

Assessing the Development- Displacement Nexus in Turkey

Working Paper

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Acronyms

AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (Turkey)
ASAM	Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (Turkey)
DGMM	Directorate General of Migration Management (Turkey, Ministry of Interior)
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
LFIP	Law on Foreigners and International Protection
MHC	Migrant Health Centre
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OFID	OPEC Fund for International Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
TEC	Temporary Education Centre
TEPAV	Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
TOKI	Housing Development Administration (Turkey)
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net (programme)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
WFP	World Food Programme

1 Introduction

1.1 The Syrian crisis and Turkey

The ongoing Syria conflict has caused one of the worst humanitarian crises of the century, forcefully displacing nearly 12 million Syrians from their homes. As of July 2018, the number of those fleeing the conflict and seeking asylum in neighbouring countries had surpassed 5.6 million (UNHCR, 2018). With the highest concentrations of Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, both displaced Syrians and their host communities face increasing and protracted challenges. Turkey, which shares its longest land border with Syria, is one of the countries most affected by the conflict and the subsequent refugee influx. In 2015, Turkey became the world's largest refugee-hosting country in absolute numbers. More than 3.5 million Syrians were registered under temporary protection in Turkey as of July 2018 (DGMM, 2018b). Among the major refugee-hosting countries in the region, Turkey currently has the largest population of Syrian refugees (table 1).

Table 1. Syrian refugee numbers and shares in countries of asylum in the region, 2018

Major refugee-hosting countries in the region	Syrian refugees	Share of displaced Syrians (%)
Turkey	3,570,352	63.4
Lebanon	982,012	17.4
Jordan	666,596	11.8
Iraq	250,708	4.5
Egypt	128,956	2.3
Other (North Africa)	33,545	0.6

Source: UNHCR (2018).

Turkey has a two-tiered refugee and asylum regime due to the geographical limitation it imposed on its ratification of the 1951 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Status of Refugees (the Geneva Convention) and its 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. Accordingly, it grants refugee status only to 'persons who have become refugees as a result of events occurring in Europe'. Since the mid-2000s, Turkey has initiated a comprehensive reform of its legal framework on migration and asylum to meet new emigration, immigration and transit migration challenges. Turkey's process of accession to the European Union (EU) has provided further impetus for reforms in the field of migration and asylum, towards closer alignment of the Turkish legislative framework to the EU acquis.

Two key outcomes of the reform process have been Turkey's adoption in 2013 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) (Republic of Turkey, 2014), and its establishment in 2014 of a new civil migration authority, the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) under the

Ministry of Interior. In May 2015, the DGMM's provincial organisation became fully operational in all 81 provinces of the country, taking over the majority of foreigner-related responsibilities from the provincial police departments. These major reforms in the field of migration and asylum have coincided with the largest refugee influx Turkey has ever experienced. In line with its newly devised legislative framework, which retains the geographical limitation, Turkey has offered Syrians what it terms "temporary protection status". This is a group-based protection scheme implemented in times of mass influxes of displaced persons.

The Turkish government long regarded the Syrian refugee situation as temporary and provided extensive humanitarian assistance to displaced Syrians seeking refuge within its territory (Memişoğlu, 2018). Turkey's main emergency management body, the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), set up camps and provided social assistance to the new arrivals. As the refugee situation became protracted, and normalisation in Syria grew into an ever more distant prospect, the government began devising policies considering Syrians' long-term prospects in the country. The scale and duration of the refugee influx also shifted Turkish policymakers away from their initial encampment policy, towards longer term planning for urban refugees, as more than 94% the Syrian refugee population in Turkey now live in cities.

The scope of temporary protection has been expanded over the years. Regulations have been introduced facilitating refugees' access to education, health services and the job market. At the same time, new restrictive measures concerning mobility have been enacted, due to the government's mounting concerns regarding national and regional security. EU concerns, too, have driven some of these restrictions, as the March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement requires Turkey to take 'any necessary measures to prevent new sea and land routes for irregular migration opening from Turkey to the EU' (European Parliament, 2018).

This report provides contextual background on Turkey's response to the Syrian refugee crisis, focusing on the formulation and structure of refugee protection and development policies within the temporary legal framework governing the more than 3.5 million Syrians residing in Turkey. Following this introduction, the rest of the report is organised as follows: Section two provides a brief country overview and information on the refugee population in Turkey with a specific focus on Syrian refugees. The characteristics of the Syrian refugee population are examined, alongside the legal issues they face. Section three looks at the impact of the refugee arrivals, discussing particularly impacts on the Turkish economy and labour market and on various sectors: education, property and housing, healthcare, and environment and waste management. It then elaborates on local perceptions of the refugee population, as well as on Turkey's diplomatic engagement on the issue with the international community. Section four unpacks Turkey's approach in the Syrian refugee crisis, particularly refugee protection-focused and development-focused policies, after briefly discussing the evolution of the policy framework. The conclusion, section five, summarises the main findings.

