Labor and Social Security Minister Jülide Sarıeroğlu stated that "Ministry is in a very intensive work on harmonisation and integration of Syrians, as foreign labor power, in Turkish labor market"(Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, 2018).

Below given citation is from Cafer Uzunkaya, the General Director of İŞKUR:

There is a Syrian population at working age whose number is around 2.2 million. To be able to include these people in the labor market, their professions must be correctly identified. Among our Syrian brothers and sisters there are also those who are highly qualified and having a number of competencies (Türkiye İş Kurumu, 2018).

Ahmet Eşref Fakıbaba, the Agriculture Minister also expressed his views on Syrians in a television program as follows: "*our guests from Syria are 3.5 million people, even if they want to back home, we will not send them back, because we need them*"(Güneş Gazetesi, 2017).

Alike, Gaziantep's Mayor Fatma Sahin, one of the cities where Syrian asylum seekers are most heavily populated, gave the following information in a speech he made at a meeting:

Since from their first entering into the city we believed that these immigrants would play a crucial role in the development of our city. As a matter of fact, when you look at it today, there are very meaningful and promising collaborations especially in a few sectors...For example, there is a significant number of Syrian workforce in the construction sector and seasonal agricultural work (Haksöz Haber, 2018).

In these statements, the words of Vice Prime Minister Veysi Kaynak are even more striking:

Turkey must consider these 3 million people as human capital. Among them there are also university graduates and skilled experts. Today there is no any workers accepting to do manual works except Syrians in many cities including Kahramanmaraş, Adana, Osmaniye, Gaziantep even in capital Ankara/Ostim, if we

did not have Syrians we would be totally deprived from unskilled laborers (SGK Rehberi, 2017).

The concept of "human capital" used for Syrian asylum seekers can be criticized in more than one way, such as commodification of labor, seeing it as a part of the capital, and ignoring opposition between capital and labor. The concept of "human capital" that has been used in the economics literature since the early 1960s was previously referred to the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities during and after the training process which allows people to work productively and consequently earn income. Over time, a health factor was also added in terms of workers' stay in the production process longer. Today, especially neoliberal approaches have an ideological reason above all else to value the concept of "human capital" that basic motivation of them is to conceal the labor-capital conflict even at the concept level. Thus, labor power is lost in the concept of "human capital" and the class is being removed from being a central concept (Şahin, 2016).

Gizem Şimşek and Fuat Ercan who analysed the concept through Karl Marx's critique of the capitalist production system point out following fact:

The reason for why human capital has become more of an issue is that the relative surplus value has taken a dominant form in the stage of producing surplus value today. Relative surplus-value is something relates with ensuring that the total capital which is transferred to production process by productive capitalists (the variable capital plus the constant capital) provides greater returns in given unit time. Hence, capitalism's efforts to increase surplus-value through increasing constant capital in today's conditions means the change in both direct machine infrastructure and therefore the existing labor-power (variable capital) (Şimşek & Ercan, 2013).

If we leave the theoretical definitions aside, the most prevalent reference of the concept "human capital" is educated or qualified workforce. For example, the World Economic Forum defines human capital as "knowledge and skills that enable people to create value in the global economic system" (World Economic Forum, 2017, p. vii).

Neither in general nor in the definitions made by Prime Minister and İŞKUR, Turkey does have a human capital scarcity in terms of qualified or skilled labor. According to the 2017 data from Central Distribution System of Turkish Statistical Institute unemployment rate is 11.90 percent for 15 years and older high school equivalent vocational school graduates, and 12.7 percent for university graduates. Unemployment among general high school graduates is 13.30 percent in the same report (TÜİK, 2018).

By the way, Hikmet Tanrıverdi, the head of Istanbul Apparel Exporters' Association (IHKIB) expressed his approach to Syrians in an interview in 2014 as follows: "Yes, there is an unemployment problem in Turkey. Most of them are university graduates. I do not want to hire

university graduates as tea makers or janitors. Instead we want to run our business with Syrians” (Özkan, 2014). This intent has evolved into a widespread practice over time.

