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Araştırma Makalesi * Research Article

The Syrian Problem and Social Integration Policies

Suriye Sorunu ve Toplumsal Entegrasyon Politikaları

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Abstract: The Syrian civil war began in March 2011 with demonstrations and protests inspired by the Arab revolutions, leading many Syrians to flee their homeland. Initially, they sought refuge in neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, but eventually spread to various parts of the world, particularly Europe. In response to the influx of Syrians fleeing the conflict, Turkey entered a new phase in its refugee policies. Initially, Turkey adopted a positive narrative centered on "hospitality" and "charity," viewing Syrians as temporary residents. However, as the number of refugees continued to increase, Turkey forced to reevaluate both the permanence of the Syrian presence and related policies. At the time, the problem was assumed to be temporary, and even Syrians were considered "guests." However, things did not go as planned, and this time, discussions arose in society about whether Syrians should settle. This study addresses the integration problems of Syrians under temporary protection status who came Turkey after the Syrian civil war, and offers solutions. However, how Syrians who were born and raised in Turkey or who are now almost entirely settled in Turkey will return to their country or how they will adapt when they return is another research topic.

Keywords: Syria, Türkiye, migration, refugee, integration.

Öz: Suriye iç savaşı, Arap devrimlerinden esinlenen gösteriler ve protestolarla Mart 2011'de başlamış ve birçok Suriyelinin anavatanlarından kaçmasına yol açmıştır. Başlangıçta Türkiye, Lübnan ve Ürdün gibi komşu ülkelere sığınmışlardır, ancak sonunda dünyanın çeşitli yerlerine, özellikle Avrupa'ya yayıldılar. Çatışmadan kaçan Suriyelilerin akınına yanıt olarak Türkiye, mülteci politikalarıyla ilgili yeni bir aşamaya girdi. Türkiye, başlangıçta Suriyelileri geçici ikamet edenler olarak görerek "misafirperverlik" ve "hayırseverlik" merkezli olumlu bir anlatı benimsedi. Ancak mülteci sayısı artmaya devam ettikçe Türkiye, hem Suriye varlığının kalıcılığını hem de ilişkili politikaları yeniden değerlendirmek zorunda kaldı. O zamanlar, sorunun geçici olduğu varsayıldı ve hatta Suriyeliler bile "misafir" olarak kabul edilmiştir. Ancak işler planlandığı gibi gitmedi ve bu sefer toplumda Suriyelilerin yerleşik olup olmayacağı konusunda tartışmalar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çalışmada, Suriye iç savaşından sonra Türkiye'ye gelen geçici koruma statüsündeki Suriyelilerin uyum sorunları ele alınmış ve çözüm önerileri sunulmuştur. Ancak, Türkiye'de doğup büyüyen veya şu anda neredeyse tamamen Türkiye'ye yerleşmiş olan Suriyelilerin ülkelerine nasıl dönecekleri veya döndüklerinde nasıl uyum sağlayabilecekleri başka bir araştırma konusudur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suriye, Türkiye, göç, mülteci, entegrasyon.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, individual or mass migrations have always occurred. However, migrations have never been as intense as the migrations that began in the 20th century and continue today, and have not been as complex in terms of their causes and consequences as they are today. According to the World Bank, the number of migrants, which was approximately 94 million in 1980, exceeded 243 million in 2015. There are many reasons for this tremendous increase in the number of migrants, such as economic, political, environmental, etc. In particular, developments in transportation technologies, the widespread use of the internet, the belief that people from different geographies can continue their lives in better economic conditions in other places, or the desire to go to places where they can feel free, serve as catalysts for the increase in migration.

While it is known that in traditional societies, people mostly lived in the place where they were born and were more distant from migration, migration has become a common trend in today's societies. Moreover, in modern times, migration can often go beyond a trend and become a necessity. Today, individuals or groups are often forcibly displaced against their will and are forced to leave their relatives, homes, and memories behind to live in an unknown country in order to save their lives.

According to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2021, there are over 79.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, 26 million of whom are refugees. An estimated 30-34 million of the 79.5 million forcibly displaced people are children under the age of 18. The fact that there are very few countries that will open their doors to people who are forcibly displaced, and that even if they find a country, it is uncertain how long they will stay in the places they are forced to migrate to, also makes it necessary for forcibly displaced people to somehow hold on to their place of migration.

Whether forcibly displaced or voluntary, everyone who migrates is a stranger to the place they go to, and therefore experiences some anxiety, while the host society may see the presence of the immigrants as a threat. International migrations in particular increase ethnic, racial and cultural diversity (Uğur Göksel, 2019), and may increase the concerns of the host society. Integration policies are needed to eliminate concerns, enable societies to live in harmony with each other, prevent the formation of parallel societies within the country, and pave the way for living together in harmony. Otherwise, migration will be the starting point of a process that will last for many years and be pregnant with potential dangers that will increase in intensity with each passing year.

