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EFFECTS OF THE SYRIAN REFUGEES ON TURKEY


ORSAM


TESEV
Türkiye Ekonomik ve
Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı

ORTADOĞU STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES

مركز الشرق الأوسط للدراسات الاستراتيجية





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Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) was established in January 2009 to inform the general public and the foreign policy community on the Middle East. ORSAM is an independent and non-profit research centre based in Ankara.

ORSAM aims to diversify sources of information on the Middle East and expose the Turkish academia and political circles to the perspectives of researchers from the region. ORSAM, by facilitating the visits of Middle Eastern statesmen, bureaucrats, academics, strategists, businessmen, journalists, and NGO representatives to Turkey, seeks to ensure their knowledge and ideas are shared with the Turkish and international community. To that end, ORSAM carries out research on social, economic and political developments in the Middle East and shares these with the public.

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Prepared in Cooperation between ORSAM and TESEV

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Prepared by:

Oytun Orhan, *ORSAM Researcher*

Sabiha Senyücel Gündođar, *TESEV Director for the Foreign Policy Program*

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PREFACE

We believe that NGOs are responsible for attracting attention to the refugee issue and should take the lead in contributing to solutions. ORSAM (The Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies) released a report in 2014 that examined the refugee situation in a comparative manner, drawing on extensive field research. TESEV (The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) has also contributed to the process of public awareness about the Syrian refugee crisis by organizing meetings and hosting workshops related to the issue. As part of our ongoing research to understand this problem, we have jointly conducted a three-month-long study based on visits to the cities bordering Syria. Interviews were held with local authorities, NGOs, businessmen, academics, local communities and Syrians living in Turkey. This joint research prepared by ORSAM and TESEV investigates the effects of Syrian refugees on the country's social structure, economy, politics and security. Findings on these topics can be found in the study. Besides general classifications, each city hosting Syrian refugees have a unique condition according to its demography, economy and political atmosphere. Thus, there are individual city analyses investigating the unique situation in every city. The study is based on three main observations. First, a considerable number of Syrian refugees in Turkey will either stay in the country for an extended period of time or will live the remainder of their lives in Turkey. Second, based on the first observation, it is crucial that Turkey prepare a comprehensive policy that includes preventative measures to deal with possible negative reaction from the local communities. This issue is predominantly about social integration, and recommendations for decision makers are provided in the conclusion. The third evaluation is related to diversity. If the integration process works effectively, the Syrian refugee situation might contribute to an enhancement of the multi-cultural makeup of Turkey.

Although the report was written by Oytun Orhan and Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, many people contributed to the study during fieldwork and preparation stages. We would like to thank Ferhat Piriñçi, a faculty member of Uludağ University and an ORSAM advisor, for his help with the field research in Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa and for drafting the framework of the report in an academic perspective. Also, we would like to thank Mustafa Aldı, a doctoral student at Bilkent University's International Relations Department, who worked in the team conducting field research in Adana, Osmaniye, and Hatay, for his preparation of the notes for the interviews and for translating the complete report into English. We also thank Tunç Demirtaş, a research assistant at Uludağ University's International Relations Department, for conducting the field research and interviews in Mersin. We would also like to extend our gratitude to two TESEV program assistants, Zerrin Cengiz Ceren Zeytinoglu, and to the program's intern, Esra Şimşek, for their help in setting up appointments for the research. We would like to especially send our gratitude to the NGOs, local authorities and communities for helping us bring this report together by accepting our interview requests and by sharing their information. The list of the institutions interviewed can be found at the end of the report. We hope that the study attracts attention to the living conditions and problems of the Syrian refugees while also generating solutions for the problems in the area. The burden of the refugee situation falls mostly on the shoulders of the border cities in Turkey. We hope that this report can be an effective tool to convey the issues to decision makers. Thank you to all who contributed to the study and to those who attended the interviews. In the end, we hope readers better understand the refugee situation and realize the steps needed to ameliorate it.

Assoc. Prof. Şaban Kardaş
President of ORSAM

.....
Prepared by: Oytun Orhan, *ORSAM Researcher*
 Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, *TESEV Director for the Foreign Policy Program*

EFFECTS OF THE SYRIAN REFUGEES ON TURKEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Basic data about Syrian refugees in Turkey:

- According to the official numbers, there are 1,645,000 Syrian refugees in Turkey as of November 2014. Unofficial numbers are estimated at around 2 million. These numbers mean that Turkey hosts a Syrian refugee population of 2.1% (officially) and 2.5% (unofficially) of its population.
- 1.2 million people have been included to the 10 million already residing in cities near the Syrian border.
- With the Interior Ministry’s decision in October 2011, registered Syrian refugees are given “temporary protection status.” Under the temporary protection regime, protection and aid is provided to Syrians, covering regulations on indefinite residence, protection against going back under coercion, and responding to emergency needs.
- 85% of the Syrians live outside of refugee camps.
- 500,000 Syrian patients have been sent to the hospitals from the camps.
- Syrians working in Turkey have reached 200,000 individuals.
- According to Ministry of Health data, 35,000 Syrians have given birth in Turkey.

- Turkey has spent 4.5 billion dollars on Syrian refugees between April 2011 and November 2014.
- According to official numbers, aid from the UN and European countries is approximately 246 million dollars.

Social effects of Syrian refugees on Turkey:

- Differences in cultures, languages and life styles make social integration more challenging.
- Polygamy among local communities is spreading as a result of an increase in divorce rates.
- Child labor is spreading.
- A suitable environment for ethnic and sectarian polarization can be observed at present.
- Uncontrolled urban development is on the rise.
- In some bordering cities, there has been disturbance due to changing demographics.
- There has been a change in demography (fertility rates, population increase, etc.).
- The challenging living conditions and lack of educational opportunities for Syrian refugees might worsen certain social issues in the long term. However,

there have not been any serious law and order issues as of December 2014.

- Even if there are some issues between locals and refugees, both sides have developed some mechanisms that help keep social peace. The fact that there have not been many social issues thus far shows the capacity of the receiving and guest communities in dealing with social problems.
- Even if it is still problematic, the integration process has started. There have been 35,000 Syrians born in Turkey. Marriages between Syrians and Turks might cause some issues, but they have also helped with the integration of refugee communities. Many investors and small businesses have moved their funding to Turkey. A large portion of the Syrians in Turkey are made up of children or youth. Even without proper schooling, these young people have been learning Turkish.

Economic effects of Syrian refugees on Turkey:

- If the effect of the Syrian refugees on the Turkish economy is examined in detail, it is apparent that risks and opportunities are closely intertwined.
- There has been an increase in rental prices and, as a result, it is often difficult to find affordable rentals.
- There has been an increase in inflation in border cities.
- Hiring illegal workers is spreading, especially among small businesses.
- There is unfair competition between businesses that hire illegal workers and companies that do not employ illegal workers.
- Locals believe that job opportunities have been taken away from them. However, when investigated, the effect is not existent. People who might lose their jobs under normal circumstances believe that they have lost their jobs because of Syrian refugee workers. In real-

ity, Syrians are generally employed in areas that locals are not willing to work in. Thus, Syrians meet the demand in unskilled labor.

- Syrians filling a demand for labor creates a suitable environment for investment.
- There has been an important decrease in wages in areas with Syrian refugees.
- The fact that humanitarian aid material distributed to the Syrians in Turkey and Syria are supplied from local Turkish firms creates an opportunity for many of them, especially those involved in the food and textile industries.
- Investors and merchants have moved operations from Syria, especially from Aleppo, to Turkey. Mersin's harbor and sea access make it a top choice for Syrians. Another city attractive to the Syrian investors is Gaziantep.
- The number of Syrian companies registered with the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce was 60 before the Syrian crisis. By the end of October 2014, the number rose to 209.
- It has been suggested that a large business opportunity has been lost in channeling Syrian investments to Turkey.
- Syrian investors and merchant who have good relations with the Middle East contribute to the commerce and investments in the region.
- Syrians contribute to production related to the smaller businesses (bakery, shoes-making etc.). However, since most of these small shops are unregistered and they also escape legal responsibilities, they result in losses in tax revenues. Both situations cause unfair competition.

Effects of Syrian refugees on Turkish politics and security:

- There are rumors among the public that Syrians disturb law and order. However, this is not a correct assumption. The number of criminal cases in which

refugees are directly involved are very low and, in most cases, Syrians living in Turkey are the victims.

- The most serious security threat is a risk of violent mass reaction, caused by the provocations capitalizing on anger towards Syrian refugees.
- The biggest concern among people living close to the borders is their perceived vulnerability to terrorist attacks.
- The fact that Syrians live together in the ghettos is a challenge to the integration process. This situation may cause security problems in the future.

Effects of Syrian refugees on public services in Turkey:

- Hospitals in border provinces offer approximately 30% to 40% of their services to Syrian refugees. Thus, there are capacity issues in the hospitals.
- Municipality services (garbage collection, cleaning, public transportation, water distribution, controls, etc.) are planned according to the population. Thus, the services are not sufficient because of the rapid influx of refugees.
- Municipalities receive their budget according to their population. But the actual population of bordering cities increased critically. Therefore these municipalities are forced to serve people with limited supplies and budgets.

Conclusion and recommendations:

- The initial presence of Syrian refugees on Turkish territory, which was considered temporary at the beginning of the crisis, has now become a permanent one. The permanent nature of the situation is now affecting the psychology and reactions of both the host community and the Syrians.
- Syrians will stay in Turkey for an extended period of time, and some might spend their whole life in Turkey. If Syrian refugees are to become permanent and a reality for Turkey, measures that

will minimize the negative consequences and maximize the benefits need to be introduced.

- It is crucial to create an immigration policy that includes the prevention of reactions from the local communities. The issue should be considered as a social integration problem. There should be a holistic policy covering education, working conditions, accommodation, social services and improving the receptivity of the host community.
- If the integration process works effectively, the Syrian refugee situation might contribute to the diversity and the development of a multicultural structure in Turkey in the long run. In addition, the presence of Syrians can strengthen bonds with neighboring countries and help provide a better environment for economic and political cooperation in the future.
- With the above realities in mind, many points of action need to be taken into consideration: officially registering all Syrians, increasing the capacity of local hospitals and educational facilities, facilitating work permits, providing more authority to local administrations, coordinating between local and central authorities, generating extra capacity and budget for municipalities, creating community leader groups among Syrians, preparing booklets and webpages in Arabic, opening up new living areas in the border cities, increasing international aid, increasing border security, fairly sharing or distributing the refugee burden, developing programs for Turkish people to accept Syrian refugees, correcting the Syrian stereotype, creating a database to understand refugee movements, looking at the issue objectively without political concerns, preventing begging, bolstering the efficiency in law and order, building a capacity for Syrian refugees are the main points of action that should be considered carefully by the authorities.