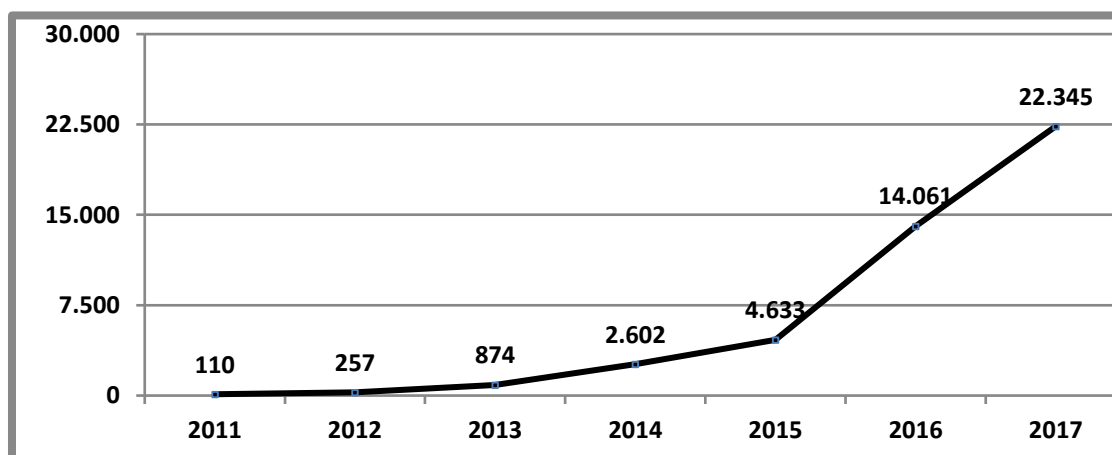
Similarly, also following words of Vahap Küçük, the chairman of a readymade clothing brand which is active in international markets as well, clearly show the position of Syrian asylum seekers in employment: “There is no any new investment in the apparel sector in Turkey and nobody wants to work in the garment industry. So there is a serious demand in Turkey, especially this year, supply could not meet demand under normal circumstances. So if the Syrians did not exist, our shelves would unfortunately be left empty.”(Kıraç, 2017).

From the perspective of the ruling party and employers, the opinion on Syrian asylum seekers is that they filled the gap especially for “plain works”. This brings to mind a question that under which conditions Syrian asylum seekers fill the gap in “plain jobs?”

b) Big Majority are Employed Informally

In the early periods when the wave of immigration got started first the legislation in force did not allow Syrian refugees to obtain work permits in Turkey. In this regard, providing temporary protection and identification of Syrian asylum seekers was given priority. Following the legislative amendment made in early 2016, an ID card was issued for Syrian refugees who were allowed to work. According to the data from Ministry of Labor and Social Security the number of work permits provided to Syrian Arab citizens in Turkey are shown in Figure 1 (Çalışma İstatistikleri Bilgi Sistemi, 2018).

Figure 1 Syrian Refugees with Work Permit



Source: Labor Statistics Information System, 2018.

The fact manifested by above given table is as follows: Against the fact that more than one million Syrians is under employment, the number of given work permits only to the very small part of Syrian population remains very low. On the other hand, figures on the given work permits are continuously changing. So much so that the data in Ministry's annual reports and in the

information system on the web page are different from each other.⁵¹ Although total number of given work permits have been given in the table when these figures are decomposed in itself we must remark that average 21 percent of those given after 2011 are not the new ones but only extensions of previously given work permits.⁵² The data indicate that almost all of the Syrian asylum seekers are part of informal employment. We must also note that Syrian asylum seekers are at the bottom layer of informal employment in Turkey.

When we have a look at the distribution of the permits according to the branch of activity it is understood that a significant part of the Syrian asylum seekers is shown under the category of administrators (ÇSGB Çalışma İstatistikleri Bilgi Sistemi, 2018). The data indicate that a significant portion of the Syrian asylum seekers with work permits aimed to open workplaces of different sizes by these permits. However, it is not surprising that there are not many applications and permits for those who will work as waged laborers if it is recalled that the applicants of the Syrian asylum seekers who are to be employed as workers are made by the employers.

The informal employment which was already quite high has grown much more with the participation of Syrian asylum seekers. This case has a black hole impact on working conditions including wages of the working class in Turkey for it pulls gained rights down as a whole. This problem is also on the agenda of the opposition parties. For example, the CHP the main opposition party, has pledged in its election declaration that it would prevent Syrians, especially children, from working in informal economy or under unreasonable conditions and with unfair tax exemptions (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 2018).

d)High Unemployment is a Problem for Syrian Asylum Seekers as Well.

An INGEV research (2017) shows that the unemployment rate in Syrian asylum seekers was 17 percent. This rate is almost close to the broadly defined unemployment rate in Turkey. Unemployment rates are also changing according to the regions and education levels. For example, Syrians' unemployment in the Western regions is 14 percent, while it is 20 percent in the Eastern regions. As the level of education increases, the rate of unemployment also increases. So much so that unemployment rate is around 36 percent among Syrians with university diploma (İnsani Gelişme Vakfı, 2017).

⁵¹ See ÇSGB Yabancı Çalışma İzinleri İstatistikleri, 2017.