Among the countries that are likely to be exposed to the potential dangers mentioned is Turkey. An average of 3.7 million Syrians live in Turkey and there are over 5 million immigrants (Directorate of Migration Management, 2021). Since the beginning of the civil war in Syria in 2011, Turkey has been hosting a large number of Syrians, who are defined as refugees in the international literature but are under "temporary protection status" in Turkey. In Turkey, which has become the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world in a very short period of time, Syrians were initially seen as guests and a humanitarian aid policy was implemented for the guests within the scope of an emergency approach for a long time, assuming that the civil war in Syria would end soon (Özçürümez and İçduygu, 2020). In other words, Turkey both saw Syrians as guests and sought temporary solutions to the needs of these temporary guests, considering that the Syrians who came through forced migration were in their country for a short time and that their humanitarian needs needed to be met during this period. However, the fact that things in Syria did not go as Turkey expected, the civil war became more complicated with the involvement of different actors, and the forced mass migrations increased in the following years caused the Turkish state to accept that the Syrians would not return in the near future. In this context, various legal regulations were implemented in Turkey, the number of temporary shelters was reduced with the request of the Syrians in order to prevent increasing costs, and integration-based policies began to be adopted. Özçürümez and İçduygu call this process a transition from a life support-oriented approach to an interactive social integration and governance model (2020). In the life support-oriented approach model mentioned here, based on the assumption that Syrians are temporary guests, emphasis is placed on meeting their basic needs urgently. However, with the extension of the stay of Syrians who came to Turkey through forced migration and the questioning of the concept of guest hood, the transition to a social integration model encompassing integration policies began in 2016.

In order to transition to a social integration model, Turkey has decided to prepare an Integration Strategy Document and National Action Plan covering the years 2018-2023 by ensuring the participation of all relevant institutions under the coordination of the General Directorate of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior. This document first determined 6 thematic areas under the umbrella of integration, namely social integration, information, education, health, labor market and social support (social services and aid) as strategic priorities and set forth strategic objectives in these areas. With this document, it is understood that Turkey intends to accelerate the integration processes of Syrians and complete social integration as quickly and healthily as possible. However, it should not be forgotten that integration is a multidimensional and painful process. It is obvious that Turkey, which has hosted an unprecedented number of refugees in world history, will encounter some problems in implementing its integration policies, especially in a very short period of time.

The integration of current immigrants is always an issue that should be evaluated on social, cultural, political, economic, religious, historical and geographical grounds; it is important for policy makers, researchers, service providers and immigrant groups. Integration is often thought of as the adaptation of the immigrant to the country and its citizens because international migration policies have focused on the adaptation of immigrants and refugees to the country they migrate to. However, integration processes have a multidimensional nature that should be addressed from the perspective of the host and immigrants. For this reason, if integration is addressed as a process and mutual responsibilities are defined, a successful policy can be produced. For this, the healthy completion of integration processes, the active participation of individuals in the process, and the development of integration, acceptance and integration policies based on Turkey's current realities are among the requirements. In this study, the integration problems of Syrians under temporary protection status who came to Turkey after the Syrian civil war were discussed and solution suggestions were presented.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Syrians in Turkey and the Migration Phenomenon

The term international migration is defined in the Dictionary of Migration Terms published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as "the displacement of a person or group of people across an international border or within a state". Accordingly, population movements that involve the displacement of individuals can be called migration. However, this displacement can become a multidimensional problem, depending on the rate of migration, both in terms of the migrant and the place and society to which they migrate. Especially if this migration process is international migration, ethnic and cultural reasons also contribute to the conflict that arises here. In this respect, international migration is turning into a multifaceted phenomenon that concerns the societies and governments of the two countries and even international relations, is not unilateral, and includes cultural, social, security and economic dimensions (Karakaya, 2020; Erbaş and Türker, 2019).

With the Arab Spring that started in Tunisia in December 2010, the protests spread to the Middle East and North Africa and were also seen in Syria, as a result of which the Bashar Assad regime responded violently to the local people and many people lost their lives. Thus, in this process that turned into a civil war, many people living in Syria were forced to leave their country and migrate to other countries (IHH, 2022).

Mass migration from Syria to Turkey has been taking place since 2011. According to the statistics of the Presidency of Migration Management, as of December 31, 2022, the number of Syrian migrants under temporary protection status in Turkey is 3 million 535 thousand 898, and the city with the highest number of Syrian migrants is Istanbul, with 543 thousand 973 people (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023). Despite these high numbers, Turkey has followed an open door policy, has not set any criteria for accepting migrants, and has allocated large amounts of resources for migrants (Günay et al., 2017).

During the process of reaching these high numbers, the discussions have also changed direction and at the point reached, Turkey has found itself in a position where, in terms of migration policies, it is necessary to take measures to provide better settlement and integration opportunities for migrants in the current situation rather than to stop the increasing flow of migrants or to reverse this migration

movement (İçduygu and Şimşek, 2016). Because, due to the increasing number of migrants, many problems have emerged in the country, and migrants are forced to leave their countries due to concerns such as persecution and fear of death, and the problems they face in the country they migrate to make their commitment to life and integration processes difficult.