2 Refugee populations in Turkey

2.1 Country overview

Founded in 1923, the Republic of Turkey is a presidential democracy with a multi-party system. The presidential system itself is very recent, adopted after a referendum held 16 April 2017. The new system entered into force with the most recent general elections, on 24 June 2018. At that point, the country's former parliamentary system of government was replaced by an executive presidential system. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the head of government and state, holding also all of the authorities and responsibilities formerly vested in the prime minister post. With the transition, a new vice-president post was formed, currently held by Fuat Oktay. Cabinet members are appointed by the president, replacing the former Council of Ministers structure. The ruling Justice and Development Party (hereafter AKP) has been in government for more than a decade. The other main political parties represented in Parliament are the Republican People's Party (hereafter CHP), the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the Good Party (Iyi Party) and the People's Democratic Party (HDP).

Along with this transition, the country's administrative structures have undergone a number of changes, especially the line ministries and directorate generals relevant to the management of the Syrian refugee situation. AFAD, for instance, was under the former Prime Ministry, but now operates under the Ministry of Interior. The former Ministry of Family and Social Policies was merged with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to form the new Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policies. The former Ministry of Development was merged with the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology to form the Ministry of Industry and Technology. This restructuring process is still ongoing. In particular, the situation of the Ministry of Development remains unclear. Accordingly, the institutional responsibilities referenced in this report should be considered a snapshot in a continuing organisational reform process.

At the end of 2017, Turkey's population reached nearly 81 million, with a gender distribution of 50.2% male and 49.8% female (Turkstat, 2017; refugees not included in these population statistics). The median age of the population was 31. The population growth rate was 12.4% in 2017, slightly below the 13.5% registered in 2016. The working age population (ages 15-64) comprised nearly 68% of the total populace, with children 0-14 years of age comprising 23.6%, and the 65 and older age group making up 8.5%. Turkey's life expectancy at birth was 75 years in 2016 (World Bank, 2018). An overwhelming majority of the Turkish population lives in urban areas (92.5% in 2017) with the remaining small minority residing in rural towns and villages. The country's five most populous cities are Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa and Antalya, in order of decreasing size (Turkstat, 2017).

According to April 2018 data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat), the employment rate was 47.9% (nearly 29 million employed people), with an unemployment rate of 9.6%. Regarding sectoral distribution, the services sector employed the greatest share (54.8%), followed by industry (19.5%), agriculture (8.3%) and construction (7.4%). Turkstat defines a category it terms "unregistered employment" as persons working without any form of social security in their main job. Some 33.3% of the Turkish labour force is active in this informal sector. Informal work is particularly common in agriculture. In the non-agricultural sector, some 22.4% of workers are in informal jobs (Turkstat, 2018).

Turkey's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 was US \$863.7 billion, according to the World Bank. Its annual growth rate was 3.2% in 2016, rising to 7.4% in 2017. Some 1.6% of the population was below the national poverty line in 2015. Gross school enrolment is high, at 103.3% (World Bank, 2018).

Turkey has a long tradition of accepting migrants and refugees, especially those of Turkish origin and culture (Kirişçi, 1996: 387). More than 1.6 million Turks and Muslim ethnic groups from the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia immigrated to Turkey between 1923 and 1995 (Kirişçi, 2000; De Bel-Air, 2016). Accordingly, a core feature of the Turkish State's policy towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is the notion of a national identity based on the perception of one common Turkish culture (Kirişçi, 2000: 49). In fact, Turkish legal terminology differentiates between the terms "foreigner" and "migrant". For decades, the 1934 Law on Settlement was the centrepiece of Turkish immigration policy. It stipulates that only a 'person of Turkish descent and who is attached to Turkish culture' may migrate and settle in Turkey or acquire refugee status (Law No. 2510). While the more recent Law on Settlement, adopted in 2006, maintains this condition, it refers only to the admission and settlement of migrants, not refugees (Law No. 5543). "Foreigner" is the term used to define a person who has no bond of citizenship with the Republic of Turkey. Over the years, the status of foreigners has been regulated by various legislation, such as the 1950 Passport Law and Law on Residence and Travel of Foreigners. The country's first dedicated immigration law was the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) adopted 4 April 2013 (Law No. 6458) (Memişoğlu, 2014: 4).

As noted, Turkey's geographical limitation on ratification of the 1951 Geneva Convention gave rise to a two-tiered asylum policy structure. The first tier concerns European asylum seekers, while the second tier deals with non-European asylum seekers. Under the first tier, Turkey received an estimated 13,500 asylum seekers from the Soviet Union and other Communist Bloc countries in Europe between 1970 and 1996 (Kirişçi, 2003).¹ Under the second tier, Turkey began receiving increasing numbers of asylum seekers from Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan in the late 1980s (De Bel-Air, 2016: 1). Durable solutions for refugees from non-European countries seeking refuge in Turkey have been found largely through voluntary repatriations and resettlements to third countries (Memişoğlu, 2018: 8-9). Thus, temporariness has remained a key feature of the country's legal framework for refugee protection.