INTRODUCTION

The humanitarian factor is one of the crucial aspects of the Syria conflict that has lasted now for nearly four years. According to the UN's official numbers, 191,000 people lost their lives. On the other hand, according to the Syrian NGOs' unofficial numbers, 283,000 people lost their lives so far. Approximately four million people had to flee from Syria and around 6 million have left their homes in order to settle in secure areas in the country. More than half of the refugees outside the country consist of children and youth under the age of eighteen. A majority of these refugees struggle to survive under challenging conditions outside the refugee camps. Syrian refugees have been struggling to find basic necessities such as security, food, shelter and health services, let alone basic modes of comfort. In addition, the refugee influx has caused problems for host countries. Tension caused by economic hardships, social problems and changing ethnic and sectarian balances have resulted in conflicts between the host country nationals and the Syrian refugees.

Turkey hosts the largest population of Syrian refugees among the countries neighboring Syria. According to the latest official numbers, Turkey hosts over 1.6 million Syrian refugees as of November 2014. However, the actual number of refugees could be around 2 million. In many cities, chiefly those along the border, there are many Syrians who have entered the country through illegal ways and have not been registered yet. The issue of refugees in Turkey should be investigated under two headings, namely Syrians living in the camps and those living outside

the camps. The majority of refugees living in camps have better conditions in terms of access to the basic services and social environment than the ones living outside the camps. It can be stated that under the coordination of AFAD, Turkey set an example for the world in the manner it establishes and manages camps in such a dire situation.

Although the camps might be a good place for refugees who live inside these areas, approximately 85% of all Syrians live outside them. Thus, the real or crucial situational factors for refugees occur outside the camps, especially in the city centers where the majority of Syrians live. It is a mistake to assume that the integration of the Syrian community with the locals is an easy and straightforward process. The initial presence of Syrian refugees on Turkish territory, which was considered temporary at the beginning of the crisis, has now become a permanent one. The permanent nature of the situation is now affecting the psychology and reactions of both the host and incoming communities. Accordingly, this study focuses on the impacts of the Syrian refugees on Turkey.

To understand the effects of refugee influx on Turkey, four different field studies were conducted in the provinces of Adana, Osmaniye, Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mersin and Kahramanmaraş during a period of three months. In these provinces, NGOs, local authorities, community leaders, academics, members of chambers of commerce and industry, local citizens and Syrian refugees were interviewed. This report, titled "Effects of the Syrian Refugees

on Turkey” was prepared with observations and data collected from field studies. First, an overview of the situation of Syrian refugees in Turkey is presented. In the second chapter, the effects of the Syrian refugees on Turkey will be examined in relation to the economy, social life, security and politics. Because of the unique

nature of these effects in each city, the third chapter is dedicated to a detailed examination of different provinces. In the last chapter, a general conclusion of the study and recommendations for improvement of the Syrian refugees’ situation will be presented.

I. GENERAL SITUATION OF THE SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY

The influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey began in April 2011. Turkey announced at that time that it would apply an “open-door policy” for these refugees. When AFAD made their first announcement regarding the Syrian refugees in June 2011, they reported that there were 8,535 individuals living in the camps established in Hatay, Yayladağı and Altınözü. According to AFAD statistics, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey reached 78,409 in August 2012. When this number was determined, Turkey announced that a critical threshold would be around 100,000. However, the refugee flow from Syria has exceeded all predictions. Turkey continued to accept Syrian refugees, even though the numbers have increased dramatically. According to official numbers, by November 2014, the number of Syrians under temporary protection reached 1,645,000. There are 16 different tent cities in 10 different provinces, 1 temporary admission center and six container cities that host 221,447 Syrians. The majority of Syrian refugees not in these centers try to live in the cities among local populations. Turkey is now hosting many times more Syrians than its critical threshold, which makes it confront a multi-faceted refugee problem.

When the economic side of the refugee issue is investigated, it can be observed that Turkey has spent 4.5 billion dollars on refugees. More than 500,000 people have been sent to hospitals from the refugee camps and, according to the Ministry of Health, nearly 35,000 Syrians have given birth in Turkey. Humanitarian aid which

comes from the UN and European countries amounts to only 246 million dollars.

Even though the conditions in camps are satisfactory, life is challenging for those who live outside the camps in the cities. Because Turkey accepted the 1951 Geneva Convention on the legal status of refugees with geographical limitations, it cannot accept Syrians as legal refugees. Even though the individuals inside and outside the camps can get their temporary protection identification cards, because of that reservation, they encounter the geographical limitations. Because of the geographical limitation, only people coming from Europe with the fear that they will be prosecuted for their nationality, ideas, religion, political views or membership to certain groups can get refugee status in Turkey. The situation of those who apply for refugee status in Turkey is negotiated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and if these individuals are eligible, they are transferred to a third country. Thus, Syrians in Turkey do not have refugee status and they are considered *guests* in the formal terminology.

With the decision of the Ministry of Interior Affairs in October 2011, Syrians registered in Turkey get “temporary protection status.” Under the temporary protection regime protection and aid is provided to Syrians, covering regulations on indefinite residence, protection against being sent back under coercion, and meeting emergency needs. In addition, those living

in camps are provided education, water, food, shelter and health services. The majority of those living outside the camps are only provided free healthcare and medica-

tion if they are registered. Those who are not registered, often for various reasons, do not have any rights.

Chart- 1 Basic Data About The Refugee Camps Hosting Syrian Refugees (November 2014)

City	Camps	Opening Dates	Number of Container and Tents	Camp Population
	Altınözü1 Tent City	09.06.2011	263 (divided)	1,372
	Altınözü2 Tent City	10.06.2011	622	2,578
	Yayladağı1 Tent City	30.04.2011	546 (Triple divided)	2,816
	Yayladağı2 Tent City	12.07.2011	510	3,004
	Apaydın Tent City	09.10.2011	1,181Containers	4,965
	Reyhanlı Admission Center		Changes according to daily data.	
Hatay	Total		573 Divided+1.368 Tents +1.181 Containers	14,735
	Öncüpınar Container City	17.03.2012	2,065	13,414
	Elbeyli Container City	03.06.2013	3,589	24,164
Kilis	Total		5,654	37,578
	Ceylanpınar Tent City	01.03.201	4,771	19,199
	Akçakale Tent City	06.07.2012	5,000	26,416
	Viranşehir		4,100	19,986
	Harran Tent City	13.01.2013	2,000	14,064
Şanlıurfa	Total		13,871 Tents + 2,000 Containers	79,665
	Islahiye Tent city	17.03.2012	1,888	9,984
	Karkamış Tent City	28.08.2012	1,686	7,641
	Nizip1 Tent City	03.10.2012	1,858	10,674
	Nizip2 Tent City	11.02.2012	1,000 (Containers)	5,029
Gaziantep	Total		5,369 Tents + 1,000 Containers	33,070
	Kahramanmaraş Tent City	01.09.2012	3,318	17,215
Kahramanmaraş	Total		3,318	17,215
	Cevdediye Tent City	09.09.2012	2,012	7,597
Osmaniye	Total		2,012	7,597
	Adıyaman Tent City	22.09.2012	2,292	9,854
Adıyaman	Total		2,292	9,854
	Sarıçam Tent City	28.01.2013	2,162	11,124
Adana	Total		2,162	11,124
	Midyat Tent City	19.06.2013	1,300	2,858
	Nusaybin Tent City	Under Construction		
Mardin	Total		1,300	2,858
	Beydağı Container City	12.06.2013	2,083	7,493
Malatya	Total		2,083	7,493

Source: AFAD (The Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey)

*Chart- 2: Syrian Refugees Living Outside the Refugee Camps (November 2014)
(Cities with 1000 or more Syrians are listed. These numbers only include registered Syrian refugees. Numbers in the report include unregistered Syrians based on estimates by local authorities and NGOs).*

City	Number of Syrian refugees
İstanbul	330.000
Gaziantep	220.000
Hatay	190.000
Şanlıurfa	170.000
Mardin	70.000
Adana	50.000
Kilis	49.000
Mersin	45.000
Konya	45.000
Kahramanmaraş	44.000
Ankara	30.000
Bursa	20.000
Batman	20.000
Şırnak	19.000
Kocaeli	15.000
İzmir	13.000
Osmaniye	12.000
Antalya	10.000
Kayseri	9.500
Diyarbakır	5.000
Adıyaman	2.500
Samsun	1.230
Niğde	1.100
Aydın	1.000

Source: Ministry of Interior Affairs

II. EFFECTS OF THE SYRIAN REFUGEES ON TURKEY

In the initial phases of the crisis, Syrian refugees were living in and around border cities. Later, they began spreading around the country. According to the data from the Ministry of Interior, there are only eight cities without any Syrian refugees. Today, the majority of the refugees are living in the border cities, leaving aside the big cities. As a result, the 10 million people who reside in these border cities have been struggling to host approximately 1.2 million refugees. Inevitably, the situation is causing issues all around the country, especially in border cities. The effects can be categorized as follows: social, economic, political, security-oriented effects and the effects of accessibility to public services.

a. Social Effects

The issue of Syrian refugees in Turkey is primarily one of social adaptation. The difference in culture, language and living style is one of the main reasons for various reactions from the local communities. Besides, the increase in polygamy, a higher divorce rates because of polygamy, women and child abuse, social and sectarian polarization and urban sprawl can be listed as the social effects of Syrian refugees in Turkey.

A conservative culture is predominant in Turkish border cities. Local communities tend to react to incidents that might clash with the local culture. One of the most prominent changes affecting the local culture is the frequent marriage between Turkish men, be they elderly or young or married or single, with young Syrian women. These occurrences have been happening mainly in Kilis, Şanlıurfa and Hatay. The marriages cause reactions among the locals, especially among women of these

urban areas. In all the three cities, divorce rates have increased because of marriages between Syrian women and Turkish men. In the official data, these marriages do not seem high since most of them occur under the religious traditions, something that may not result in official registration. For example, in Kilis, the causes of 20% of the divorces are speculated to be because of Turkish men marrying Syrian brides. Women have been complaining that the fear of losing their husbands to Syrian women has brought great pressure on them. Also, the women of these cities blame Syrian women for deceiving their husbands. The most negative aspect of the issue is that there is a market surrounding the arranged marriages. Men who want to marry Syrian women pay a middleman to arrange a marriage, and then pay a dowry price to the bride's family. Syrian families often consider arranged marriages to be an efficient way to make money and also to secure a daughter's future. This phenomenon has been observed in Şanlıurfa and Kilis at greater rates than in other cities. Another negative aspect of these types of marriages is that many of the brides are minors, and these marriages may result in child abuse.