A LOOK AT THE INTEGRATION DEBATE

Today, the relationship that refugees and immigrants establish with the society they live in is expressed as a dynamic and non-linear process in which both sides change (Kaya, 2022; Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016; Yüksek, et al., 2022). However, as Deniz Yüksek and Hatice Kurtuluş, Uğur Tekin and Esra Kaya Erdoğan state in their research on immigrant neighborhoods in Turkey (2023), it is quite difficult to conceptually apply this multi-dimensional integration process that changes both sides. However, some studies show that unilateral policies based on assimilation continue with their current practices (Favell, 2019; Yüksek, et al., 2022). In addition, as Schinkel (2018) stated, in some theoretical discussions on integration, the “host society” is accepted as a problem-free, single/monolithic structure, while immigrants and ethnic groups are highlighted as “problematic” population groups. In this context, integration is reduced to the adaptation of immigrant individuals to the existing host society, not the relationship and harmony of the parts of the whole, while the social and cultural differences and existing structural inequalities of the host society can be ignored (Dahinden, 2016; Yüksek, et al., 2022). Within these differences, the class dimension of integration also escapes attention. Because in integration discussions, it is seen that the adaptation of poor or unemployed immigrants to the majority society is examined rather than the adaptation of immigrants from the middle or upper classes to the majority society (Kaya, 2022; Schinkel, 2018).

In short, integration, which causes mutual transformation of the whole along with themselves, is not a static concept, but a phenomenon whose meaning and means of access are constantly evolving with different immigrant practices and strategies, and even contradictory policies and practices, depending on the historical-political-social-cultural-legal context in which it is located (Şimşek, 2019; Daniş & Dikmen 2022, Unutulmaz 2022). It is possible to say that within a dynamic, multidimensional and complex process of acceptance and participation, integration policies today oscillate between integrative policies that provide access to rights and exclusionary policies focused on temporariness, return and repatriation. As a result, the concept of integration in its simplest form can be expressed as the adaptation of immigrants to different components of the social structure of the country of origin (such as legal status, education, health, housing, employment, cultural life) in various ways (Daniş & Dikmen, 2022)

At the EU level, it is seen that harmonization policies are developed around the principle framework drawn for integration, mostly in line with the needs determined at the level of municipalities and regions. Therefore, it is possible to say that integration in the EU has developed as a multi-layered governance from bottom to top, not from top to bottom (Scholten & Penninx, 2016; Kurtuluş, et al., 2022; Kaya Erdoğan, et al., 2022). In other words, increasingly localized integration policies have come to the fore in the EU (e.g. Zapata-Barrero, Caponio & Scholten, 2017; Kurtuluş, et al., 2022); thus, integration policies that ensure “cultural and social diversity” at the regional or local level and observe the principle of “subsidiarity” have been developed (Kurtuluş, et al., 2022; Yüksek, et al., 2023).

However, the war between Ukraine and Russia that started in February 2022 has revealed the “selective solidarity” displayed by Europe in policy-making. Indeed, the European Commission has put into effect the Temporary Protection Directive¹ and various cohesion funds in order to provide rapid and effective assistance to Ukrainian refugees (Karaçay, 2023). In short, unlike the externalization policies implemented for the mass migration movements that developed after the Arab Spring, the EU has taken special measures to meet the early integration needs of those coming from Ukraine (Karaçay, 2023); civil society, professional organizations, volunteers and various other actors have also taken action to support the new arrivals in this process. Compared to previous movements of people towards

¹ This directive was first implemented during the Bosnian War. Externalization policies aimed at keeping migrants and refugees in third countries were implemented for the large-scale mass migration movements that developed after the Arab Spring and the Syrian civil war, and the temporary protection directive was forgotten on the shelf (Karaçay, 2023). The EC also accepted the Adaptation Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) bill.

the EU, the solidarity and assistance limited to Ukrainians has strikingly demonstrated the selective solidarity that has emerged on the part of the EU (Carera & Ineli-Ciger, 2023). Solidarity policies offered only to certain groups show that states prefer exclusionary practices shaped around security and control rather than the “integration,” “voluntary repatriation,” and “resettlement to a third country” options of the international refugee regime. Indeed, only “selected” groups have been able to access integration and resettlement options, and fundamental rights have become more inaccessible for those outside these groups. In short, the international refugee regime has transformed into a structure that produces solidarity and policies only for the “selected,” while introducing exclusionary practices focused on temporariness and return for others. In this context, when we look at Syrians in Turkey, we see that their “permanent temporariness” has become permanent with their “temporary protection status” (İçduygu ve Demiryontar, 2022; Osserian 2020; Kirişçi & Yıldız, 2023). As Ahmet İçduygu and Birce Demiryontar (2022) and Kemal Kirişçi and Ayselin Yıldız (2023) argue in their studies, the state of permanent temporality has made it possible for states to easily instrumentalize policies towards refugees and even implement exclusionary policies. The following section will focus on three periods that examine how the permanent temporality of Syrians in Turkey has been perpetuated by integration policies.

POLICIES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF SYRIANS

When both migration literature is examined and migration practices are followed, it will be seen very clearly that there is permanence in the nature of migration. This is valid for both intra-national and trans-national (international) migrations. The permanence of migrants can partially or completely change the ethnic, religious, cultural, social, political and economic structures of the settlements they migrate to, as mentioned before. This situation can be perceived as a threat especially for the host society. On the other hand, a threat perception may also occur for migrant groups who think that the dominant host society will impose or impose on them many elements from their lifestyle to their political views. As a result, a polarized and divided society that views each other as others, approaches each other with suspicion may emerge. The way to eliminate all these threats is through having effective integration policies. Perhaps the most distinguishing aspect of the 21st century from previous centuries is that the borders of nation-states have become enormously blurred. Although formal borders are preserved, capital and human mobility between countries has increased tremendously; there has been a state of economic, political and demographic intertwining. In this process, which can also be called globalization, thanks to the developments in transportation and communication technologies, migration from any part of the world to another has become easier and cheaper than before. Moreover, thanks to these technological developments, different societies have been able to access information about each other's cultures, economies, political and social structures, etc. more quickly and have become more open to being influenced by each other. This process of interaction needs to be supported by various policies, especially within the scope of international migration. This process, which could lead to major social conflicts if it happened on its own, can transform differences into social harmony thanks to integration policies (Çiçek, 2020).