Turkey's asylum policy developed such that management of mass migration influxes is distinguished from individual refugee applications (Ihlamur-Öner, 2013; Memişoğlu and Ilgit, 2017). In the early 1990s, for instance, Turkey admitted nearly 500,000 refugees from Iraq, defining them as 'temporary guests for humanitarian reasons' (Ihlamur-Öner, 2013: 198). Following the mass influxes from Iraq, the government adopted the Regulation on Asylum in 1994 (Law No. 94/6169).² This was the first detailed legal document governing the status of refugees and asylum seekers from outside Europe (Memişoğlu, 2014: 9). Between 1989 and 1999, the country experienced mass influxes of Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, Pomaks and Turks (Kirişçi, 2003).

Although displaced Syrians, as a mass influx, have been provided a "temporary protection" status, it could be argued that the scale of this forced displacement and its protracted character have actually made temporariness less of a defining feature. As will be discussed in the following sections, the Turkish authorities have devised various strategies to facilitate the local integration of these refugees, as non-European asylum seekers, including providing them access to social services and the job market.

¹ According to Kirişçi (2003), no statistics prior to 1970 are available.

² The full name of the legislation is Regulation on Procedures and Principles related to Mass Influx and Foreigners Arriving in Turkey either as Individuals or in Groups Wishing to Seek Asylum from Turkey or Requesting Residence Permits with the Intention of Seeking Asylum from a Third Country, adopted 30 November 1994.

Turkey became a net-immigration country in the early 2000s (Martin, 2012: 129). Thereafter, its migration profile changed rapidly due to growing mixed migration inflows. A range of pull factors attracts different types of migrants to Turkey. Foremost among these are the country’s critical geopolitical location, its socio-economic progressiveness and its stability, in contrast to the more tumultuous political and social scenes elsewhere, especially in the Middle East. Other factors that have attracted immigrants to Turkey are its flexible visa policies towards neighbouring countries; its close proximity to Europe, alongside the increasingly strict immigration controls implemented by European countries; and the difficulty of establishing effective controls on Turkey’s east and south-east borders (İçduygu, 2004: 89-90). The country’s foreign population has thus substantially increased in size in the past decade, reaching 4.3 million in 2017, up from 296,608 in 2011 (table 2). The population of foreigners with residency permits almost tripled between 2011 and 2017. The number of irregular migrants was also four times higher in 2017 than in 2011.

Turkey had less than 20,000 international protection applicants in 2011. However, even this figure represents a large shift when compared to the 31,000 asylum applications in total that Turkey received between 1997 and 2007 (İçduygu and Yüksekler, 2012: 449). From 2011 to 2015, Turkey jumped from the 59th position to first place in the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) ranking of countries hosting the largest refugee populations (UNHCR, 2014, 2018). The outbreak of the Syrian conflict is the main factor that triggered the substantial rise in Turkey’s refugee population from 2011 onwards.

Table 2. National immigration figures, 2011- 2017

	2011		2017
International protection applicants	17,925	International protection applicants and temporary protection beneficiaries	112,415 3.42 million
Apprehended irregular migrants	44,415	Apprehended irregular migrants	175,752
Residency permits	234,268	Residency permits	593,151

Source: Compiled by the author based on DGMM (2018b).

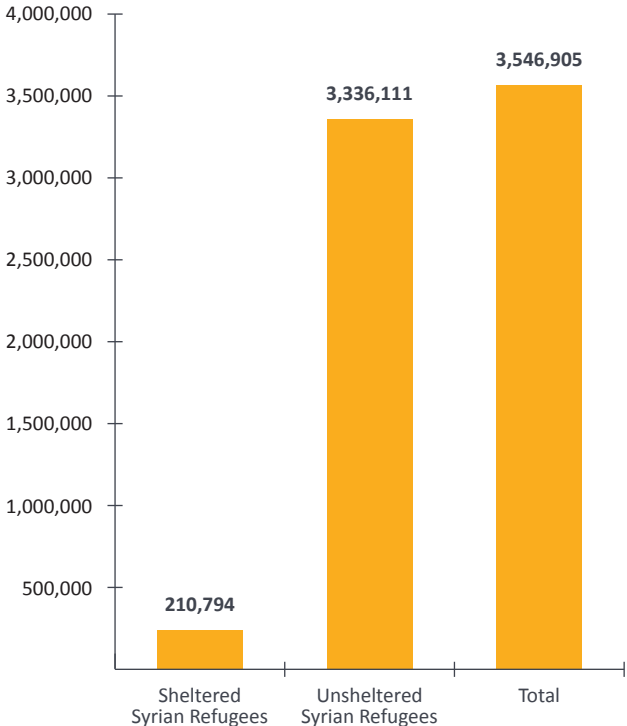
2.2 Evolution and dynamics of the Syrian influx in Turkey