Many Syrians living in cities prefer low quality suburbs and neighborhoods because this means lower rents. Multiple families live together in the same house in dire conditions. This situation mainly causes unplanned settlements and construction of shantytowns. With the expectation of extra income, locals often start the construction of illegal building around their houses or fields. They may also add extra floors to their apartments. These illegal buildings put more pressure on the already irregular city structures. Connected to this issue is the fact that this sort

of illegal activity provides an environment that may cause Syrians to get involved in criminal activities. For example, because of the harsh living conditions, some young Syrian men end up being caught in drug use or trafficking, while women may fall victim to prostitution.

Another social issue caused by large refugee populations is child labor. Only a small group of the children outside the camps have access to education. The first reason for this is the inability of the Turkish government and NGOs to offer sufficient education to the refugee children. Another major factor is that Syrian parents often have their children work instead of sending to school. The economic and social desperation of many families results in an increase of child labor. Many children from Syrian backgrounds end up working in factories, selling goods on the street or begging in public.

Another concern in the border cities is the rapidly changing demographics. The rapid change and constant flow of people tends to cause feelings of insecurity among the local community. This sentiment might not be so prominent in every city, but citizens living in cities such as Kilis, Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep suffer from a feeling of insecurity in a tangible manner. Kilis is one city where this issue is quite apparent. The city consists mainly of Turkmens. Since it accepted a large number of refugees who are mostly Arab, the local community has had the sense that they are now the minority in their hometown. In Hatay, the same sentiment can be observed among the Arab Alewite population. The fact that most Syrian refugees are Sunni is changing the demographical mosaic of the city. This change has, in turn, caused feelings of lack of security among the Arab Alewite population.

b. Economic Effects

When the effect of Syrian refugees on the economy is closely examined, it is apparent that risks and opportunities are inter-

twined, and it can be observed that Syrians contribute in an important way to the local and national economy. The most visible and common effect of the new population in all cities is an increase in rental prices. The increase is an advantage and a gain for the landlords, whereas it is yet another burden for those low income people who rent. With an increasing demand and higher rental prices, it is becoming difficult for renters to find affordable accommodation. Landlords prefer to rent their properties to Syrians in some cases, because they can offer higher rent payments. There are even rumors that some of the landlords were forcing Turkish tenants to leave so they can rent their houses to Syrians for a higher price. It is apparent that landlords use the demand created by Syrian refugees as an opportunity. Another effect created by the influx of Syrian refugees is the increase in the living costs. The prices for basic food products and houses for rent have increased, as there is more demand. Therefore, statistics show above average inflation rates in cities such as Kilis and Gaziantep.

The second complaint frequently mentioned is the use of Syrian workers in the industry, agriculture and small business sectors as illegal, cheap labor. According to the survey findings of a report investigating the economic effects of Syrians on Turkey by ORSAM, 40% to 100% of the people who lost their jobs in border cities believe that they lost their jobs because of the Syrians. This perception causes strong reactions from the local community because they think that Syrians are stealing job opportunities. In reality, however, there seem to be both positive and negative effects of the Syrians entering into the domestic work force. In most cases, a large part of those locals losing jobs do so because of normal economic developments.

Employers want the Syrians to enter the job market, but they want regulations to be able to hire them legally. Given the possibility of accidents in the work place, un-

ease in the local community, and chances for social tensions or disturbance, Syrian workers are a worry for local businesses. Furthermore, there are fears that a potentially unduly competition between the companies hiring Syrian workers and those that do not may appear, something which might cause instabilities in the long run. The possibility of such instability in the job market is worrying both for employees and employers.

At the same time, there is a high demand for new workers in cities such as Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş. There are two different opinions about the perceptions that Syrians are stealing jobs from local people. Interviews with businesses and employers suggest that locals are not willing to work in factories and in agriculture even though there is substantial need for workers in these fields. Therefore, it can be understood that Syrian refugees are not stealing jobs from the locals; rather, they are filling needed positions for unskilled labor. In contrast to the views of employers, locals state that there have been cases of layoffs in order to replace local workers with refugee workers. There is a perception that the locals are losing their jobs because of the refugees even though in many cases the reasons might be different. In conclusion, even though Syrian refugees might steal some job opportunities away from the locals, the perceptual dimension surrounding this issue is much more decisive among the local community. One of the most important issues related to illegal workers is the low wages paid to these individuals, and its probable effects on the job market in the long term.

Considering all of the above-mentioned negative aspects, it is possible to state that Syrians contribute to the economy in different aspects. Most of the humanitarian aid distributed to the Syrians in the camps as well as the aid dispatched to Syria are supplied through the local firms. Similarly, the firms in border towns also supply some of the humanitarian assistance provided by the international community.

This situation creates opportunities especially in textile and agriculture. This development helps increase the production and recover exports from the sharp drops due to the Syrian conflict. For example, exports from Gaziantep to Syria amounted to 133 million dollars in 2011, and it increased to 278 million dollars in 2013.

Although a majority of the Syrian refugees come from rural areas and belong to lower income groups, some business owners and investors, especially from Aleppo, have also come to Turkey. These groups of high-income business people primarily prefer Mersin to settle in because the commercial opportunities offered by the harbor in the town have attracted these groups. Another city, which had its business increase with the influx of refugees, is Gaziantep. There has been a visible increase in the number of Syrian firms registered to Gaziantep's Chamber of Commerce since 2011.

Despite the increase in capital flows in the Turkish border cities, bigger opportunities have been missed in terms of attracting Syrian investments in Turkey. The Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, though speculative, maintained that around 25 billion dollars have been transferred to Europe through Greek Cyprus banks. Although there is great opportunity, there have not been a considerable amount of investments by Syrians as of 2014. Conversely, another economic impact has been the significant commerce generated in Turkey by the businesspeople from Aleppo who had great networks and relationships with the Middle East. These merchants have been distributing Turkish products around the Middle East. Finally, Syrians businesses have had another positive effect on the Turkish economy in terms of creating an environment that attracts investors thanks to the flow of labor force from Syria.

Syrians are also starting to contribute to the manufacturing, though at a small scale. Syrian shops, bakeries and shoe manufac-

turers contribute to the local economy. Of course, these types of businesses appeal mostly to Syrians because they offer products Syrians are accustomed to. Although they might seem positive at first glance, another reality of these enterprises is that they are predominantly illegal. This creates disturbance among locals because these underground businesses create unfair competition. As a result, there have been a number of disputes between the Syrian and Turkish business owners.

Smuggling in the border cities existed before the Syrian conflict; however, with the advent of the crisis, it has increased considerably. Smuggling is now beneficial for only a minority portion of the population, while before the conflict it was an income source for a broader group of individuals. This situation is especially apparent in Kilis. Before the uprising, smuggling was considered as a source of income by people in Kilis. Families from Kilis used to cross the border, fill their tanks with gas and buy as many products as they could for sale upon return to Turkey. After the civil war, this trade disappeared because of security concerns. However, now some villages smuggle products in great scale. Thus, while smuggling used to be an activity from which a larger group of people received their income, now it has become a big income source for only a limited group of people.

At the macroeconomic level, Syrians have had an effect on budget and unemployment rates. Turkey has spent around 4.5 billion dollars on the Syrian refugees so far. Also, in November, the unemployment rate reached double digits with a rate of 10.1%. It is possible that Syrians entering the job market has also had an effect on the unemployment rates in Turkey.

c. Political and Security Effects

The effects of the Syrian refugees on politics can be analyzed in two different ways. First, there is the effect of Syrians on the political environment. The possibility of

a conflict with locals, increasing security concerns among the locals and political polarization can be seen as the possible effects on the Turkish political environment. Also, the political environment in Turkey has a definitive influence on how the Syrians are viewed in general. Political views sometimes cause people to approach Syrians in a more tolerant manner. However, it also causes people who are not in direct contact with Syrians to react harshly to the issue of refugees, simply because of political preferences. Therefore, it can be argued that the issue of Syrian refugees is a topic that feeds an already existing, polarized political discussions in Turkey.

One possible security concern that could be caused by the Syrian refugees is a violent mass uprising that might be caused by provocations stemming from the existing anger and frustration towards Syrian refugees. Minor examples of such behavior have already occurred in almost every Turkish border city. If the current conditions continue, it is possible that the events that happened in Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş in July 2014 could happen again in other cities. The most dangerous consequence of such reactions from the locals is that the Syrians feel the need to organize themselves and provide for their security and justice. Recently, Syrians have been discussing the possibility of organizing in order to protect themselves. Such a development may result in small judicial issues turning into larger scale conflicts. The possibility of the organization of Syrian groups among themselves is causing reactions even from formerly friendly communities. It is also creating polarization among the locals and the refugees, and this polarization may emerge as a barrier to integration.

One of the biggest fears of the locals is the feeling of being vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Locals have the belief that among the Syrian refugees there are people who might want to punish Turkey and create provocations. Some locals also believe

that it is very possible that there are individuals among the Syrian refugees who are closely associated with Assad, ISIS or the PKK. These beliefs are especially widespread in the border cities such as Kilis and Şanlıurfa. Any judicial reprisal or terrorist attack perceivably committed by Syrians could affect the Turkish perception of all Syrians in a critical manner. An event of that kind has the possibility of turning into a bigger security issue. Thus, it is crucial that local tensions be observed very carefully.

Refugees living in cities continue their lives in the ghettos of these urban areas. This situation causes a serious challenge for the integration process, but it also creates an environment that might produce security issues in the long term. Also, living under harsh conditions makes Syrians open to the possibility of getting involved in criminal and violent acts. It can be said that youth growing up in poverty, who have a sense of being outcasts or who have identity crises, could be a source of crime in the future. The locals state that if precautions are not taken soon, these lost generations might be the reason for an increase in criminal acts in the future. This possibility means that even if it is not felt yet, there may be more serious security issues in the near future.

d. Effects on Public Services

Syrian refugees living in the camps have no difficulty in accessing basic services such as health and education. If registered, refugees in the camps can also have free health services in public hospitals. Public hospitals around the border cities serve the refugees, which may take up around 30% to 40% of their capacities. Because of the high rate of service to the refugees, hospitals in these areas have significant capacity problems. In these hospitals, not only the locals and refugees, but also people who are injured in clashes across the border are treated. Because of the high number of patients, hospitals are suffering from insufficient capacity in terms of

the operational conditions and personnel. Furthermore, locals who believe that they are not getting the services they want and need further aggravate the existing negative reactions. Another issue related to the health service problem is the negative effect on the health of the community at large. Some diseases such as polio, which was eliminated in Turkey many years ago, have been newly detected. In addition, Gaziantep reported the highest rates of measles in Turkey in 2013.