Of course, transforming differences from a potential threat that could lead to conflict into social harmony is not as easy as it is theoretically stated. In fact, this situation is often nothing more than an ideal that is difficult to achieve. Especially for those who have to flee from civil war and leave everything behind to live in a new country for an indefinite period of time, living in harmony with the new society is a process that is fraught with great difficulties. In addition to the economic, political, social and cultural difficulties that make this process difficult, the fact that a very large mass migration is taking place, especially in the case of Syrians, and moreover, the fact that those who are subject to migration have gone through a traumatic process (and this process continues) are important obstacles to integration.

When studies on migration and integration and successful country examples are examined, it is seen that there are four main motivations behind the successes in question. These countries mostly focus on examples such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand or Germany.

The first of the four basic motivations that ensure successful migration management and integration processes in these countries is that a significant portion of these countries already need immigrants and they make announcements every year to attract a certain number of qualified

immigrants to their countries. In other words, these countries need labor. Secondly, the countries in question accept immigrants who they will accept into their countries if they have various skills. For example, Canada's immigration policy is based on a scoring system that "gives points to highly qualified foreigners for their education and work experience, and privileges them and accepts those who earn high scores" (Uğur Göksel, 2019). Countries such as Australia and New Zealand, just like Canada, accept people with a certain level of language skills, business skills appropriate to the country's needs and certain capital as immigrants to their countries; they ask them to document that they do not have psychological or health problems and do not accept people with criminal pasts. Therefore, thirdly, immigration policies in these countries are created according to the interests of the country, and importance is given to accepting immigrants in appropriate numbers and qualities. In other words, the most important criteria for accepting immigrants are not humanitarian concerns. That is why there are only symbolic numbers of Syrian refugees in such countries (except for Germany). Fourth, almost all of the countries accepting immigrants are economically developed, have high per capita national income and low unemployment rates. These four motives are the common characteristics of countries that successfully carry out the integration process, achieve social harmony to a large extent and base themselves on multiculturalism policies.

In Turkey, none of the four criteria mentioned are fully present. Before the Syrian civil war, Turkey did not need unqualified labor from different parts of the world. Moreover, the Syrians who came to Turkey were not selectively admitted to the country by the Turkish state; everyone who was concerned about their safety was welcomed and a humanitarian stance was displayed in this respect. In addition, Turkey experienced a very high number of people migrating in a very short time. It should not be forgotten that most of those migrating had traumatic cases. In a field study conducted in Istanbul in 2015, Şirin and Rogers Şirin revealed that 79% of Syrian children had witnessed someone in their family being injured or killed. One in three Syrian refugees suffer from mental health problems, and depression and anxiety rates are at least three times higher among refugees than in the general population. "According to a UNHCR report on the mental health problems of Syrian refugees, Syrian adolescents choose to withdraw as a coping mechanism for the trauma they have experienced. Other frequently used coping methods are thinking about the (old) good times in Syria, reading the Quran, listening to music and crying" (Uğur Göksel, 2019). Therefore, it is inappropriate to expect Syrians who have experienced a great trauma to easily integrate into Turkish society or to compare Syrians with immigrants in countries such as Canada. It should not be forgotten that there are many obstacles to the integration of Syrians in Turkey. Despite this, Turkey is trying to provide Syrians with services such as health, education, access to the labor market, social assistance, translation and similar services, as stated in the temporary protection regulation, and has recently been focusing on moves to facilitate the integration of Syrians. These efforts can be considered as a clue that Turkey is also convinced about the permanence of Syrians.

As of 2021, more than 90% of those who came to Turkey through forced migration reside in cities, and this can cause problems for both the individuals in question and the local population (Memişoğlu, 2018). In order to eliminate tensions that arise from time to time, to take precautions in advance for potential conflicts, and to live together in peace and happiness, it is very important to ensure that those who have come to Turkey through forced migration live in harmony with the local population (Özçürümez and İcduygu, 2020). The way to achieve this is to have effective integration policies. In this sense, Turkey's integration policies towards Syrians can be explained in general under the headings given below.

Access to Healthcare

It is essential that Syrians have the opportunity to benefit from various health services so that they can continue their existence in temporary accommodation centers or outside of accommodation centers in cities, districts, towns or villages where they live together with Turkish citizens, and not threaten their own health or the health of the general public. When we consider that a large portion of Syrians who fled the civil war in very difficult conditions and took refuge in Turkey continue their lives under adverse economic conditions, it becomes clear how important free access to health services is. With an understanding that prioritizes both public health and human values, the Turkish state has paved the way for Syrians to access health services with Article 27 of the Temporary Protection Regulation.