The first arrivals – initially 252 Syrians– came to Turkey in late April 2011, admitted to the country in the border province of Hatay (DGMM, 2015). After the siege of Jisr al-Shughur in June 2011, more than 10,000 people fled to Turkey, leading the government to declare an open-border policy for those fleeing Syria (Ilgit and Davis, 2013; Ozden, 2013). On 30 March 2012, the Turkish government issued a circular as the first step in the launch of a temporary protection regime for the Syrian influx. Three basic principles were espoused: (1) an open-border policy, (2) respect for non-refoulement and (3) provision of humanitarian assistance in line with international human rights standards (DGMM, 2015). In 2012, Turkey’s main emergency management body, AFAD, began building refugee camps in the border provinces of Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Mardin and Şanlıurfa, as well as in the surrounding provinces of Adana, Mersin, Kahramanmaraş and Osmaniye. As the situation in Syria deteriorated, subsequent years saw

a dramatic increase in Syrian arrivals. From December 2012 to December 2013, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey rose from 150,000 to half a million (UNHCR, 2018). By the end of 2014, there were more than 1.5 million registered Syrians in Turkey (ibid.). While almost all Syrian refugees lived in camps in 2013, the share of urban refugees reached almost half in early 2014. By late 2014, almost four out of every five refugees were settled in towns and cities (Içduygu, 2015: 7). As of July 2018, the camp population was 210,794, comprising just 6% of the total Syrian refugee population in Turkey (figure 1). There are currently 21 camps, located in Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaraş, Mardin, Hatay, Adana, Adıyaman, Osmaniye and Malatya.

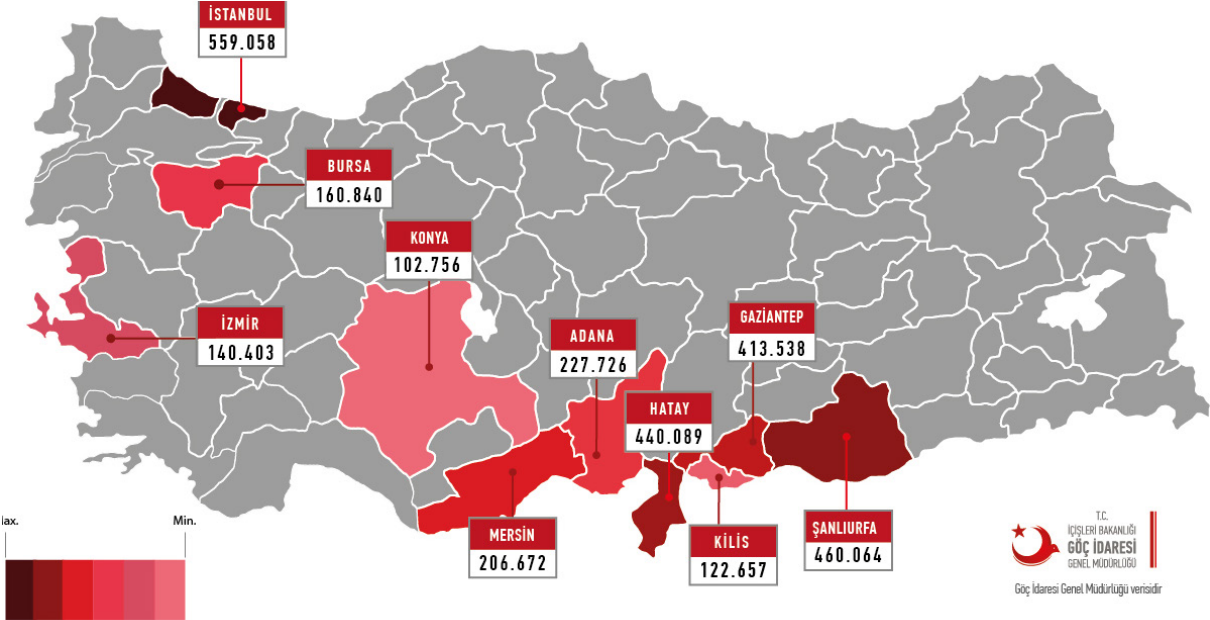
Geographical proximity to Syria, kinship and family ties, and existing socio-economic networks help explain the high concentration of Syrian refugees in the cities and towns close to the Syrian border (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). As their stay has become more prolonged, however, some have moved on other regions, seeking larger job markets and following socio-economic networks. Many better-off Syrian business owners, for instance, have settled in Gaziantep and Mersin, where they have long-standing business and communal ties (Orhan and Senyucel-Gundogar, 2015; Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). As shown in figure 2, large cities such as Istanbul, Bursa, Konya and Izmir host sizeable refugee populations. Currently all 81 provinces host Syrian refugees (DGMM, 2018b). The top-ten refugee-hosting cities, respectively, are Istanbul, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, Bursa, Izmir, Kilis and Konya. Although Istanbul hosts half a million Syrian refugees, Syrians’ share in Istanbul’s total population is relatively low, at 3.7%. In certain border towns, however, the arrival of Syrian refugees has substantially changed local demographics. In Kilis, for instance, the Syrian refugee population (130,448) almost outnumbers the locals (136,319) (DGMM, 2018b).

Figure 1. Syrian refugees in Turkey sheltered in camps and residing elsewhere, as of 12 July 2018



Source: DGMM (2018b).

Figure 2. Numbers of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in Turkey’s top-ten refugee-hosting provinces, as of 12 July 2018



Source: DGMM (2018b).