Only the refugees who enter with a passport or have a residence permit can attend government schools. However, there is a language challenge for new students from Syria who attend public schools. Other than public schools that are supported by the initiatives of Turkish NGOs and various Syrians, other limited education services are provided. Overall these initiatives are only a beginning. Nevertheless, only about 10% of the Syrians living in Turkish cities can access formal education. It is therefore clear that there is not much immediate pressure on the educational sector. But, a lack of education might cause a risk in terms of social issues in the long term.

Another effect of the Syrians on Turkish cities is the challenge of municipal services. With the influx of Syrians refugees there has been a great burden on municipalities that oversee garbage collection, building inspections, traffic, public transport, water supply, city cleanliness, city police and cultural events. There are burdens on the municipalities in two different ways. Firstly, since municipalities are provided a budget according to their population, with the flow of Syrians, they now have to serve many more people with an already limited budget. Secondly, the infrastructure in the cities is designed to serve only a certain amount of people. With the rapid rush of huge number of Syrians, several cities, such as Kilis whose population doubled in a year, have encountered problems meeting the demand for services.

III. ANALYSES OF CITIES

The cities around the border differ in terms of demographic structure, economy, culture and politics. Thus, the border cities hosting Syrian refugees have unique experiences. More specifically, each city has had a unique reaction to the Syrian refugees and has been affected in unique ways by the refugee crisis. In this section, eight cities will be studied and evaluated as regards the various effects elaborated in the previous section.

a. Gaziantep

There are 220,000 registered Syrian refugees in Gaziantep. It is estimated that the number might be closer to 280,000 in reality, which is the highest refugee population after Istanbul. In fact, people have been immigrating to the city from all around Turkey since the 1980s. The potential of economic growth is the main reason for domestic immigration. The ever-growing economy is also a main reason for an easy integration process. Groups of people from different cultures and sub-identities have come together with a common purpose, i.e. benefiting from stable economic growth. By directing people towards productivity and integrating them into the management of the city, integration issues have been solved naturally. According to the people in Gaziantep, “the insurance of the city is the industry.”

The economic dynamism of Gaziantep can be advantageous for the integration of the Syrian refugees, but it could also become a risk factor. Because the economy is the main bond in the city, any damage or instability on economic sphere can cause polarization, not just between Syrians and locals but also among the locals. Therefore, it is imperative for the city to sustain

economic growth and stability in order to prevent negative consequences.

Because of the reasons mentioned above, business people in Gaziantep who are aware of the problems with Syrian refugees decided to keep the events of July 2014 contained. Business groups are and were aware of the fact that increasing tension in the city could destroy economic growth. Furthermore, they have been trying to persuade the relevant stakeholders to act in a responsible manner to solve issues related to the Syrian communities in the city. Business people know that even if the conflict ends in Syria, a majority of the refugees will remain in Turkey. Thus, they believe that plans for long-term integration should be implemented as soon as possible. Considering the destructive results of instability, business people from Gaziantep do not care about cheap labor. In contrast, they believe that regulations for refugees to work legally in Turkey should be in place as soon as possible. Such a step is believed to be a step towards decreasing the existing tension in the city, while also helping the integration and providing a strong labor force for the economy. In conclusion, business people believe that Syrians should be integrated into the society and the economy.

In Gaziantep, it is believed that Syrians contribute to the economic growth because of their involvement in production as well as consumption. Also, an important number of Syrian investors have decided to stay in Gaziantep. Before the revolution, there were only 60 Syrian companies registered with the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, but the number has reached 209 as of October 2014. These companies include traders and manufacturers. It is not certain how much of an invest-

ment has been made by Syrians, although it can be said that the increasing amount of investment might hold an insignificant place in the city's booming economy. Since many of the Syrian investors could not get any business assurance, according to local accounts, they decided to invest in other places. These missed investment chances might be a lost opportunity for the city, in terms of turning a crisis into an opportunity.

Exports from Gaziantep have been recaptured, after experiencing the shock of the initial instability in the region. Between January and July of 2014, export figures increased 21% compared to the same term in 2013. Of course, there are some disadvantages, such as increasing inflation because of the refugees. Kilis and Gaziantep showed the highest inflation rates in the country. While the average inflation rate was 7.4% in Turkey, Gaziantep, Adiyaman, and Kilis regions had a higher rate with 8.51%. Even if it has one of the highest inflation rates in the country, Gaziantep does not show any serious symptoms of a bad economy. City entrepreneurs are actually more worried about the effects of social risks related to the Syrian refugee influx and its effects on the overall economy.

In terms of social integration, initially, Gaziantep approached the Syrian community in a positive manner, but recently the refugees have been considered as an unwanted group. Syrians have settled in the ghettos of the city which used to have high immigration anyway. Attack towards Syrians in July 2014 began in these neighborhoods, which had high crime rates in the past. Thus, it can be stated that one of the main issues in Gaziantep is that since the Syrians settle in the ghettos with high crime rates, they are more likely to be attacked. Even if the attacks were limited to these neighborhoods, their effects spread citywide. After the attacks, there was tension in the streets, shopping centers and in other common areas. It can be said that

with the advent of these recent events, there is now a trust issue between the two communities. Even if some of the refugees have left after the events, many have remained in the city, but they usually do not socialize outside their communities.

It was mentioned in interviews with Syrians that locals in the city had helped them a lot; however, the perception has changed with the long-lasting process of further inflow of Syrians. The biggest result of the violent events of July 2014 is that the Syrians do not feel completely safe in the city. The community's reaction has caused Syrians to consider organizing in order to protect themselves. If the organization process cannot be controlled in a way that keeps a balance between the local community and the refugees, there is the possibility that conflicts will occur due to possible provocations or misunderstandings.

Although the recent clashes were limited to the ghettos, it is apparent there is a disturbance all around the city. There are numerous causes for disturbance such as cultural and linguistic differences, economic reasons, the reality that Syrian refugees will stay for long periods, criminal acts committed by Syrians, and a feeling of unfairness, because aid is given to refugees but not to the locals in need. In the events of Gaziantep, socioeconomic factors might have played an important role, although provocations were a leading cause, as well. To provoke unrest, social media is frequently used. False news spreading through social media such as "Syrians poisoned the water system" or "Syrians killed a police officer" caused reaction that led to the reactions in the city. It should not be ignored that the situation in Gaziantep is extremely vulnerable to provocation.

b. Şanlıurfa

In the city center and in towns surrounding Şanlıurfa, there are approximately 150,000 registered and unregistered Syr-

ian refugees living outside the camps. In addition to that number, there are around 80,000 refugees living in the camps. Despite the high volume of Syrians, the situation in the city is relatively calm. There are two reasons for the low occurrence of tensions in the city. First of all, the majority of people in the city have familial relationships with the refugees. The city mainly consists of Turkish citizens of Kurdish and Arab origins, so are the refugees who came to the city. Therefore, Syrian refugees are usually hosted by locals who are relatives from the same tribe. If a disturbance occurs, it is generally resolved without escalating into a serious dispute, because of adherence to tribal law. Even if there is no blood relationship, the refugees are treated with respect because they share a common identity with the locals. Hence, a benefit of the city's demography is that it is easier to solve integration problems because of the similar culture and language.

Another reason easing tensions in the city is the efficiency of the NGOs in playing a leadership role in the community. NGOs have been bringing together community leaders among Syrians, who played a crucial role in directing their communities into more conciliatory approach. Community leaders have been making suggestions such as urging them for integration and staying out of crime, arguing that the wrongdoings of a few would be blamed on all Syrians. These suggestions have helped refugees to be more sensitive and positive in their behavior. Thus, it is almost impossible to mention any issues of disorder caused by the refugees. In conclusion, disturbance or unrest is not a high possibility in Şanlıurfa.

Low tension does not mean that there are no problems in the city. Almost all Syrians belong to low-income group. It is possible to observe a certain annoyance among the locals, due to the perception of losing jobs to cheap labor provided by poor Syrian workers. Although the increase in rental prices is an issue, it is not as apparent as in

other cities in this study, since the city has always had higher rates.

The growing idea that the Syrian refugees will not go back has also caused some verbal disagreement. The biggest risk for the city is the fact that the number of Syrians exceeds 10% of the total population. In effect, the city does not want more increases in the refugee population. It is believed that decreasing the number by resettling the refugees could be beneficial. Another sour point with the locals is related to the healthcare or lack thereof, and this is a main cause of negative reaction from the public.

It can be said that the biggest issue in Şanlıurfa is security. There is a common belief in the public that there might be some among Syrians who might want to cause instability. Because of its location on the border, this fear has reached critical levels. Şanlıurfa has the longest border with Syria and friendly forces do not exist across the border. There is a feeling of vulnerability towards terrorist attacks because across from Akçakale ISIS is active and across from Suruç, the PYD, an extension of the PKK, has strongholds. The biggest fear of NGOs is the risk of a change in the peaceful acceptance of Syrian refugees because of a terrorist act.

The most critical social issue related to Syrian communities in Şanlıurfa is the second marriages. Due to these marriages, there have been disturbances among local women. Some of the men leave their families to marry Syrian women. As a result, there might be social disturbances due to the harm to the family structure.

In economic terms, the effect of the crisis is limited in Şanlıurfa because of its already limited business connection with Syria. As a disadvantage, it can be said that the investment environment in Şanlıurfa has been negatively affected by the crisis in Syria. Besides, there has been a decrease in the exports from Şanlıurfa due

the crises in Syria and Egypt. However, the importance of exports in the city's overall economy is low, so the decrease in exports does not have much general effect. Actually, many entrepreneurs think that the refugees contribute to the economy instead of harming, because they do the jobs locals are not willing to do. There are not many rich Syrians living in Şanlıurfa, so there has only been 2 million dollars worth of Syrian investments in the industrial district of Şanlıurfa, according to local estimates. These investments are only a fraction of the city's overall economy. Although there is not much contribution in a large scale, Syrians still participate in the economy by opening small shops and other retail centers. Also, the camps contribute to the city economy, because supplies for these camps, which house a refugee population of 80,000 people, are provided by local companies.

c. Kilis

The population in the city center of Kilis is 84,000 and the overall population of the province is around 129,000. By October 2014, the population of registered Syrian refugees reached 98,000 in the city center. NGOs estimate the number of Syrian refugees living outside the camps at around 120,000. In addition to these numbers, there were 15,000 refugees in Öncüpınar refugee camp and 24,000 in Elbeyli refugee camp. The refugees living in the city exceed the local population of Kilis. As a result, Kilis is one of the most affected places by the refugee influx. It can even be said that the people of Kilis feel like they live in a sort of buffer zone between Syria and Turkey.