However, it is not possible to say that free access to health services has been provided to all Syrians since the first day they arrived. This has been realized with the extension of the Syrians' permanence and the Temporary Protection Regulation.

Turkey initially based its policies regarding those who had to migrate from Syria and seek refuge in Turkey on the assumption that the Syrian civil war would end soon. However, the prolongation of the civil war and the ongoing migration of many Syrians who exceeded the capacity of temporary shelter centers led to an understanding of the permanence of Syrians and, consequently, to changes in policies towards them. For example, initially (from 2011 to the beginning of 2014) there was a condition for Syrians to have free access to healthcare services, to stay in temporary shelter centers. In other words, in order for Syrians to benefit from healthcare services free of charge, the condition was that they reside in camps. Therefore, in the first period, Syrians' access to healthcare services was limited to a very limited area (only on condition that they reside in camps). However, when there was not enough space in the camps and it was understood that the duration of the migration (and therefore its permanence) would be prolonged, free healthcare services became valid for Syrians outside temporary shelter centers (camps). However, in this second stage, there was a condition that Syrians residing outside temporary shelter centers should be in the provinces of the region. In the third stage, the criteria for Syrians to access health services were removed and all Syrians were granted this right regardless of where they resided. This right was regulated by the Temporary Protection Regulation published in the Official Gazette dated 22.10.2014 and numbered 29153. In addition, a directive on the Principles Regarding Health Services to be Provided to Those Under Temporary Protection was prepared in 2015 in order to determine the voluntary health services of health institutions and organizations that will provide health services to those under temporary protection based on the Temporary Protection Regulation and the working principles of foundations or associations that provide this service (Şen, 2020). However, later on, in order to be able to register Syrians, they were asked to obtain a temporary protection identity document and register in the cities they were in in order to benefit from free health services. Every Syrian will be able to benefit from health services free of charge in the province where they are registered, but if they go to other cities without permission, they will not be able to benefit from these services free of charge in the place they go (Erdoğan, 2018).

In addition to free access to preventive health services, Syrians have also been provided with health services for babies, children and adolescents, and all the free opportunities provided to women living in Turkey, including in vitro fertilization treatment, have been provided to Syrians, especially in terms of reproductive health. According to Article 9 of the directive stating the Principles on Health Services to be provided to Persons under Temporary Protection, all health expenses of patients are invoiced to the Governorate they are registered with, and the health and medicine expenses of Syrians are paid by the Governorates.

Access to Educational Services

The data of the General Directorate of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior for October 2020 shows that of the 3 million 624 thousand 941 Syrians registered in Turkey under temporary protection, 1 million 191 thousand 153 are between the ages of 5-18. It is seen that there are 503 thousand 312 Syrians between the ages of 0-4 who will reach school age. If the Syrians between the ages of 19-24 who are university age are added to these figures, it will be seen that the number of Syrians of school age exceeds 2 million. Therefore, it can be said that a very significant portion of the registered Syrians in Turkey are school-age children and young people. One of the most basic parameters of integration is the ability of immigrants to access educational opportunities at the host community level. Because the rapid inclusion of immigrants in the education system and especially their receiving education in the language of the country they come from is known to be a factor facilitating integration. Turkey also attaches importance to the education of Syrian children and young people in order to facilitate the integration of immigrants.

Article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey states that no one can be deprived of the right to education and training under the title of the right and duty to education. The expression "person" in this article means that foreigners as well as citizens will benefit from this right (Kaya, 2017). Similarly, Article 89 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection emphasizes that applicants or

international protection status holders and their family members will benefit from primary and secondary education services. Therefore, children under international protection in Turkey have the right to register to educational institutions in their place of residence through their parents or legal representatives with a document indicating their status (B y k alık, 2015). In accordance with this law, the Temporary Protection Regulation also draws attention to the fact that the educational activities of foreigners will be carried out under the control and responsibility of the Ministry of National Education both inside and outside temporary accommodation centers.

The same article also stipulates that the procedures and principles regarding associate, undergraduate, graduate and doctoral education of those under temporary protection will be determined by the Council of Higher Education; that foreigners receiving education in our country will be given a document showing the content and duration of the education they receive; that if education has been received in a different curriculum and documentation has been provided, these documents will be evaluated by the relevant units of the Ministry of National Education or the Council of Higher Education and their equivalence to the appropriate levels will be made. Therefore, it seems that there is no legal obstacle to the educational services of Syrians. However, despite the comprehensiveness of the legal regulation, the schooling rates of Syrians are relatively low compared to Turks. Because the fact that children do not have a command of Turkish and especially “when the difficulties they experience in making ends meet and their efforts to hold on to their new life are taken into consideration, the issue of education becomes a secondary issue for them” ( a lar Deniz et al., 2016). The study conducted by Erdo an (2020) also shows that the schooling rate of Syrians is well below the Turkish average.