⁵² See ÇSGB Çalışma İstatistikleri Bilgi Sistemi, 2018.

e) Lower Wages and Longer Working Hours

In some academic studies on immigrant laborers and wages, the following factors come to the forefront (Erol et al., 2017):

- Even if variables such as experience, education and age are taken in the account, there is a wage gap between immigrants and native employees.
- Home country, previous experiences and education they received in their own country also have a decisive influence on their earnings in receiving countries. For example, the returns of education and experience of those who migrate from developed regions such as Europe and Oceania are higher.
- There is a positive relationship between the levels of ability in the language in receiving countries and the earnings.
- As the age in the date of immigration increases, the income gap between immigrants and natives increases.
- In immigrant-intensive sectors -generally low tech-intensive sectors- while the wages of native workers are falling; on the wages of native workers in other sectors immigrants have positive impacts.
- Those who voluntarily migrate in comparison to those who involuntarily migrate have higher earnings.

When Syrian asylum seekers are considered in the context of their participation in employment this general framework has been verified in many ways. The problem of low wages which has been experienced by Turkish and Kurdish working classes of Turkey for decades is much more severe for Syrians. In almost all the researches and reports, the wages paid to Syrian refugees seem to be well below the minimum wage. This situation becomes more evident in female Syrian asylum seekers (Erol et al., 2017).

Childrens of asylum-seeking families who do not have sufficient income are sometimes forced to work by their parents, sometimes at will, to contribute to the family budget (Harunoğulları, 2016). This problem, which has been subject to controversy from time to time, manifests itself clearly in every research (Erdoğan, 2018).

Moreover, Syrian refugees in Turkey are also forced to work over the average working hours. For example, the rate of Syrian asylum seekers working under weekly 50 hours in the textile sector is about only 17 percent. That is, the majority is working over 50 hours. In the interviews held for field researches 31 percent of Syrian participants reported that they work 60 hours weekly (Erol et al., 2017).

Socialized Loss versus Privatized Profits

The common point in many of the problems from education to health that we have tried to elaborate above is the hardship of the living conditions of Syrian asylum seekers. A number of factors, especially language differences affect communication channels negatively and prevent their access to solutions. Facing with low wages, being forced to work with longer working hours and high unemployment which all have traditionally been burning issues in Turkey for decades made employment conditions worse in general.

On the other hand, informal working conditions can often be the cause of complaints or even conflicts not only for workers but also for self-employees such as craftsmen, artisans and etc. Unregistered small shops run by Syrian refugees are among the problems which have very often been expressed by Turkish shop owners and their associations. But here another contradiction is manifesting itself. Those who react to Syrian refugees who have opened informal workplaces only because they are competing with themselves are happy when it comes to employ Syrian asylum seekers informally.

Another noteworthy issue is the unresponsive behaviors of official institutions and institutions regarding Syrian asylum seekers who are working informally. Those who trouble about this problem point out the fact that official institutions are neglecting all what have been happening (Erdoğan, 2018). Authorities are fairly ignoring this case. Although the existence of the informal economy in official documents is shown as a problem and among the objectives of struggle, in practice, Government considers the informal economy implicitly as a means of its economic policy.

The policy of “Socialized Losses versus Privatized Profits” which was also criticized by Straus Kahn himself, the President of International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the global crisis and termination of this policy was requested has become prevalent in Turkey. The interesting point here is that the French historian Henri Michel used this notion -which dates to Andrew Jackson⁵³ (1834) - to describe the economic policy of the fascist administration in Italy in World War II. (WWII) Michel stated that the fascist government did not change the existing structure and maintained the existence of private ownership and market economy; and emphasized that "losses are socialized when profits are privatized" (Michel, 2017). Similarly, the Turkish government showed the same attitude on informal employment of Syrians in many projects such as the constructions of airports, city hospitals and bridges just like how it provided employment incentives for employers. The tax and insurance losses resulted from the unregistered employment

⁵³ “I have had men watching you for a long time and I am convinced that you have used the funds of the bank to speculate in the breadstuffs of the country. When you won, you divided the profits amongst you, and when you lost, you charged it to the Bank. ... You are a den of vipers and thieves” (Gilderlehrman Institute, 2019).

of Syrian asylum seekers and health expenditures for Syrians⁵⁴ are imputed on public while the surplus value created by them are left to capitalist class. Thus, Syrian refugees are exposed to an open and brutal exploitation, along with other problems as well as long working hours and low wages.

Solidarity, Organizing and Common Struggle

The most important basis for the survival of Turkish and Kurdish migrants in Europe was the existence of organized working class in Europe. For example, although unions opposed workers from abroad (Aksoy, 1998) at early stages, they later attached great importance to solidarity and organizing of them. Thanks to the existed organizations and collective bargaining systems, migrant workers from Turkey and other countries could improve their working and living conditions over time, despite they received comparatively lower wages in the beginning.