Because the local population of Kilis is mainly Turkish and the refugees coming to Kilis are mainly of Arab descent, some troubles were observed as a result of the rapid mixing of the city's demography in terms of culture and language. Actually, since Kilis is situated on a main route that leads to both a pilgrimage and commercial

center, there always has been historical tolerance towards foreigners. Being one of the first cities to accept refugees from Syria, Turks approached refugees as generous hosts. They even collected funds for Syrian refugees and some accommodated Syrians in their extra homes. While helping new guests, locals thought that the situation was only temporary. They expected Syrians to either return home or settle in the refugee camps. With the realization of the fact that these Syrians would not be able to go back for a long time or could not be settled in the refugee camps, the general attitude towards Syrians has changed considerably for the negative. Moreover, the uncertainty of the process adds to the already existing negative sentiments towards the Syrians. As a result, most of the aid that was once thriving for Syrians by the local community has started to diminish.

Kilis has also been struggling with the issues caused by its proximity to the border. The local community fears that there might be criminals or escaped convicts among the Syrians who might commit crimes such as kidnapping. They think that in the case of an event like kidnapping they will not be capable of doing anything. So far, there has not been any kidnapping of a local. However, other refugees kidnapped some Syrians for ransom. Therefore, Kilis feels the negative effects of the uncontrolled border between Syria and Turkey in the most apparent way. In addition, locals believe that Kilis has turned into a hinterland and a buffer zone for the Syrian opposition. The fear of provocation and having people from the PKK or ISIS around them is widespread in Kilis. The biggest threat is the fact that the city is vulnerable to mass protests that could occur with little provocation.

The economy of the town has been negatively affected by the refugee influx. First of all, exports, which reached 30 million dollars previously, fell to 10 million before rising again to 20 million dollars. Howev-

er, this is still below what it was before the uprising in Syria. Previously an economy partly based on smuggling existed in Kilis. Before the crisis, families used to cross the Syrian border to fill their cars with gas and other products in order to resell them. An estimated 6,000 families, which means almost 25,000 to 30,000 people, lived on profits from smuggling. The population engaged in these activities totaled almost one third of the city's population. After the crisis, the level of smuggling increased but, consequently, the number of people benefiting from it decreased dramatically. Only a few villages around the border have benefited from smuggling after the crisis. That means 6,000 families in the city have lost their income source. The positive contribution of Syrians to the economy is therefore limited, and only a few refugees have good income. There is only one businessman settled in Kilis who invested and does trade. Thus, the contribution is very marginal. Some Syrians brought money with them but that ran out rapidly.

The population of Kilis mainly consists of Turkmen and is very homogeneous. Thus, Syrians do not worsen an already existing ethnic-sectarian problem. However, with more Syrians now in the city than locals, there is the possibility of ethnic polarization between Syrians and locals, as the local people of Kilis now find themselves in the situation of minority.

Another issue regarding Kilis is that the city is designed to accommodate up to 80,000 people although it is currently inhabited by 200,000. Consequently, the city is burdened in terms of municipality services such as health services, garbage collection and traffic. Also, the city is serving 200,000 with funds necessary for only 80,000 people. The situation in the hospitals does not only cause health problems but also psychological problems because the hospitals in the town resemble war hospitals. For the people in Kilis, it gives them the feeling that they are living in the middle of the Syrian crisis.

Besides all these limitations, street begging, problems with unregistered Syrian vehicles, and security issues cause panic in the city. There are also more serious social problems caused by prostitution, polygamy, and Turkish men marrying Syrian women. These occurrences contradict the traditional conservative structure of the community. Other issues such as unplanned settlements, culture clash and increasing rental prices also exist in Kilis. Therefore, it is possible to say that Kilis is one of the most vulnerable cities observed in our study. There are signs of this vulnerability such as disagreements between Syrians and locals turning into negative reaction towards the Syrian community as a whole. Although the Syrians in the town form the numerical majority, they still carry with them the psychology of a minority and feel the need to organize in order to protect themselves.

Overall, Kilis's citizens feel that they cannot handle more refugees. Thus, community leaders have suggested that if Syrians are to remain for an extended period of time, they must be resettled to other cities in order to share the burden.

d. Hatay

One of the most affected cities is Hatay. The city has not come to know Syrians only after the crisis. The border between Hatay and Syria was practically non-existent before the crisis given the deep cross-border ties. Almost every family in Hatay has or had relatives across the border. As a result, Hatay not only faces economic and social problems because of the Syrian situation but humanitarian concerns, as well.

According to the United Nations data from October 2014, there were 15,504 refugees in five different camps in Hatay region. The official number of Syrians living in the city at the time was around 60,000. However, the number is doubled when the estimated number of unregistered refugees living in Reyhanlı, Antakya and the

towns close to the border are added to this amount.

Hatay has a heterogeneous demography. The city is proud of its heritage. People from different ethnic groups, cultures and religions live together in peace there. Generally, the population of Hatay consists of Turks, Alawite Arabs, Sunni Arabs, Kurds and Christian Arabs. The town's demography means that it is a more sensitive place for Syrian refugees. The biggest fear in Hatay is losing the balance in the population in favor of a certain group. This fear is especially present for Alawites.

At the same time, each group recognizes they will be affected the first and most by the unrest in the city. Some of the divisions created by the presence of the Syrians have already manifested themselves on the streets. Granted, there is broad acknowledgement that the community leaders and city officials are handling the crisis well. After the above-mentioned street manifestations, the idea of furthering peace and togetherness in the city is improving.

Although there were some issues regarding the refugees' arrival, there has not been any widespread reaction or protest apart from the off-shoots of Gezi protests in Hatay. It is important to mention that there was not big unrest even after the terrorist attack in Reyhanlı in May 2013. Even if there were rumors that some refugees left the city because of negative reactions following the attack, the numbers and the current situation in the city does not reflect that. However, there is concern that some reports in local and national news about Hatay are provoking unrest and might cause discomfort in the community. For example, speculative news about Syrians creating problems or about some Syrians not paying their bills in hotels and restaurants perpetuates the dissatisfaction of the locals.

The historical family relationships between Syrians and locals keep the social environment stable and prevent any mass disturbance in the community. Locals maintain that 20% of the Syrians living in city center stay with their relatives, where they also receive emotional and physical support. Still, there are reports that Hatay is like a ticking time bomb. Different groups have the common view that if there is a spark of unrest, this could lead to major problems. The fear of losing the peace is a predominant sentiment around the city. This fear actually prevents many issues from being resolved.

In addition, the economic effect of Syrian crisis on Hatay is more severe than in many other cities. Many citizens in the city mentioned that Hatay has suffered from the crisis more than any other city in Turkey. Every branch of business has expressed the fact that they have suffered from the early stages of the crisis in Syria. It is possible to categorize the economic effects of Syrian crisis on Hatay in four categories:

Direct trade: Hatay's exports to Syria, which amounted to nearly 118 million dollars in 2010, fell to 56 million dollars in 2012. Even if this number is expected to increase in 2014, it does not seem possible for exports to reach pre-war levels.

Transportation/transit crossings: Before 2011, Hatay housed the biggest logistics companies after Istanbul because of the city's trade with Syria. The logistics firms provided countless jobs for the region directly and indirectly. Problems starting after the crisis reached their peak when the border was officially closed on July 20, 2012. Only a few logistics companies went bankrupt, but if a solution is not provided or alternative routes opened, this sector might face dire problems.

Frontier trade/Informal economy: The war economy was initiated in Hatay as it has everywhere, with the advent of the war. In

fact, smuggling has not stopped as some suggest. In reality, only the products and the smugglers have changed with the crisis.

Tourism: The tourism has mostly died out in the city. However, the Syrian refugees mostly spend their money locally, thus it provides a balancing effect for the economy. Also, most of the humanitarian supplies are provided by locals business, so the economy still has some dynamism.

In addition to the sectors mentioned above, banking also took a hard hit after the crisis. It is reported that some Turkish citizens moved their funds elsewhere because of security concerns. Contrary to some other cities, real estate prices have gone down because of the city's security issues. A majority of the refugees in Hatay do not have the funds to make big investments. Some of them participate in the economy by opening small businesses like barbershops or grocery stalls in open markets.

Syrians in Hatay have done well in getting jobs in entry levels. Of course, unregistered labor is still an issue, and there are some groups who are disturbed with Syrians getting jobs in the city. It is believed that people who can find a job in Antakya will stay there even after the crisis. The cultural and linguistic similarities make integration easier for them.

In terms of security and order, the belief that individuals from the Syrian opposition regularly come to Hatay has caused some security concerns among the public. Thus, the security forces increased their regulations and checks. Although there are not many Syrians opposition members in the city, concerns about this have not totally vanished. A lot of people believe that it is impossible to totally block and check the border. Thus, some people come and go across the border in order to fight or work. Even if there is a sense of help or protection for the refugees, there

are some concerns about Syrian fighters in the city.

There have been some judicial cases between Syrians and locals. The number of cases was approximately 200 by June 2014, which is lower than expected considering the city's demographic and cultural structure. One of these cases was a homicide committed by a Syrian against a local. Such cases can spread through rumors and cause disturbance in the city. It is believed that familial relationships help maintain the order in the city. Since the family and relatives offer a kind of protection, crimes such as theft remain low. However, there is a perception that child abuse and domestic violence towards women is very high in Hatay. Also, it is believed that there has been an increase in multiple, informal marriages.

The life standards of Syrians living in Hatay might not be high, but their integration process is better than many other cities. Many of the refugees have found accommodation thanks to their family relationships. In addition, it is evident that the higher population of Arabic speakers in the city has prevented possible language barriers to a great extent. Education is still an issue in the city though the initiatives in this sector have increased.

e. Adana

Adana is less affected by the Syrian crisis but the issue of Syrians has been a major item on the local agenda. According to official numbers, there are around 40,000 Syrian refugees living in Adana. 11,292 of these refugees live in Sarıçam tent city, and the rest live in the city center. According to unofficial numbers, Adana hosts over 50,000 refugees.