In our country, the integration of Syrian children under temporary protection in the education process is carried out within the scope of the Project for Supporting the Integration of Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System (PIKTES). “The main purpose of the PIKTES Project is to contribute to the access of children under temporary protection to education in Turkey and their social adaptation” (PIKTES, 2020). According to PIKTES figures, the number of Syrian children of school age is 1 million 82 thousand 172. The schooling rate of these children was stated as 62.23% as of 11.10.2019. The schooling rate of Syrians in pre-school education is 27%. This rate is 93% for primary school and 70% for secondary school. However, the schooling rate of Syrian children of high school age is around 33%. Turkish language education is provided to 599 thousand 670 of these students (PIKTES Outputs, 2020). Syrian students are provided with Arabic education in addition to Turkish language education, and their alienation from their own language is prevented. In this case, it can be said that a policy is being followed in accordance with Berry's definition of integration, which is discussed in the integration theories section of our study.¹ However, the schooling rate is behind the schooling rate of Turkish society. It is possible to talk about a dramatic decrease in the schooling rate of Syrian children, especially at the end of secondary school. The reason for this situation can be said to be mostly economic impossibilities. Especially in cases where only one person in the family works, Syrian children of school age are forced to work to help their families make ends meet in order to cover various expenses such as rent, kitchen expenses, and clothing. These children mostly work in jobs such as selling handkerchiefs on the street, shining shoes, collecting paper, or working as an intermediate worker in a garment factory for low wages ( i ek, 2020).

The Ministry of National Education has implemented various initiatives and incentives to keep the schooling rate of Syrian children high. The most important of these is the Conditional Education Support. This project, carried out in cooperation between the Ministry of National Education and the European Union, aims to provide cash assistance to poor Syrian families in particular if they send their children to school. The Conditional Education Support project has been a program funded by the European Union since 2003 to encourage children in Turkey to enroll in school and attend school. Since 2017, poor Syrian children of school age have also been included in the scope of this project (UNICEF, Conditional Education Support Project). The most important criterion for conditional education support is that

¹ According to Berry, all immigrants and residents draw attention to intergroup interaction during the acculturation process. If the level of intergroup interaction is high and the immigrant maintains his/her own ethnic identity as well as adopting the perspective of the dominant culture, then there is a possibility of achieving integration. By providing education to Syrians in both their own language and Turkish, Turkey does not isolate them from their own culture and identity, in other words, it does not attempt to assimilate them. Therefore, Turkey providing education in both Arabic and Turkish to Syrians is in line with the integration model Berry stated in the acculturation process.

students from kindergarten to 12th grade attend school regularly. The bimonthly payments for each child are around 35 TL for boys in primary school and 40 TL for girls. This payment is made as 50 TL for boys in high school and 60 TL for girls (Conditional Education Assistance Programs of Turkey, refugees.org). It is also important to note that despite the aforementioned small aid from international organizations, the importance Turkey gives to the education of Syrian children and the budget it allocates are at very serious levels. According to the 2018 calculations of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the cost of an average student (primary school, secondary school and high school) to Turkey is 9790 TL for 2018 (TurkStat Education Expenditure Statistics, 2018). When the physical costs of the new schools to be opened are added to this cost, it will be better understood how much care Turkey shows in providing Syrians with access to educational services.

The significant difference in education levels between Turks and Syrians may cause Syrians to work in informal sectors for low wages in the coming years and will actually negatively affect their economic integration. In addition, the marginalization of generations that will compare their own society with Turkish society may also occur and the social integration process may fail. Therefore, in order for Syrians to have access to educational services and increase their schooling rate, policies aimed at increasing Turkish language skills as well as significant developments in economic conditions are required. This is closely related to integration processes in accessing the labor market.

Access to the Labor Market

In Turkey, we mentioned that 1.7% of Syrians under temporary protection live in temporary shelters (camps); however, 98.3% live in harmony with the Turkish society. In order for the few Syrians living in temporary shelters to continue their daily lives, their basic needs are met by the Republic of Turkey and international organizations, and there is no situation that requires those residing there to work. Despite this, it is known that more than 30% of Syrians living in temporary shelters and whose needs are met work outside the camps during the day with permission (Erdoğan, 2020). On the other hand, it is essential for Syrians living outside temporary shelters to work in order to meet their basic needs (shelter, food, beverages, clothing, etc.). In order for this to happen, the obstacles to Syrians participating in the labor market must be removed.

Participation/access to the labor market can be considered among the most critical integration indicators for the integration of Syrians, along with education. Because if Syrians' participation in the labor force is low or their access to the labor market is blocked, they will not be able to be self-sufficient and will be subject to economic exclusion, and their economic burden will fall on the Turkish state, and therefore more taxes will be collected from Turkish citizens to meet their expenses or the amount that should be spent as services for them will have to be spent for the Syrians to continue their lives. The scenarios mentioned may increase the potential for conflict between Turkish society and Syrians, and may also squeeze the government between human values and political choices. Therefore, in order to prevent all these potential threats, ensure the integration of Syrians and bring Syrian labor into the Turkish economy within the framework of a win-win logic, it is essential to pave the way for their participation in the labor market. However, since the supply in the labor market will increase with the participation of Syrians in the labor force, there may be a decrease in the labor market (wages may decrease). In other words, the local population will have to compete with Syrians in the labor market, on the one hand, and on the other hand, they may have to accept lower wages or longer, difficult working conditions. Especially in periods when the Turkish economy is on a negative course, unemployment figures are rising and inflation rates are rising, the source of all negativity can be shown as the presence of Syrians, and this situation can also erode the social integration process. As a result, the participation of Syrians in the labor market is of great importance in every aspect, and great sensitivity must be shown to manage the process well.