In particular, it should be remembered that those who run to help Turkish and Kurdish workers who came up against increasing racist attacks starting from 1980s in Europe were always their native class brothers and sisters. That's why the DİSK repeats since 1970s that *“there is only a single way to achieve equality of rights and to eliminate discrimination, inequality and injustice: it is the organizing in trade unions and consolidate organized power of native and immigrant workers at all levels”* (Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu, 1976).

The first reactions against xenophobic, racist, new fascist organizations that have become widespread in Europe in recent years are again coming from workers' organizations that many unions defend immigrants against racist attacks. One of the most obvious examples of this was seen in Germany. One of the organizers of the protest march against the Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland - AfD), which entered the parliament as a third party in the last elections, is the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) (Deutsche Welle Türkçe, 2017).

In a joint statement after talks of the managers of the DGB (Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund), the Turkey-based unions and Arzu Çerkezoğlu, the Secretary General of the DİSK in Germany the same commitment was highlighted (DİSK, 2017). The reason of bad luck of Syrian immigrants who came to our country is that unlike European workforce in general the working class in Turkey is unorganized. The only way to overcome this bad luck is common organizing. Even if it becomes a candlelight in the dark, positive examples increase prospects for the future.

The most visible sample of that is the common protest action organized by shoe-upper makers against unfair wage increases in many cities in Turkey in September 2017 (Birgün, 2017).

⁵⁴ According to Article 27 of the Provisional Protection Regulation for Syrians, for basic and urgent health services and therapies and medicines within this scope users do not pay any contribution.

In this action, workers who opposed Syrian refugees until shortly before met on a common ground (Turgut, 2017), claiming to increase wages and improve working conditions, and managed to reach a significant portion of their demands. With the exception of only a limited number of examples the unions did not support this action that this was something subjected to criticism to some extent. Statements on Syrian asylum-seekers have almost been absent when the confederations make statements after their board meetings. Unions' approaches on Syrians are also quite different from each other. For instance, following statement cited from Confederation Türk-İş, the most representative labor organization:

We, as the Council of Türk-İş Chairmen welcome the humanitarian assistance provided to immigrants especially those from our neighbour country Syria. However, we feel that it is necessary to be careful and meticulous in order to make this guests not become permanent, or on giving them an identity and work permit based on their statement, particularly for not having trouble later on. It should be ensured that unregistered employment and unemployment not becoming more widespread, with no consequence of further fall in wage levels" (TÜRK-İŞ, 2014).

Similarly, the comments from Mahmut Aslan, the Chairman of the Hak-İş Trade Union Confederation is as follows:

We must do our best to welcome our Syrian guests until the end of the civil war in Syria and the establishment of a peace atmosphere in their territories... We expect our employers not to employ Syrians and other refugees unregistered... We demand that Syrian brothers are integrated in the labor market soon and should be allowed to join in employment (HAK-İŞ, 2017).

The only different and more class based approach can be found in the expressions made by the councils of DİSK:

We continue our struggle to ensure that all immigrant workers especially those from Syria enjoy with basic rights such as organizing, equal wage, working free from inhumane working conditions and access in public services on the basis of class brotherhood. In this sense, we, as DİSK will continue its fight against racism, discrimination and xhnefobia against immigrants (DİSK General Assembly, 2017).

Syrian asylum seekers have hanged on to life with their own capabilities and solidarity despite challenging conditions they face with. Highly compelled conditions of them is not limited only with employers who have an itch to exploit Syrian refugees or Government's policies which enable this unacceptable conditions. In addition to these factors, an adverse community surrounding them and reactions which manifests itself in the forms of xenophobia also appear as another dimension to which Syrian asylum seekers must struggle against.

Conclusion

Existed conditions in Turkey has created an environment which retired them into their shell, push Syrians to find their solutions via their own solidarity networks and consequently limits communication channels of them with native population. On the other hand, the tendencies such as autism and ghettoizing are further reinforcing the exclusion of Syrians. It is apparent that the change of this situation is required the development of common living possibilities starting from the language problem. However, as Erdoğan pointed out, many areas that can be activated, such as "Economy and Laborforce Working Group" or "City Boards for Employment and Vocational Education" can neither augmented nor actuated by the authorities (Erdoğan, 2018).

The transformation of non-humanitarian working conditions, which can be summarized in particular as informal employment, long working hours and low wages, can only be overcome by a struggle together with Syrian asylum seekers. Otherwise, it will be employers who are the only winners of the current conditions that the Government implicitly supports or at least ignores.

It seems highly difficult for Syrian asylum seekers to be organized in unions under given conditions. The primary reason for this is that employers prefer Syrian asylum-seekers only if they accept to work informally. The fact that the number of Syrian asylum seekers receiving work permits is so low can not be explained otherwise. Indeed, the bureaucratic procedures are far from being a reason for the low number of working permits received.