During periods of escalated conflict in Syria, the open-border policy has been disrupted due to increasing security concerns and the risk of conflict spillover. From March to early June 2015, for instance, Turkey closed all border crossings to individuals, including passport-holding Syrian citizens. This persisted until more than 15,000 Syrians fleeing the intensified fighting in Tel-Abyad were admitted in June 2015 (Al-Jazeera Turk, 2015). The Turkish authorities even started constructing a wall along the Syria border as a protection measure against the Daesh terrorist organisation (Middle East Monitor, 2015). In February 2016, some 60,000-70,000 people were stranded near the south-eastern border town of Kilis, most fleeing the bombings near Aleppo. Turkey did not open its borders for this new influx. Instead it opted to try assisting them on the Syrian side, building makeshift camps and providing for basic needs in a “safe haven” model (Al Jazeera, 2016). A series of terrorist attacks followed, to which Turkey responded by enhancing border security and completing construction of the 700 km wall along its border with Syria by the end of September 2017 (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). As will be discussed later, the increasing security concerns were also reflected in policy adjustments, including introduction of measures restricting the mobility of Syrian refugees.

Turkey has also been a transit hub for Syrian refugees intending to seek asylum in Europe, as it is situated on the Eastern Mediterranean Route. This is one of the five major global irregular routes of mixed migration flows transiting the Middle East towards the Mediterranean region and Europe (Memişoğlu, 2014). In the summer of 2015, there was a substantial increase in numbers of irregular crossings via the Aegean Sea. Thousands of Syrian refugees, along with others of various nationalities, embarked on the short, yet dangerous sea passage between Turkey and Greece. According to Frontex (2018), some 885,000 migrants and refugees arrived in the EU via the Eastern Mediterranean Route in 2015, a figure 17 times higher than that recorded in 2014. A major reason for this unprecedented spike in irregular migration to Europe via Turkey was the lack of safe and regular options available to migrants

and refugees seeking international protection beyond their neighbouring countries. This pushed many to seek irregular routes to enter Europe, usually with the help of migrant smugglers (Zaragoza-Christiani, 2015). In fact, resettlement options for Syrian refugees wishing to move to a third country have been strikingly limited. From 2014 to 2018, only some 14,000 Syrians were resettled to third countries (table 3). Table 4 shows the distribution of Syrians resettled to EU countries under the humanitarian admission scheme implemented within the framework of the March 2016 Turkey-EU Statement. As of July 2018, less than 1% of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey had been resettled to third countries. Meanwhile, some 150,000 Syrians in Turkey returned to Syria between early 2017 and May 2018 following military operations by Turkey to create safe areas in northern Syria (Azez and Afrin districts), according to AFAD (Bilgehan, 2018).

Table 3. Syrians resettled from Turkey to third countries, as of 12 July 2018

Country	Departing persons
USA	3,902
Australia	91
Austria	58
Belgium	46
France	1
Netherlands	3
England	1,757
Sweden	168
Iceland	13
Canada (via UNHCR)	3,538
Canada (direct)	2,645
Liechtenstein	18
Luxembourg	46
Norway	1,921
Romania	43
New Zealand	4
Total	14,254

Source: DGMM (2018b).

Table 4. Syrian refugees who left Turkey in the scope of the “one-to-one” policy, as of 12 July 2018

Country	Total
General total	14,680
Germany	5,370
Netherlands	2,884
France	2,103
Finland	1,002
Belgium	989
Sweden	742
Spain	429
Italy	332
Austria	213
Luxembourg	206
Portugal	123
Lithuania	84
Latvia	81
Estonia	59
Letonia	46
Malta	17

Note: The “one-to-one policy” is the agreement concerning Syrian refugee resettlements under the 18 March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement.

Source: DGMM (2018b).