The community in Adana is generally cautious and can, at times, be judgmental. Thus, any kind of issue caused by Syrians can easily turn into mass disturbance. Contrarily, there is an atmosphere of sym-

pathy and generosity in Adana. When compared to the other cities, the effects of Syrian on Adana in terms of economy and social life is very limited. However, there are a number of people in Adana who claim that they have been affected from Syrians in a negative manner. The main cause of the complaints is the idea that Syrians are contributing to an already existing unemployment and causing security problems.

The social effect of Syrians in Adana is limited, compared to other cities. There has not been any ethnic-sectarian conflict in Adana as of yet, although there are concerns about it. Especially Alawite Arabs, who are a large group in the city, are cautious and disturbed by the presence of Syrian refugees. Thus, refugees do not settle in Alawite-dominated neighborhoods in the city. Besides the Alewites, there are some who are opposed to Syrians living in the city because of nationalist ideas and tendencies.

Syrians generally live in big groups in neighborhoods with limited opportunities and low-income populations. Even if it has not happened yet, the possibility of more Syrians arriving and creating their own neighborhoods is a matter of contention in the city.

When the economic effect is observed, situations can be encountered where the locals are victims or abusers of the refugee population. The general public opinion is that it is harder to get a job and the wages are lower due to the Syrians in the city. In addition, the firms affirm that some companies create unfair competition by hiring illegal refugees. Upon closer examination, the situation is different than what the public states. The average unemployment rate in the city might be high but there are job opportunities in different basic job sectors. Many people believe that there are some individuals who are used to living on welfare and who are picky about jobs. It is believed that they only use the

Syrian case as an excuse. According to some Syrians, they are simply filling the positions locals do not want to take. Still, it can be said that stronger regulations for Syrians to work in Turkey could help both the public and the employers.

There is not much investment by Syrians in Adana. When direct commerce is examined, the rate of exports, nearly 43 million dollars in 2011, dropped down to 24 million in 2012. After the refugee crisis, exports have picked up and have actually reached higher levels than before the crisis.

In terms of security there are no signs of any serious crimes committed by Syrians. There have been small fights or conflicts, but these are common among the locals, as well. There might be rumors that Syrians cause some tension, but there is no solid evidence of this. Until the middle of 2014, there have only been forty Syrians involved in disturbances. There might be some reaction from the community, but it is only done verbally.

There are instances of child labor. The insufficient education and lack of supervision of children make them vulnerable to such problems. It is possible that children growing up without an education might cause bigger issues in terms of security and order in the city in the future if necessary social and economic opportunities are not provided. In fact, begging in order to survive is already causing some problems in Adana.

When the living conditions of Syrians are examined, it is apparent that the primary issue is accommodation. Syrians living outside the camps are already on their own in meeting their needs, with the exception of health services. Health is, seemingly, the least problematic issue in Adana. Registered refugees are able to go to hospitals free of charge and can get free prescriptions, as well. There have been no

complaints of an under capacity of work, as in other cities.

It is hard to mention positive things about education and shelter. As stated before, refugees might have to work illegally to meet their needs, and they are still living in poverty. Refugees coming with money have already spent their savings. Most Syrians struggle to survive, and multiple families live together in single houses in bad neighborhoods. There is some aid provided by local initiatives and NGOs, but they are not sufficient and not well coordinated. When compared to the demand, the aid provided is insufficient.

It is possible to make the same evaluation in terms of education. The rate of people who need basic education in Adana is very high. According to unofficial numbers from NGOs, there are currently at least 12,500 school-age Syrian children in Adana. With NGOs' initiative, a school is opened which educates around 3,000 students. There are also language issues. It is difficult to find good quality educators in Arabic because Syrian teachers are offered very low salaries.

Another issue related to education is the fact that many Syrian families are reluctant to send their kids to school because of security concerns. It is often mentioned that if the school is far from where the family lives, the family will not want to send their children because of financial burdens and safety concerns. Because of the imperative of earning money, it is particularly hard to encourage families to send their male kids to school.

f. Osmaniye

According to AFAD's statistics from July 2014, 9,051 of the refugees in Osmaniye stayed in Cevdetiye tent city. There are 14,145 refugees living in the city according to official data. However, it is estimated that there are at least 20,000 refugees in Osmaniye as of November 2014. Most of

the refugee population living in Osmaniye are of Turkmen origin while a limited number are of Arab origin.

Since the refugee influx that came to Osmaniye is relatively low, there has been no serious social disturbance in the city. Although there are some verbal complaints, there are no serious issues revolving around the refugees. It can be said that the fact that majority of the refugees are Turkmen is helping to keep the peace. The biggest concern for the public is an increase of refugees from different ethnicities. Another concern, as in other cities, is the increase in unofficial marriages.

Even if the Turkmen refugees provide a positive dimension, there are still complaints from conservative and nationalist groups. The individuals and initiatives that organize and collect aid state that the majority of the donations come from conservative people. However, the willingness to help is decreasing among them. Another factor initiating and perpetuating dissatisfaction is the fact that refugees have a different way of life.

Communication between the refugees and the locals is very limited. The local community believes that the situation is temporary and does not want to consider it a long process. It is frequently stated that if the refugee number increases by 50%, there will be more serious problems in the city.

The economic effect of the Syrians is very limited in Osmaniye. Still, illegal employment of refugees might be an issue. It is estimated that 2-3% of the refugees are wealthy, and the rest belong to low-income groups. Most of the illegal workers can find jobs in construction. According to reports from locals, there are some refugees who cross the border to go work on their fields and who later come back to Turkey. As an economic effect, the rents are increasing. The 250-300 TL increase in the rental prices makes landlords hap-

py, but it upsets the tenants. It is believed that there are problems related to the real estate sector in the city, but there have been some initiatives to remedy this.

In terms of law and order in the city, officially there have not reported many cases involving Syrians; however, there are rumors in the community about Syrians disturbing order. In 2013, there were 24 cases involving Syrians and in 2014 there were only 26 Syrians involved in court cases. Many of these cases were resolved before going to the court. Another issue mentioned in Osmaniye is that there might be some refugees going across the border to fight and then coming back. These cases are considered security problem and cause some distress among the public.

There is no major report about the abuse of women, but many confirm that unofficial marriages are occurring. One of the major issues reported by the public, especially from women, is that marriage with Syrian women is quite common.

When the living conditions of the refugees are analyzed, the fact that Osmaniye is a small city enables humanitarian aid to be more efficient and coordinated. However, accommodation and education are still crucial issues as they are in other cities. 2,000 children living in camps have access to education, while the ones living in the city lack educational opportunities. There is a school that will be opened soon with 12 classrooms that will serve 2,000 children, but this may not be sufficient.

g. Kahramanmaraş

In Kahramanmaraş, there are 17,000 refugees in camps and 40,000 in the city, totaling approximately 57,000 registered refugees. It is estimated that the real number of refugees is around 75,000. The reason for the difference between the numbers is the unregistered refugees living in the rural parts of the province. Kahramanmaraş

has a homogenous population because of its limited domestic immigration. The population is very conservative and inclusive. The reaction to the Syrians is mainly determined by the helpful but easily provoked structure of the community. On the one hand, Kahramanmaraş is the least likely place where a negative reaction towards Syrians may occur. On the other hand, there is the risk that one little incident could turn into a mass disturbance in the city. Mass disturbance may occur not because the city is at risk for this type of event but, rather, because the community can be easily provoked. The one factor that stabilizes the situation is the efficiency of NGOs in keeping the public from moving in a negative direction. In addition, the painful legacy of the 1978 incidents in Maraş has made the public, local authorities and NGOs more responsible and cautious.

After the incidents in July 2014 against a group of Syrians, the city is better now. In fact, these events helped the city decrease tensions afterwards. The reason for the decrease in tensions is the improvement made in answering complaints from the locals. It can be said that the reactions before the incident had multiple reasons. The flow of refugees, who came with a different culture and a different language, caused a reaction from the conservative and closed segments of the community. For example, Square Park in the center of the city has become a place used by Syrians daily. Square Park and other parks are even named Syrian parks because the Syrians are often using them. Moreover, usage of the parks till late hours, the large crowds, the noise and some other behavior, which are not in line with the local culture, have caused a negative verbal attitude towards Syrians. Also, this city, which had little crime and beggars before, has many beggars in the streets. This is one reason for the negative attitude towards Syrians. After the July incident, Syrians are less apparent in city life. They have also devel-

oped more acceptable behaviors that have been adapted to the local culture. Local authorities have also taken precautions to prevent street begging. For these reasons, it can be said that the atmosphere in the city is calmer and a risk of a major disturbance is very low.

The biggest fear of community leaders is the possibility of provocations that seek to trigger disturbance in the city, by capitalizing on domestic or international political developments. For example, reports surfaced that urban myths played a big role in the July incidents. An erroneous piece of news titled "A Syrian killed a police officer" was the spark of the incident. Also, articles such as "Syrians cut open a pregnant woman" caused mass protests. As in Gaziantep, provocations were the main reason for major disturbance. In addition, the cultural layout of the city is open to provocations. For example, during the events of the July, most of the protestors were young people between the ages of 12 and 20 who were easily provoked and acted irrationally. Another worry for locals is that, on the one hand, they are concerned about the fact that they are willing to help Syrians as victims of war but, on the other hand, that they may react if Syrians behave inconsiderately towards the local culture. The perception of Syrians as victims is weakened by crimes, organization against locals, and actions that go against local culture. In contrast to the perception of the local community, involvement in crime is rare in the Syrian community. The real worry is that one criminal act committed by a single Syrian might be used as impetus to act against the entire Syrian community.

Another reason for negative reaction towards Syrians is the economy. Many Syrians have opened their own stores in the city, and often these entrepreneurs do not pay taxes, something that causes unfair competition with local stores. In addition, the increasing numbers of small businesses such as shops and bakeries have affect-

ed other businesses. As a result, this has caused problems with local business owners. Attacks on stores with Arabic signs during the July incidents were a result of this problem. It was speculated that local business owners were the primary instigators of these incidents.

In spite of the reactions from small business owners, big businesses do not show any signs of contention with Syrian refugees. It can even be said that they need and depend on the Syrian work force. The public has made suggestions that Syrians are stealing local jobs, but no real data shows any indication of that. The unemployment in Kahramanmaraş is lower than the national average. The work force is needed to work in factories and in the region's agricultural sector. In addition, there is a new industrial district being built which will need workers. Business people in the city think that Syrians could be a good resource for the new work force, and that their legal issues regarding work permits should be resolved immediately. Consequently, it can be said that Syrians contribute to the city's economy. Another small contribution is that a few Syrians made investment through local businesses. There are two Syrian textile factories, but their contribution to the overall economy is not crucial. These two companies employ only Syrians.