Another hurdle what Syrian workers are facing is that the very few number of native workers covered by collective bargaining in Turkey. Breaking this barrier depends on strengthening the contact of Syrian asylum seekers with the unions. The problem here is that because of humanitarian reasons, Unions refrain from reporting Syrians who work informally to the official authorities which is something that leads to a vicious cycle. On the other hand, when collective organizing and bargaining establishments are widespread, informal working in general and slave working conditions of immigrants in particular can be avoided easier.

In order to expand the union organization, approaches to collective bargaining must also be changed. Today, the collective bargaining system at the enterprise and workplace levels is insufficient. Also International Framework Agreements (IFAs) signed between global brands and global unions especially in some business lines are far from being remedy. For this reason, it must be ensured that to have a system of contracts which include wages, and the legal and practical conditions for this must be prepared.

Actually, the first step has been taken to overcome above mentioned problem. The Agreement "Action, Collaboration, Transformation" (ACT) which was signed between IndustriALL Global Union and 17 global ready-made-clothing brands have initiated a campaign

for decent wage (ACT, 2018). One of the noteworthy elements in the agreement is that it emphasized the fact that "framework contracts" signed between global brands and global trade unions in recent years are now inadequate. Indeed, IFAs are reciprocally arranged on the basis of respect to the regulations of United Nations, ILO conventions and national laws in general. This bestoves especially those employers operating at the national level the use of national regulations and public authorities for their own benefit. However, IFAs do not have a framework to improve the working and living conditions of workers, especially wages. Unlike IFAs, the new agreement opens the way for the parties' entering in collective bargaining order. With its ACT system, it also proposes a collective bargaining system on sectoral level for future.

In case of the possibility to make this come true the first effect will be prevention of informal employment and the second will be the improvement of safe working and living conditions of the workers producing for supply chains. Therefore, the door will be opened for the humanitarian and fraternal living and working conditions for immigrants who forcibly work informally and live like slaves. It is not easy to say today how the ACT process which is yet in the initial stage and to be practically tested in the two countries (Turkey and Cambodia) will progress. Although past experiences are not very promising, the task of unions must be to translate any opportunity into the possibility for a hopeful future.

References

- (ACT) Action, Collabrotion, Transformation (2018). Memorandum of understanding. Retrieved in July, 2018 from <https://actonlivingwages.com/memorandum-of-understanding/>
- Akparti. (2018). *Genel İcraat Kitabı*. Retrieved from http://www.akparti.org.tr/dosyalar/genel_icraat_kitabi_cift_sayfa_2018.pdf
- Aksoy, N. (1998). Almanya'da yabancı olmak. *Birikim*, 110, Retrieved from <http://www.birikimdergisi.com/birikim-yazi/3836/almanya-da-yabanci-olmak#.W0YcS-Q1-U>
- Birgün Gazetesi. (2017, September 20). Binlerce sayacı ayakta. Retrieved from <https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/binlerce-sayaci-ayakta-180396.html>
- Birgün Gazetesi. (2018, May 30). Kılıçdaroğlu: Suriyeliler ülkelerine dönmeli. Retrieved from <https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/kilicdaroglu-suriyeliler-ulkelerine-donmeli-217818.html>
- Boyacıoğlu, H. (2017, December 16). 12 milyon çalışanın maaşı 3 bin TL'nin altında, yüzde 40 asgari ücretli. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/12-milyon-calisanin-maasi-3-bin-tlnin-altinda-yuzde-40-asgari-ucetli-40680624>
- Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı (ÇSGB) Çalışma istatistikleri bilgi sistemi (2018, March 30). Retrieved from <http://cibs.csgb.gov.tr/RaporOlusturmaSihirbazi.aspx?kullanicisiz=1>
- Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı (ÇSGB). (2018, March 11). Bakan Sarıeroğlu: Suriyelilerle ilgili hiçbir dünya ülkesinde olmayan bir örneği hayata geçirdik. Retrieved from <https://www.csgb.gov.tr/home/news/bakan-sarieroglu-suriyelilerle-igili-hicbir-dunya-ulkesinde-olmayan-bir-ornegi-hayata-gecirdik>
- Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı (ÇSGB)(2018, January 31). İşçi ve sendika üye sayıları. Retrieved from <https://www.csgb.gov.tr/media/8122/resmî-gazete-20180131-4.pdf>
- Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi. (2018, June 26). *CHP seçim bildirgesi 2018*. Retrieved from <http://secim2018.chp.org.tr/files/CHP-SecimBildirgesi-2018-icerik.pdf>
- Deutsche Welle Türkçe. (2017, October 22). Berlin'de ırkçılığa karşı protesto yürüyüşü. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/tr/berlinde-irkciliya-karsi-protesto-yuruyusu/a-41068768>
- Deutsche Welle Türkçe. (2018, March 2018). Yedi yılda bir ülkenin çöküşü: Suriye. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/tr/yedi-yilda-bir-ulkenin-cekusu-suriye/a-42979799>
- DİSK Genel Kurulu. (2017, March 09). *DİSK 15. Genel kurul sonuç bildirgesi*. Retrieved from <http://disk.org.tr/2017/03/disk-15-genel-kurulu-sonuc-bildirgesi>
- DİSK Araştırma Enstitüsü (DİSK-AR). (2018, February 21). "Türkiye işçi sınıfı gerçeği" araştırmamızın özet sonuçlarını açıkladık. Retrieved from <https://disk.org.tr/2018/02/turkiye-isci-sinifi-gercegi-arastirmamizin-ozet-sonuclarini-acikladik>
- DİSK Araştırma Enstitüsü (DİSK-AR). (2018, June 19). *İşsizlik ve istihdam raporu Haziran 2018*. Retrieved from <http://disk.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/DISK-AR-issizlik-ve-istihdam-raporu-Haziran-2018-1.pdf>
- Duran, A. E. (2015, August 18). Suriyeliler Türkiye'de kalıcı. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/tr/suriyeliler-turkiyede-kalici/a-18654827>
- Erdoğan, M. M. (2017, December 06). Suriyeliler barometresi 2017 yönetici özeti (Taslak). Retrieved from <https://mmuraterdogan.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/suriyeliler-barometresi-yc3b6netici-c3b6zeti.pdf>