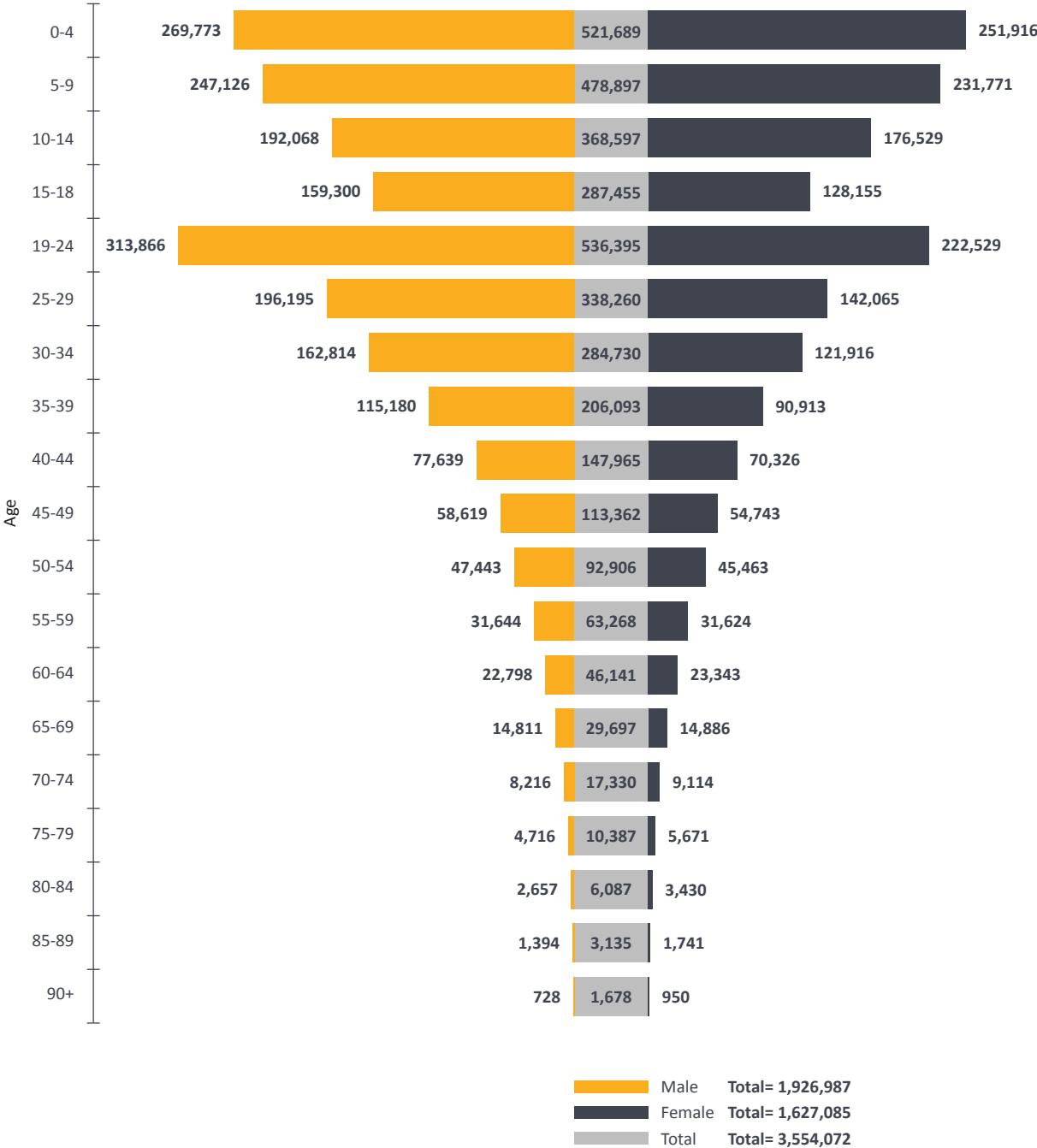
2.3 Characteristics of the Syrian refugee population

Figure 3 reports on the age and gender distribution of the registered Syrian refugee population in Turkey. Among Syrian refugees, 54.2% were male and 45.8% female as of July 2018. Demographically, the population is overwhelmingly young: the 0-18 age group comprises 46.6% of the total, with the 19-24 age group representing 15% of the total. The smallest age bracket is that of age 60 and older, which represents 3.2% of the total. As these data demonstrate, 51.5% of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey is of working age (19-64). As will be discussed later, at least half of the more than two million working-age Syrians in Turkey are estimated to be informally employed. Most of those in informal labour are men. The share of working women is low in all age brackets, the highest being 7% for the 30-44 age group (Del Carpio et al., 2018).

In 2010, prior to the outbreak of the Syrian conflict, women constituted 22% of Syria’s labour force, indicating a generally low participation rate of Syrian women in formal labour (Hilton, 2017). Following a drop in formal employment opportunities for both men and women in the context of the war, this rate

declined further to 14% in 2015. However, women are now reported as constituting the overwhelming majority of the workforce in some areas of Syria, especially in informal and small-scale employment. This suggests that the devastating impact of the war has shifted Syrian women’s previously more passive role in the workforce (Hilton, 2017).

Figure 3. Age and gender of registered Syrian refugees recorded by biometric data, as of 5 July 2018



Source: DGMM (2018b).

The Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR, 2014) assessed human development in Syria from 2001 to 2009 using the multidimensional poverty index (MPI). This method derives estimations based on health, education and standard of living indicators. Prior to the outbreak of the conflict, Syria's MPI had fallen from 0.061 in 2001 to 0.036 in 2009, indicating steady improvement in Syria's human development situation (SCPR, 2014). A persistent gap in poverty reduction was observed between Syria's rural and urban areas. The eastern and northern regions had the highest MPI scores, and the most deprived governorates were Deir-ez-zor, Al Rakka, Aleppo and Al Hasakeh. Gains in education and health made the largest contributions to MPI reductions, while the contribution of standard of living indicators fell from 23% in 2001 to 9% in 2009. "School enrolment", "nutrition" and "years of schooling" all had relatively high MPI values in 2009, indicating relatively high levels of material poverty, low social and economic well-being among mothers initially and later also among their families, restricted access to resources among women and limited access to education.