In order to fully examine the situation of Syrians in the labor market, it is necessary to briefly touch on Syrian entrepreneurs. In order for Syrians to become employers in Turkey, they must open a business with at least one Turkish partner. They cannot officially have a business license without Turkish partners. On February 26, 2019, Minister of Trade Ruhsar Pekcan, in response to a question directed to her by a CHP deputy, said that the number of companies in Turkey with Syrian nationality was 15,159 and that 10,046 Syrian workers were employed in these companies (Pekcan, 2019). On the

other hand, according to a study conducted by TEPAV, it is stated that Syrian employers have important complaints about access to financing, tax rates and labor law regulations, and it is expressed that they want regulations in this regard (TEPAV, 2019). However, it is possible to say that there are many workplaces of Syrian entrepreneurs that are unregistered. Syrian businesses, which are mostly small-scale and opened without a license or registration, do not pay any taxes or insure their employees. This situation puts them at an advantage over small-scale Turkish entrepreneurs and causes complaints.

In general, although legal regulations have been made for the participation of Syrians in the labor market and various conveniences have been provided to Syrians compared to other foreigners, it is seen that the rate of Syrians with work permits is symbolic. In addition, studies have shown that Syrians work for lower wages despite doing the same job as Turks, and are subject to accusations such as taking jobs from Turks and damaging the country's economy (Çağlar Deniz et al., 2016).

Social Aids

It is known that in welfare state practices, some social assistance for disadvantaged groups and low-income citizens is an important public policy. As a requirement of being a welfare state, Turkey offers some opportunities and provides social assistance to disadvantaged groups and low-income citizens to ensure that they live in a manner worthy of human dignity. In order for immigrants to integrate into the country they migrate to, it is essential that they benefit from some rights enjoyed by citizens of that country under minimum conditions and thus see that state as their own state and the society as their own society. Therefore, in order to ensure this, the state receiving immigrants should provide assistance to the disadvantaged and needy among immigrants to the extent of its means, which should be seen as an integration strategy. In this context, Turkey provides some social assistance to Syrians (Çiçek, 2020). Article 30 of the Temporary Protection Regulation states that social assistance can be provided to those in need among foreigners within the scope of the regulation. Within the scope of the regulation, there is a provision that people with special needs will benefit from social services and assistance regardless of whether they are in shelters or outside, and that this service will be carried out under the control and responsibility of the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services.

The most important item of social assistance for Syrians in Turkey is the Social Adaptation Assistance Program (SUY). This program is a financial support program for both Syrians and foreigners coming to Turkey from other countries. The SUY Program, financed by the European Union, is implemented in partnership with the United Nations World Food Program, the Turkish Red Crescent, and the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services. In addition, this program is supported by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), the General Directorate of Population and Citizenship Affairs, and the General Directorate of Migration Management. The SUY Program covers cash assistance to individuals with special needs under Temporary Protection, International Protection, and Humanitarian Residence who live outside temporary protection centers (other than camps) in Turkey (Erdoğan, 2018b). The aforementioned cash assistance is provided through the Red Crescent Card after the assessment of their neediness. A Red Crescent Card is given to families determined to be in need as a result of the assessments, and 120 Turkish liras are deposited into the account of each family member monthly. The card is distributed through Halkbank, a mostly state-owned bank, and can be used to withdraw money from ATMs (commission-free from Halkbank branches and other state banks such as Ziraat Bankası and Vakıf Bankası). It can also be used to make payments at point-of-sale machines (POS) in local stores or markets, giving refugees receiving assistance the freedom of choice (SUY Program, 2018).

The program accepts applications from families in greatest need, such as large families, the elderly and the disabled. There is a belief in Turkish society that all aid provided within the scope of the program is provided by the Republic of Turkey; within this belief, it is observed that Turks sometimes react negatively towards Syrians. Reactions are generally formed with the assumption that taxes collected from Turkish citizens are transferred to Syrians in the form of cash aid (referring to the SUY Program). However, as previously stated, the program in question is financed by the European Union. "SUY aid has become an important regular source for 1.5 million Syrians under temporary protection, or 43%, and for 175 thousand, approximately 50% of other country citizens under international protection" (Erdoğan, 2020). However, it should be kept in mind that the aid in question is not sufficient to meet the

basic needs of Syrians. Therefore, Syrians and other foreigners who benefit from this aid have to work to earn their living. Because this aid is not enough to meet all the needs of people.

Another social assistance program for Syrians is the Social and Economic Support (SED) Service. This service is essentially a support provided by the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services to Turkish families. However, since June 2016, immigrants with temporary protection identity cards and international residence permits have also started to benefit from this support (What is SED, multeciler.org). SED covers temporary economic and psychosocial support provided to families who have difficulty in meeting the basic needs of their children until their economic situation becomes sufficient to meet the care and support of their children.

In addition to these two programs, Conditional Education Assistance service is also provided to increase the schooling rate of Syrian children and to encourage families to send their children to school.