- Erdođdu, S. (2018). Türkiye'de geçici koruma altındaki Suriyeliler için insana yakışır işlerin desteklenmesi işçi ve işveren örgütleri ne yapmalı?, Ankara, Turkey: Uluslararası Çalışma Örgütü.
- Erol, E., A. E. Akyol, C. Salman, E. Pınar, İ. Gümüşcan, K. Y. Mısırlı, M. Kahveci, P. Mutlu. (2017). *Suriyeli göçmen emeđi: İstanbul tekstil sektörü araştırması*. İstanbul: Birleşik Metal-İş.
- Ertuna, C. (2016, May 26). Suriyeliler kalıcı: medya onları ne zaman görecek. Retrieved from <https://journos.com.tr/suriyeliler-kalici-medya-onlari-ne-zaman-gorecek>
- Gilderlehrman Institute (2019) Andrew Jackson and the Bank War. Retrieved from <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/content/andrew-jackson-and-bank-war>, accessed: 25th August 2019
- Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü. (2018, June 02). Geçici koruma. Retrieved from www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/gecici-koruma_363_378_4713_icerik
- Güneş Gazetesi. (2017, October 02). Bakan Fakıbaba Suriyelilere ihtiyacımız var. Retrieved from <http://www.gunes.com/ekonomi/bakan-fakibaba-suriyelilere-ihtiyacimiz-var-820987>
- Haberler.com. (2014, October 13). Türk - İş Genel Başkanı Atalay: İşsizlere çare bulalım sonra Suriyeliler'e bakalım. Retrieved from <http://fotogaleri0.haberler.com/turk-is-genel-baskani-atalay-issizlere-care>
- HAK-İŞ. (2017, November 23). ACRMII Arslan, Mültecilerin sosyal entegrasyonu projemizin kapanış toplantısına katıldı. Retrieved from http://www.hakis.org.tr/haberler.php?action=haber_detay&id=1874
- Hakların Dayanışma Köprüsü Derneđi. (2016, July 21). Mültecilerin çalışma hayatına dair saha araştırması bulguları özeti. Retrieved from <http://www.halklarinkoprusu.org/2016/06/multecilerin-calisma-hayatina-dair-saha-arastirmasi-bulgulari-ozeti>
- Haksöz Haber. (2018, January 05). Fatma Şahin: Her sektörde Suriyeli katkısı var. Retrieved from www.haksozhaber.net/fatma-sahin-her-sektorde-suriyeli-katkisi-var-101227h.htm.
- Harunođulları, Y. D. (2016). Suriyeli sığınmacı çocuk işçiler ve sorunları: Kilis örneđi. *Göç Dergisi*, 3 (1), 29 - 63.
- İnsani Gelişme Vakfı (İNGEV) (2017, March 07). Suriyeli mülteci hayatlar monitörü, Retrieved from <http://www.ingev.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Multeci-Hayatlar-Monitoru.pdf>
- International Labor Organization (ILO) (2018). *ILOSTAT*, Collective bargaining coverage Rate: Retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page27.jspx;ILOSTATCOOKIE=P2bBdH3IU7pO3SESL4yj4udlkVgrvY3QlxTB-rf7mwM3IvBqhhU!125143199?indicator=ILR_CBCT_NOC_RT&subject=IR&datasetCode=A&collectionCode=IR&_adf.ctrl-state=15lbaw&
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2010, January 14). Retrieved from <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sonew011410a>
- Kalkınma Bakanlığı (2017, October 28). 2018 Yılı programı, :Retrieved from http://www.kalkinma.gov.tr/Lists/YillikProgramlar/Attachments/27/2018_Yılı_Programı.pdf
- Kıraç, Ş. (2017, December 12). Suriyeliler olmasaydı raflar boş kalırdı. Retrieved from http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/ekonomi/885029/Suriyeliler_olmasaydi_raflar_bos_kalirdi.html
- Marmara Belediyeler Birliđi (2017, January). *Suriyeli mülteciler ve belediyelerin süreç yönetimi: İstanbul örneđi*. Retrieved from