There is no up-to-date comprehensive data on the socio-economic characteristics of the Syrian refugees in Turkey. However, DGMM is moving to collect data on aspects such as educational level and skill sets, after it completes a project to update basic information on Syrians (that project has been underway since January 2017 with the support of UNHCR Turkey). Although the situation has evolved, a survey conducted in 2013 by AFAD of 2,700 refugee households (both in camps and in urban residences) offers some insight into the characteristics of the Syrian refugee population (AFAD, 2013). That research found that most Syrian refugees came from towns and cities close to the Turkish border. A major city of origin was Aleppo (36%), followed by Idlib (21%), Rakka (11%), Lattakia (9%), Hama (7.5%), Hassakeh (5.4%) and others (10%) (ibid.: 14). Most refugees had a primary school or secondary school education (61.3% of those in camps and 52.4% in cities). The smallest group was those with a university education (7.8% in camps and 9.7% in cities). High-school graduates constituted 13.2% of the camp population and 9.6% of urban refugees. The median income of Syrian households before leaving Syria was higher among urban refugees (US \$154) compared to camp refugees (\$131). These incomes, however, should be seen in light of Syria's per capita GDP, which was \$3,829 in 2012. Some 67% of Syrian refugees were married, according to the survey results (ibid.).

While previous studies indicate that the majority of Syrian refugees are of rural origin and had a low income in Syria, more recent research has found greater socio-economic diversity (Orhan and Senyucel-Gundogar, 2015; Çetin, 2016; International Crisis Group, 2017; Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017; Kadkoy, 2017; Memişoğlu, 2018). As will be discussed in the following sections, Syrian refugees contribute to local economies in multiple ways. Some have set up businesses. Syrian entrepreneurs and investors, mostly men from Aleppo, are visibly present in cities like Gaziantep and Mersin (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). One aspect on which the existing literature is lacking is a gender perspective. There is very little data on Syrian refugee women's participation in socio-economic life.

2.4 Legal status issues

The Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP), adopted in 2013, is Turkey's first single-body immigration law. It establishes procedures regulating the entry and exit of foreigners, and also sets out three international protection categories (refugees, conditional refugees and subsidiary protection) and the temporary protection regime (Republic of Turkey, 2014).³ The international protection category

³ The LFIP states that individuals falling under these three international protection categories may apply for a work permit six months after lodging their international protection application. For temporary protection beneficiaries, as in the case of Syrians, the Temporary Protection Regulation defines procedures related to work permits.

ries are granted on an individual basis, while temporary protection is group-based and implemented in times of mass influxes of displaced persons (LFIP, Article 91). Given the large numbers of arrivals, Syrian refugees were offered temporary protection status. The scope of the temporary protection regime was further specified in the Temporary Protection Regulation issued by the Council of Ministers on 22 October 2014. That regulation concerns Syrians' admission to Turkey, procedures of registration and access to social services, social aid, interpretation services and the labour market.

The LFIP stipulates that foreigners wishing to stay in Turkey for up to 90 days must obtain a visa indicating the purpose of their visit (LFIP, Article 11). Foreigners wishing to stay longer must obtain a residence permit (LFIP, Article 19).⁴ Apart from the Syrians under temporary protection, there are also Syrians in Turkey who hold a residence permit. This implies that they entered the country with a valid passport and obtained a residence permit, like other foreigners. Those in this group are not entitled to temporary protection provisions but are considered legally residing foreigners. In 2017, there were 65,348 such Syrian nationals with residence permits (DGMM, 2018b).

Turkish citizenship can be acquired in several ways, the relevant legislation being the Turkish Citizenship Law No. 5901, adopted 29 May 2009. First, Turkish citizenship can be acquired by place of birth or descent. Thus, individuals with a Turkish mother or father acquire citizenship by birth regardless of where they were born. A child born in Turkey, but acquiring no citizenship from his or her foreign mother or foreign father also acquires Turkish citizenship by birth. A child found in Turkey is deemed to have been born in Turkey unless proven otherwise and also acquires citizenship. A child, under the age of maturity, adopted by a Turkish citizen, acquires Turkish citizenship from the day she or he is adopted (Articles 6-9). Second, Turkish citizenship can be applied for after marriage to a Turkish citizen for three years. Third, individuals who have held a residency permit for five years and have not been out of Turkey for longer than six months within this period are eligible to apply for Turkish citizenship (Article 11). Fourth, Turkish citizenship may be received upon a proposal by the Ministry of Interior and decision of the Council of Ministers in the following categories: (1) 'those who bring into Turkey industrial facilities or have rendered or believed to render an outstanding service in the social or economic arena or in the fields of science, technology, sports, culture or arts and regarding whom a reasoned offer is made by the relevant ministries', (2) 'those whose being received into citizenship is deemed to be necessary' and (3) 'those persons who are recognized as migrants' (Article 12). In addition, foreign investors are eligible to apply for Turkish citizenship under certain conditions, such as those with more than US \$2 million in investment capital, or employing at least 100 people, or who buy property worth at least \$1 million.⁵

Secondary sources indicate that some 12,000 Syrians had been granted citizenship by September 2017. This number is expected to reach 50,000 once ongoing applications have been processed (Daily Sabah, 2017b). Among the Syrians who were granted citizenship, some 6,500 of them reportedly had a mother or a father with Turkish nationality, or both (TGNA, 2018). Additionally, nearly 4,500 Syrians married Turkish citizens after 2011, and were granted citizenship following three years of the marriage (ibid.).