CONCLUSION

Since the Syrians entered Turkey, the central administration has tried to solve the problem of accommodation for immigrants, primarily with temporary accommodation centers; however, due to the large number of immigrants, these centers have become insufficient, and the problem of accommodation has been left to the mercy of society. Similarly, it has made a regulation for their participation in the labor market; however, it is understood that this regulation does not prevent Syrians from working unregistered and that a significant number of Syrians are subject to labor exploitation. It is also seen that Syrians living in ghettos due to high rents do not communicate with the local people and that they remain isolated from society under these conditions is another area of problem. Under these conditions, it is seen that Turkey has not produced an adequate policy on the issues of accommodation and participation in the economy, and this situation creates discontent for both the local people and the Syrians. Turkey's policy reveals that Syrians are still considered temporary.

It is understood that the central administration is late in taking measures regarding education. The fact that a significant portion of the Syrians staying in Turkey are of school age and that the temporary policies implemented to ensure that these people receive the education they need are inadequate has necessitated more serious measures regarding education. In this context, efforts have been made since 2018 to ensure that Syrians benefit from state schools. However, the language problem has caused Syrians to be prejudiced against schools. At the same time, due to economic problems, most Syrians are forced to work instead of going to school. There are some cultural differences between Turkish society and Syrians. In this context, mixed classes where boys and girls are in the same environment also cause Syrians to hesitate to send their girls to school. In this context, the opening of imam hatip schools for girls only is being considered. Although such a harmonization policy may provide the opportunity for girls to receive education, the extent to which it will provide social harmonization is debatable.

The legal status of Syrians is another area of concern. The fact that the Syrians who have been staying in Turkey for almost ten years have been granted Temporary Protection Status has both prevented them from obtaining citizenship and prevented them from having the right to political participation. Only the Red Crescent provides assistance in family reunification. Although the Turkish people initially had high social acceptance due to reasons such as cultural-religious solidarity, the leadership of the President, the belief that the Syrians will return and the solidarity of poverty, it is seen that this situation has increased discontent towards Syrians over time and sometimes the public has started to discriminate against them. It is possible to talk about the inadequacy of Turkey's communication capacity in this regard. The negative perspective towards Syrians has increased over the years as a result of this lack of communication and the manipulation of society's prejudices through social media. In a study conducted with AFAD, KIZILAY, Directorate of Communications and DGMM officials, it was understood that they trusted in social dynamics in terms of Syrians not being discriminated against, that they did not have a foresight regarding the social adaptation of Syrians, that they were aware that prejudice against Syrians was being fueled on social media, but that there was no strategic communication plan for the international public opinion regarding this issue and the situation of Syrians in Turkey outside of DGMM. It is understood that Turkey is not using its communication resources correctly in this regard. People believe that they are wronged by the rights granted to Syrians

and that they are seen as secondary citizens in their own country (Keskinaya, 2021). In another study, when the Twitter application on Syrians was examined and the tweets posted between 2013, 2016 and 2019 were examined, it was stated that anti-Syrian sentiment increased within the framework of economic, security, social and cultural concerns over the years, but this opposition stemmed from different reasons such as security or permanence rather than a racial situation (Balsarai et. al., 2015). In this respect, it is understood that the society does not want to live in harmony with Syrians and expects the Syrians, whom they see as guests, to return to their country.

Turkey, which is currently undergoing a demographic transformation process, is gradually losing its young population along with the increasing proportion of its elderly population. Along with this demographic transformation, Turkey is also witnessing a new generation of brain drain with young people dreaming of going abroad while studying at university, doctors applying to obtain professional records, artists, journalists, academics, software developers and engineers living in other countries (Danış, 2023). The variety of movements and routes in an increasingly expanding geography for highly qualified immigrants also brings with it different migration experiences shaped between leaving, returning and staying (Danış, 2023). Turkey is not only a country that receives immigration, but also a country that is witnessing a new generation of brain drain. However, studies reveal the fact that refugee and immigrant communities have now become a part of Turkish society (Yükseker, et al., 2023). In Turkey's integration policy towards Syrians, first a timid and then a centralized integration model, with a constant temporariness rather than permanence, has come to the forefront. The simultaneous implementation of conflicting policies demonstrates the politicized and instrumentalized nature of the migration issue. Considering the increasing anti-immigrant sentiment and centralized integration policies, Turkey needs to put a multi-layered migration governance on the agenda. Indeed, research conducted in Europe and Turkey reveals that migration policies are increasingly becoming multi-level. These policies enable migration governance to take shape with different layers. Because migration governance can be centralized, localized, multi-layered or completely disconnected from each other. Unlike "centralized" migration governance, which is built on a more top-down relationship, in localist migration governance, the concept of "subsidiarity" between levels becomes apparent and migration and refugee policies are left to the local (Kurtuluş, et al., 2022; Kaya Erdoğan, 2022). Multi-level governance of migration, where policies at different levels develop by ensuring interaction, cooperation and coordination with each other, can also produce effective policies (Kurtuluş, et al., 2022; Kaya Erdoğan 2022). While the relations between local, national and international levels constitute a vertical dimension in multi-level governance of migration, the relations between the provincial organizations of the central government, municipalities and civil society at the local level constitute a horizontal dimension (Kurtuluş, et al., 2022; Kaya Erdoğan, 2022). For this reason, multi-level governance of migration in Turkey should be strengthened, especially by making the cooperations to be developed with municipalities and NGOs more transparent and open.

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