A staggering 150% increase in rental prices, a lack of available housing, and the fact that landlords attempt to get rid of Turkish tenants to rent places to Syrians are common problems in Kahramanmaraş. It can be stated that Syrians cause less issues in terms of security and social problems in Kahramanmaraş than in other cities. There has been no considerable increase in the crime rates either. The city's homogenous demography has played a role in keeping the peace, as well. However, in the long term, an inclusion of an additional 10% Arab population to the city might cause problems. Thus, business sector participants, who are not concerned but,

rather, happy with the existing Syrian work force, still do not want a new wave of Syrians into the city.

h. Mersin

Mersin has experienced domestic immigration because of the Gulf War and the situation in the southeastern region of Turkey. Thus, the refugee flow is not its first experience with foreigners. The increasing population in Mersin might be considered positive factor by some, though there have been complaints about the change in daily life in the city. The primary complaint is the fact that the city's infrastructure remains unchanged even though the population is increasing because of the refugee influx.

Official numbers from November 2014 show that there are 58,800 Syrian refugees living in Mersin. 41,801 of these refugees have either gotten their residence permits or identification or they are on the waiting list. However, it has been repeatedly reported that the actual number of refugees might actually be closer to 200,000. The majority of the refugees are Sunni Arabs, Turkmen or Kurds.

The local population considers Syrians to be a negative factor on the life in the city. Locals also complain that refugees create uncontrolled living environments. It is believed that wealthy Syrians prefer Mersin, so the overall situation in this city is much better than in others. This evaluation has some truth in it since there have been significant investments in the city after the crisis. Nonetheless, the number of these wealthy Syrians is only a small portion of the refugee population when we consider the size of the refugee population in the city. Therefore, it is hard to suggest that things are positive in Mersin. There has been a considerable increase in the already existing malaise about immigration with more and more Syrians entering the city. Most of the interviewees claim that from the social life to traffic, Syrians have

had negative effects on the city. It has been repeatedly stated that Syrians try to live in their own ways in isolated areas, and this sometimes disturbs the locals to some extent. Some interviewees mentioned that Syrian youth spending time together in public areas have caused some concerns among public.

In terms of the city's economy, it can be stated that Mersin turned the Syrian crisis into an opportunity, and the effects of wealthy Syrians in the economy is quite visible. The number of Syrian firms active in Mersin was 25 in 2009 and by 2014 the number reached 279. Additionally, the portion of Syrian firms in Mersin was 6.3% in 2009, and it increased to 31% by 2014.

A positive effect can also be seen in the commerce with Syria. When commercial activities between Syria and Mersin in the last five years are examined, there was a drop in 2010 and 2011 and an increase in 2012 and 2013. Before the crisis, exports from Mersin to Syria totaled 19 million dollars in 2010. The number rose to 75 million dollars in 2013. The increase in exports was 331% in 2013 compared to the previous year. With the increase, exports reached their highest point in the last 5 years. It can be said that exports have continued at this pace during 2014.

The reason for the substantial Syrian investment and increasing export in Mersin is due to the relationships created before the crisis with Latakia and the advertisement campaigns in Latakia before the uprising. It is evident that the merchants who settled in Mersin have continued their trading with their old contacts via Mersin. It has been reported that especially highly needed products such as food and emergency supplies can be sent to Syria from Mersin by using individuals with contacts in Syria. This also gives a boost to the economy.

In spite of the positive effects on the economy, it is hard to see any positive effects

in the public sphere. As in other cities, small and medium-sized businesses in Mersin hire illegal Syrians and give them very low wages. In addition to this, most of the Syrians do not shop in local stores. It has been observed that the positive perceptions related to previous immigration have started to turn into negative ones recently. A decrease of the shopping in local stores by Syrians, coupled with the fact that they are starting to shop in their own stores, might be a reason for the change in attitude. The fact that most of the Syrian businesses are not registered is also problematic for local businesses.

Although suggestions were made that unemployment in Mersin is caused by Syrians, it is impossible to make a valid evaluation of that. It is frequently mentioned that illegal workers not only harm the local economy but also cause problems in the social structure by getting involved in crime and disturbing the peace. When the statistics on law and order were examined, the rates of criminal involvement and criminal disturbance do not seem as high as previously thought, however. Until July 2014, there were 519 Syrians involved in crime in the city. There have also been a

lot of complaints about unregistered Syrian vehicles getting involved in accidents. Citizens claim that these drivers often do not take any responsibility for their actions. It has also been stated that, in contrast to periods before the Syrian crisis, there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of women, drug use, theft, and gang activity at present. It is evident that the locals are concerned about these issues. Another security issue is the belief that several radical groups exist in Mersin. Related to this, lack of sufficient security in the city is also a concern for the public.

When the living conditions of Syrians are investigated, the results seem to be better than in many other Turkish cities. However, there are still problematic issues concerning education, food supplies and accommodation. Humanitarian aid is organized by NGOs, but it is not stable and sufficient. According to local citizens, there are five schools in Mersin serving Syrians. These schools educate 4,484 children and, in addition, nearly 1,000 students attend government schools. Health service provision is not of the highest concern. Registered refugees can get free health service and drug prescriptions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Syrian refugee situation in Turkey has become an integration and security issue with social, economic and political dimensions. As a result, it has been generally accepted that a policy based only on providing the basic needs of the refugees is unsustainable. Upon realization of this, the institutions tasked with administering the issue have been working on this dimension recently. Under AFAD coordination, camps have been set up in way that can be an example for the world. However, the life standards of Syrians living outside the camps need to be reexamined and changes need to be made. The suggestions below may help in the establishment of a policy on social integration of Syrians in Turkey.

1. First of all, the studies on the number of Syrian refugees and those who will remain in Turkey should be conducted in a more realistic manner. The results of such studies can make a better contribution to policies and to the steps that need to be taken. This study shows that many Syrians will remain in Turkey for a long time and some may not go back even if the conflict in Syria is resolved. If these permanent guests are a reality for Turkey, measures that will minimize the negative consequences and maximize the benefits need to be introduced.

2. If we assume that Syrian refugees are permanent, there should be a comprehensive Syrian refugee policy that also includes actions to prevent reaction from local communities. The Syrian refugees issue should be considered as a social integration issue. Accordingly, there should be a holistic policy that includes work force devel-

opment, educational development, accommodation aid, health service restructuring, a betterment of municipality services, and progress in terms of host community understanding.

3. If the integration process can be managed successfully, it can contribute to the diversity and improvement of a new multicultural structure in Turkey. Also strengthening bonds with neighboring countries can help provide a better environment for economic and political cooperation in the future.

Based on this assessment, the non-exhaustive suggestions listed below could be considered in future policies directed toward Syrians:

- *Registration of Syrian refugees:* There is a common perception in the public sphere that Syrian refugees can commit crimes without punishment. For example it was frequently mentioned during interviews that cars with Syrian plates often simply leave the scene when they are involved in accidents and that, consequently, locals are unable to make complaints. Also, there is a belief that Syrians can cross the border and come back when they commit a crime in the cities where they live. These situations create security concerns among people. Therefore, registering Syrian refugees is extremely important for the integration process. Registration has been handled by AFAD and the Police Department. It was noted that a considerable number of Syrians are still not registered. One reason for this is that the registration process started only recently. Additionally, refugees living in villages and

rural areas are not informed about the benefits of registration. Therefore, informational sessions and mobile registration services might be of great use. In addition, a registration process for Syrian vehicles may also prevent negative reactions from locals.

- *Building extra capacity for health and education:* Construction of new hospitals or increasing capacity in existing hospitals can help ease the burden on the existing system. In addition, there is a need for more personnel in every department of the local hospitals. By allowing Syrian doctors to work in the health sector may bear many benefits. For instance, if the Syrian doctors can work in basic health centers located in neighborhoods populated largely by the Syrians, it will both serve those people and ease the burden on the health system.

Education can be the most important part of preventing social exclusion. A lost generation without good education can lead to serious social issues, out of low income of feelings of social exclusion. If the education problem can be resolved, a generation which contributes positively to society and to the economy can emerge. Therefore, the biggest step to turn the Syrian refugee problem into an advantage for both refugees and for Turkey is education. There have been important steps taken regarding university education. The Syrians who have a high school degree or who have attended college have the opportunity to attend Turkish universities free of charge and without entrance exams. Besides this, the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities have been providing scholarships, free accommodation and university education for a number of Syrian students. There are two options for primary and high school students. First, Syrians can get their education in public schools with Turkish students. In this case, students can start their first grade with Turkish

children in mixed groups. Others who start at a higher-level can get a year of preparatory class to learn Turkish. The advantage of this particular approach is that Syrian children can learn Turkish and schooling can commence sooner. However, the approach entails a 15% extra burden in student populations on public school systems in the area. With the developments made in Turkey in recent years on educational quality, the average class size has dropped to 29 students per classroom. However, if Syrians students start attending school, the class sizes will considerably increase. The increase might cause negative reactions from the local communities. Therefore, new schools have to be built and new teachers have to be hired at the government's expense. Another risk is the discrimination between Syrian and Turkish children. Yet another risk is that the project might increase the possibility that more families decide to stay longer in Turkey. Therefore, an option might be the creation of a special system for Syrian children. In that case, there would be challenges related to providing a Turkish education in Syrian curriculum and training Arab teachers. In addition, Turkish and Syrian curricula should be modified according to the needs of Syrian students.

- *Work Permits:* Providing work permits for refugees is a common demand of businesses in every city. The business sector suggests that a 10% quota should be given to businesses in order to hire refugee workers so that negative reactions from the community can be prevented. Especially in Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş and Şanlıurfa there is a need for a strong workforce. Providing work permits for refugees while enabling them to keep their foreign status can eliminate unfair competition and problems derived from it. In addition, unfair competition between Turkish and Syrians workers can be eliminated. Currently, there is unfair competition between Syrian and Turkish workers

because employers do not pay taxes on Syrian positions. The plan can benefit the government in terms of ending tax losses, as well. In addition, work permits can help the integration process. Preventing unregistered businesses opened by Syrians can also ease tensions between Syrians and Turks. (As of the writing of this report, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Work and Social Security have been working a regulation to allow for work permit.)