- http://marmara.gov.tr/UserFiles/Attachments/Publication/Publication_2526_GocRaporu.pdf
- Michel, H. (2017). *Faşizmler*. İstanbul: İletişim.
- Mülteciler Derneği (2018, May 18). Suriyelilerle ilgili doğru bilinen yanlışlar. Retrieved from multeciler.org.tr/suriyeli-multecilerle-ilgili-dogru-bilinen-yanlislar
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) (2018, June 02). OECD.Stat, Average usual weekly hours worked on main job. Retrieved from <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ANHRSm>
- Özkan, F. (2014, November 02). Vasıfsız işçide Suriyeliler bize ilaç olacak. Retrieved from <http://www.haber7.com/roportaj/haber/1216821-vasifsiz-iscide-suriyeliler-bize-ilac-olacak>
- SGK Rehberi (2017). Suriyeliler olmazsa fabrikalar durur Retrieved from <https://www.sgkrehberi.com/haber/119017/>
- Şahin, Ç. E. (2016, 06). Adam Smith'den Chicago okuluna, siyasal iktisattan iktisat'a beşeri sermaye teorisi: Teorik kopuş ve süreklilikler üzerinden bir değerlendirme. <https://www.researchgate.net>: Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259296854_Adam_Smith%27den_Chicago_Okuluna_Siyasal_Iktisattan_Iktisat%27a_Beseri_Sermaye_Teorisi_Teorik_Kopus_ve_Sureklilikler_Uzerinden_Bir_Degerlendirme
- Şimşek, G. & Ercan, F. (2013, January 02). Türkiye'de öğretmenlik mesleğinin dönüşümü/dönüştürülme çabaları: Ulus-devletin muhafızlarını yetiştirmekten sermaye için emek-gücü yetiştirmeye. *Sendika Org.* Retrieved from <http://sendika62.org/2013/01/turkiyede-ogretmenlik-mesleginin-donusumudonusturulme-cabaları-ulus-devletin-muhafızlarını-yetistirmekten-sermaye-icin-emek-gucu-yetistirmeye-gizem-simsek-fuat-ercan-77712/>
- Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) (2018, 06June 18). İşgücü istatistikleri, Mart 2018. www.tuik.gov.tr: Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/HbGetirHTML.do?id=27694>
- Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (DİSK) (2017, March 16). İrkçılığa ve aşırı sağa karşı işçilerin enternasyonal dayanışması. Retrieved from <https://disk.org.tr/2017/03/irkciliga-ve-asiri-saga-karsi-iscilerin-enternasyonal-dayanismasi/>
- Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (DİSK) (1976). Göçmen işçiler sorunu. İstanbul, Turkey: DİSK.
- Türkiye İş Kurumu (İŞKUR) (2018, February). 2017 Yılı faaliyet raporu. Retrieved from <http://www.iskur.gov.tr/tr-tr/kurumsalbilgi/raporlar.aspx#dltop>
- Türkiye İş Kurumu (İŞKUR) (2018, May 16). Suriyelilerin işgücü piyasasına uyumu ele alındı. Retrieved from <http://www.iskur.gov.tr/ilMudurlukleri/Ankara/Duyurular/tabid/416/ArticleID/907/ArtMID/1098/language/tr-TR/Default.aspx>
- Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) (2018, June 18). İşgücü istatistikleri, :Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/HbGetirHTML.do?id=2769>
- Turgut, F. (2017, Semptember 18). Sayacılar ayakkabı tekellerine karşı iş bıraktı. Retrieved from www.evrensel.net: <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/332715/sayacilar-ayakkabi-tekellerine-karsi-is-birakti>
- TÜRK-İŞ (2014, October 14). TÜRK-İŞ Başkanlar kurulu bildirisi. Retrieved from <http://www.turkis.org.tr/TURK-IS-BASKANLAR-KURULU-BILDIRISI-d495m>
- UNHCR Refugee Situation (2018, June 02). Situations Syria. Retrieved from https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.160212728.454940459.1527939100-633629753.1527939100