- *Giving more authority to local governments and enabling coordination between local governments and provincial authorities:* One of the biggest challenges in the struggle with the Syrian refugee crisis is the lack of coordination between central and local authorities. Actually, local governments have better information about the issue. However, for different reasons, they are unwilling to take a risk by acting without directives from the central government. It could be beneficial to give more authority to the local governments in handling these kinds of issues. NGOs also have a better understanding of both the refugee situation and local communities. An action plan to target each city's problems considering their unique environments with the partnership of NGOs can be more effective in solving various issues. Also, the burden of multi-faceted issue of refugees should be distributed to different government institutions. The establishment of the Directorate General of Migration Management under the Ministry of Interior Affairs and Coordinator Governorship dealing with the Syrians is a helpful step.
- *Building more capacity and providing extra budget for municipalities:* The cities with dense refugee populations have a 10% extra budgetary burden on their municipal services. Therefore, there is a need for an infrastructure and a workforce to build it. The budget is given to the cities according to their populations, but the populations have increased critically with the refugee influx of recent years. Thus, a rearrangement of city budgets should be considered. The problem here is that any extra budget for cities with refugees can mean cuts for other cities, which might create unexpected results.
- *Bring together groups of Syrian community leaders:* Many of the problems with Syrian refugees are due to a difference in culture and life style. Thus, directing Syrians towards adapting to local culture is of great importance. Local authorities and NGOs are doing a good job directing the Turkish population; however, directing the refugees is still an issue. If a group of community leaders can be chosen among Syrian refugees it might help overcome some issues. There is a current practice by AFAD that might be an example for this. In the camps, there have been some mechanisms created so that Syrians can become involved in addressing problems and finding solutions. Similar practices developed from such experiences can be used to address the issues of Syrians living outside the camps and help ease tension in society.
- *Booklets and Webpages in Arabic:* Syrians are experiencing problems with social relationships, in contacting government institutions, with reaching basic services. Opening up web pages in Arabic, publishing informative handouts or creating awareness programs through NGOs can help overcome these issues. These types of programs can help refugees learn about where, when and how to apply for something that can help them better integrate into local culture. This could also enable them to learn what to be careful about in certain contexts.
- *Opening up new living areas:* It is necessary to build new areas for accommodation because increasing rents, higher real estate prices, and the struggle to find accommodation are serious concerns both for refugees and locals.

- *International aid:* If we consider the refugees' desire for migration to other countries from Turkey, the crisis can be seen as an international issue. Especially UNHCR, other international organizations and western countries have an obligation to help with the Syrian refugee crisis. The countries can do more by not only providing basic aid but by developing educational and health projects.
- *Increasing the border controls:* Another reaction from the public is the threat of terrorist attacks. Because of uncontrolled crossings, locals have doubts about the identities of Syrians. Increasing work on the control of the borders and on the registration process can decrease worries about attacks in the communities.
- *Enhancing public receptivity of the Syrians in Turkey:* People living in the bordering cities of Turkey should be reassured. Authorities should explain to locals that Syrians might stay for a long period of time. There should be some explanation about living with Syrians and the reasons why Syrians are in Turkey. NGOs can play an important role in this process because they have a considerable effect on the communities. NGOs furthered this process by nurturing host and guest relationships. Now, they can help with the integration process. Also, the local media is very effective and can play a role in shaping public opinion and awareness.
- *Ameliorating the Syrian stereotype:* Many Syrians come from rural areas, so the perception of a Syrian is negative in the community. Also, the images of Syrian beggars on the street have caused a negative stereotype that might harm integration. To change these perceptions, some socio-cultural events can be organized by showing aspects of different cultures and life styles to the community. Studies showing the social and cultural contributions of Syrians can also be shared with the public.
- *Distributing the burden of refugee populations in border cities:* Another reaction to the Syrian refugees is the density of the refugee population in certain cities. Cities with limited resources are forced to handle the socio-economic effects of the refugee crisis. Therefore, a balancing redistribution of refugees can have a considerable effect on improving the refugee crisis.
- *Persuading the skilled Syrian labor force to stay in Turkey:* It is critical that an economic elite may emerge from within the Syrians community which will facilitate the solution of integration problems. Gaziantep is a striking example for that. This city with its dense population of refugees has solved challenges of social integration by integrating the Syrians into administration of their problems and by directing them towards production. Providing opportunities to Syrian businessmen is very important, as well. Such an approach can contribute to both the integration process and the resolution of economic challenges. Another issue is that skilled Syrian labor moves to the western countries while unskilled labor and low-income groups stay in Turkey. There are many doctors, academics, teachers, lawyers and engineers among the refugees. These people are unable to do their jobs in Turkey. Most of them either leave the country or work in entry-level jobs. These people can be used to create a group of community leaders among the Syrians. Additionally by providing them with work permits, they can work in Turkey and meet the demand for skilled labor. Lastly, Syrians might be allowed to join labor force, which will facilitate the solution of the issues stemming from unemployment or cooperation with the government.
- *Approaching the refugee crisis independent of the political arguments:* Discussions about Syrians are mainly politically charged. People who are responsible for bringing attention to the refugee

issue might come under different accusations due to political bickering. Also, some people who have never met a refugee can be against Syrian refugees just because of the influence of politics. The reaction of Turkish people towards Syrian refugees should be examined independently and objectively without any political bias. Solutions should be offered based on objective evaluations. Also, reducing the social events only to provocations and ignoring some root causes can lead to bigger problems in the future. The provocation and manipulation factor is evident in some social reactions, but the fact that the environment is very vulnerable to provocations should not be ignored. Protests are usually organized by limited groups of people; however, the whole city is affected by them. Therefore, events should be investigated in detail without being simply looked over.

- *Creating a database on changes in the demographics of Syrians and possible immigration movements:* It is important to have information on the demographics of Syrians, immigration back to Syria or other countries and their social, educational and health developments. If this information can be collected, it can be useful to tackle future problems. In this regard, plans should be prepared according to different possible scenarios for mid-term (5-7 years) and for the long term (20-25 years). Having such a database on Syrians can help to develop plans by using objective information.
- *Preventing begging:* With the influx of Syrian refugees into Turkish cities, begging has dramatically increased. The increase has caused security concerns beyond simple disturbances. The number of Syrian beggars on the streets, in traffic and in parks has caused worries that theft, burglary, pick pocketing and robberies could happen at any time. Also, the issue of begging negatively affects the perception of Syrian people in the eyes of their Turkish neighbors. Precautions by the local authorities could be very effective in this case. For example, in Kahramanmaraş, the authorities picked up beggars after the July protests and took them to refugee camps. These actions helped ease tension in the city.
- *Preventing the abuse of women and children:* The negative effects in the family and the abuse of women and children have played a great role in creating a negative perception towards Syrians in the Turkish community. This type of abuse is also a serious problem for the Syrian community. Awareness activities and suggestions from community leaders to denounce this kind of abuse, along with formation of response teams for issues related to abuse, can prevent many cases from occurring. In addition, swift action against abusers by local authorities and judicial authorities can prevent offenders from repeating their actions. Opening up shelters for Syrian women or allowing them to use existing shelters can be a temporary but effective solution to this acute problem.
- *Providing effective solutions for issues of public order:* In spite of the high number of refugees, there has not been a serious public order issue caused by members of the Syrian community. The involvement rate of Syrians in criminal activities is very low. Actually, in most of the cases, Syrians are the victims in lawsuits. In spite of the problems, there is a self-restraining mechanism among the refugees and the locals in order to keep the peace. Still, it is important to mention that a risk of disturbance could occur in public order. Some groups feel the need to replace the authorities when they think that there are not enough precautions in terms of order and security. Therefore, the judicial system and security forces should be efficient in solving and resolving problems between locals and refugees. The authorities must do this in a fair and judicial manner by act-

- ing as fair referees in order to equally protect the rights of both sides.
- *Creating social areas for refugees:* Because of cultural and linguistic differences, Syrians cannot become involved in many cultural activities. Facilitating the participation of Syrian women young, and into about social activities could prevent many social problems. During the integration process, creating a positive social atmosphere in which refugees can benefit from many types of social services can be a great help. One good example is in Şanlıurfa where a mosque assigned to the refugees will be built which has lectures in Arabic.
 - *Building overall capacity for Syrian refugees:* Building a better capacity platform to serve Syrians can help in multiple ways. If programs can be geared towards this goal, creating a group of community leaders, ameliorating the Syrian stereotype and integrating refugees into social and economic life will be easier to realize. The international community is also reconsidering their insufficient support and has decided to provide more aid. Directing international aid towards improving capacity for Syrian communities is a crucial step, as well.

APPENDIX-1: Institutions Interviewed (Chronological Order)

- Adana Chamber of Industry
- Adana Chamber of Commerce
- Adana AK Party (political party) Provincial Headquarters
- Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergence Management Presidency (AFAD) in Adana
- Adana ADYAR (Adana Humanitarian Relief Foundation)
- Governorship of Adana
- Adana Çukurova Development Agency
- Çukurova University in Adana
- Osmaniye AFAD
- Osmaniye IHH (Humanitarian Relief Foundation)
- Osmaniye Doğaka Development Agency
- Antakya Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Hatay Altinozu Municipality
- Antakya Newspaper
- Kilis Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Gaziantep Mazlum-Der (NGO)
- Gaziantep IHH
- Gaziantep Chamber of Industry
- Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce
- Gaziantep Bülbülzade Foundation (NGO)
- Gaziantep Governorship Coordinator
- Gaziantep Silk Road Development Agency
- Gaziantep Mega TV (Local TV Broadcaster)
- Municipality of Şanlıurfa
- Şanlıurfa Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Şanlıurfa NGOs' Humanitarian Relief Platform
- Şanlıurfa IHH
- Şanlıurfa Karacadağ Development Agency
- Şanlıurfa Arap-Der (NGO)
- Şanlıurfa Kanal Urfa (Local TV Broadcaster)
- Syrian NGO RMTeam
- Mersin Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Mersin Kanal 33 TV (Local TV Broadcaster)
- Mersin IHH Branch
- Mersin Chamber of Artist and Artisans
- Kahramanmaraş IHH
- Kahramanmaraş Manşet Gazetesi (Newspaper)
- Kahramanmaraş Gündem Gazetesi (Newspaper)
- Kahramanmaraş Chamber of Commerce and Industry

uluslararası siyaset dergisi

Ortadoğu

Analiz

Arap Baharı'ndan Geriye Ne Kaldı?

ARAP BAHARI
SONRASI
JEOPOLİTİK, İŞİD
VE TÜRKİYE

KOBANİ,
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Süleyman Nazif Sokak No: 12-B Çankaya / Ankara
Tel: 0 (312) 430 26 09 Fax: 0 (312) 430 39 48
www.orsam.org.tr, orsam@orsam.org.tr