World Economic Forum (2017, September 13). *The Global human capital report 2017*.
https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.160212728.454940459.1527939100-633629753.1527939100
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Human_Capital_Report_2017.pdf

Labor and Globalization

Edited by Christoph Scherrer

Donna McGuire: **Re-Framing Trade. Union Mobilisation against the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)**

Volume 1, ISBN 978-3-86618-392-6, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2013, 237 S., € 27.80

Christoph Scherrer, Debdulal Saha (Eds.): **The Food Crisis. Implications for Labor**

Volume 2, ISBN 978-3-86618-393-3, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2013, 225 S., € 19.80

Sarah Elisabeth Schmelzer-Roldán: **The Impact of Electricity Sector Privatisation on Employees in Argentina and Brazil. A Comparative Institutional Analysis**

Volume 3, ISBN 978-3-86618-394-0, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2014, 249 S., € 27.80

Akua O Britwum and Sue Ledwith (Eds.): **Visibility and Voice for Union Women: Country case studies from Global Labour University researchers**

Volume 4, ISBN 978-3-86618-395-7, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2014, 229 S., € 24.80

Christoph Scherrer (Ed.): **The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): Implications for Labor**

Volume 5, ISBN 978-3-86618-396-4, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2014, 209 S., € 24.80

Veerashekharaappa, Meenakshi Rajeev, Soumitra Pramanik: **Reforming Cooperative Credit Structure in India for Financial Inclusion**

Volume 6, ISBN 978-3-86618-397-1, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2014, 98 S., € 19.80

Luciana Hachmann: **Pursuing a Developmental State Trade Agenda in a Neo-Liberal Context: Brazil and South Africa in Comparison**

Volume 7, ISBN 978-3-86618-398-8, Rainer Hampp Verlag, München, Mering 2014, 214 S., € 24.80

Oksana Balashova, Ismail Doga Karatepe, Aishah Namukasa (Eds.): **Where have all the classes gone? A critical perspective on struggles and collective action**

Volume 8, ISBN 978-3-86618-893-8, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2017, 300 S., € 29.80

Christoph Scherrer (Ed.): **Enforcement Instruments for Social Human Rights along Supply Chains**

Volume 9, ISBN 978-3-86618-894-5, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2017, 215 S., € 24.80

Markus Kip: **The Ends of Union Solidarity: Undocumented Labor and German Trade Unions**

Volume 10, ISBN 978-3-86618-895-2, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2017, 245 S. € 27.80

Christoph Scherrer, Santosh Verma (Eds.): **Decent Work Deficits in Southern Agriculture: Measurements, Drivers and Strategies**

Volume 11, ISBN 978-3-86618-896-9, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2018, 350 S. € 32.80

Jenny Jungehülsing: **Transnational migration and international labor solidarity. On migrant union members' impact on unions' cross-border work**

Volume 12, ISBN 978-3-86618-897-6, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2018, 365 S. € 32.80

Kateryna Yarmolyuk-Kröck: **The Implementation of International and European Occupational Safety and Health Standards into the National Legislation of Ukraine**

Volume 13, ISBN 978-3-86618-898-3, 2018, 320 S., € 29.80

Max J. Zenglein: **Institutional Framework and Dysfunctionality of the Transitional Chinese Wage Bargaining Regime**

Volume 14, ISBN 978-3-86618-899-0, 2019, 225 S., € 24.80

Christoph Scherrer, Katja Radon (Eds.): **Occupational Safety and Health Challenges in Southern Agriculture**

Volume 15, ISBN 978-3-95710-247-8, 2019, 195 S., € 24.80

Kwabena Nyarko Otoo: **Informality and Labour Regulations in Ghana**

Volume 16, ISBN 978-3-95710-252-2, Rainer Hampp Verlag, Augsburg, München 2019, 239 S., € 27.80

Integration through Exploitation: Syrians in Turkey

Labor and Globalization | Volume 17

Gaye Yılmaz, İsmail Doğa Karatepe,
Tolga Tören (Eds.)

This book is about the largest displacement crisis and resettlement of our time. However, it is not another piece that elaborately describes the appalling situation of Syrian workers in Turkey, but explores how they are integrated into the lower ends of the value chain in several sectors. The book seeks answers of what has been largely overlooked in the literature on the question of how labor processes have been shaped in various labor-intensive sectors by class and identity.

Key words: Migration, labor market, Syrian refugees, Turkey

Rainer Hampp Verlag ISBN 978-3-95710-260-7
Augsburg, München ISSN 2196-5382
2019 € 24.80