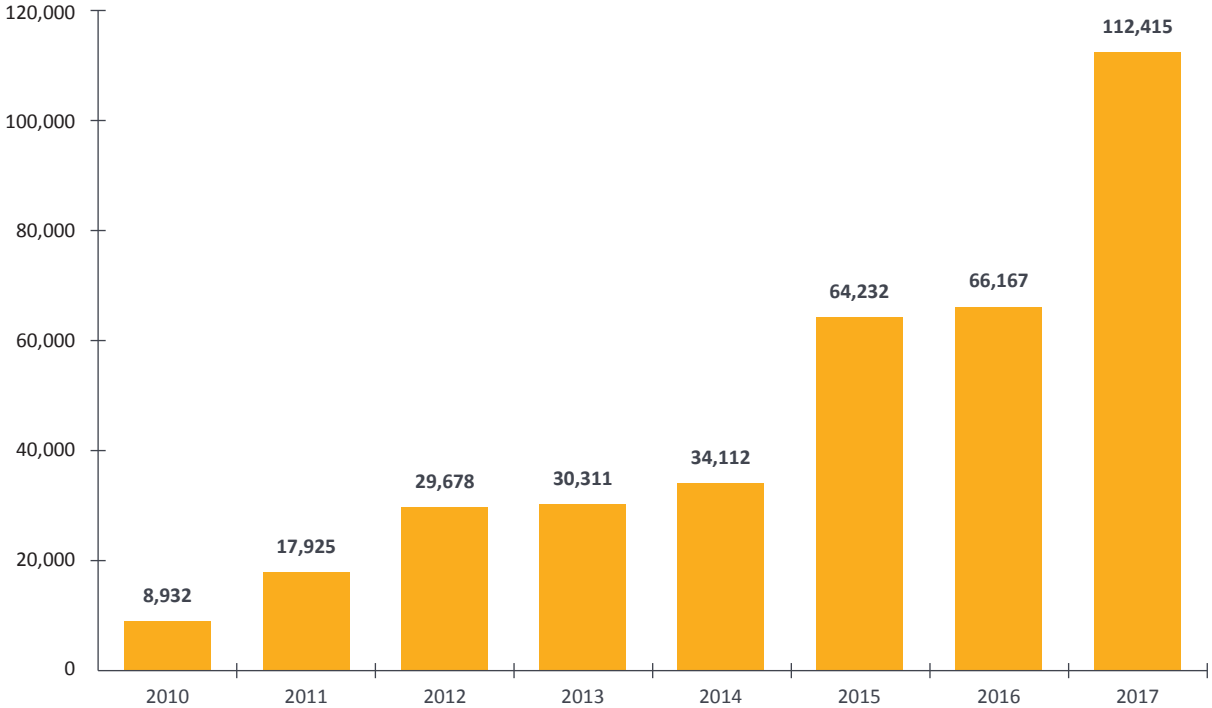
⁴ Article 27 further stipulates that a valid work permit or a work permit exemption confirmation document is also considered a residence permit.

⁵ See Regulation for the Amendment of the Regulation on the Enforcement of the Turkish Citizenship Law, Article 1.

2.5 Other relevant refugee flows

Beyond Syrian refugees, other international protection applicants in Turkey also increased steadily from 2010 to 2017 (figure 3). Whereas the total number of applicants was less than 30,000 in 2012, this number had almost quadrupled by 2017, reaching 112,415. According to DGMM statistics, individuals from Iraq (68,685), Afghanistan (31,148) and Iran (9,619) constituted the three largest groups of international protection applicants, followed by those from Somalia (1,082), Pakistan (350), Yemen (200), Turkmenistan (181), Palestine (167) and Uzbekistan (111) (DGMM, 2018b).

Figure 4. International protection applications by year, 2010-2017



Source: DGMM (2018b).

3 Impact of refugee arrivals

3.1 Impact of refugees on the Turkish economy and the labour market

When assessing the impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish economy and labour market, two features should be kept in mind. First, the population of Syrian refugees varies significantly from province to province, as has their impact. Second, Syrians are integrated, both formally and informally, into the labour market both as employees and as self-employed persons, and many have set up their own businesses. Thus, the refugee population is socio-economically diverse, representing various levels of experience, assets and skills. This diversity is often overlooked when assessing the impact of the Syrian refugees on host economies and labour markets. Esen and Binatli (2017) highlighted four key areas in which the Syrian refugee population has affected the Turkish economy: (1) public finance, (2) economic activity and the labour force, (3) regional employment structure and (4) demographics. Indeed, the refugee influx is likely to affect Turkey's 'demographic window of opportunity', increasing the ratio of working-age population to dependent-age population in the long term (ibid.: 128-129).

Public finance is the first, and a considerable, area of refugee impact, given that the Turkish assistance provided since 2011 has equalled almost 1% of the country's GDP. In December 2017, former Deputy Prime Minister Recep Akdağ said that the government had spent more than US \$30 billion on the Syrian refugees. Anadolu Agency (2017) reported the following distribution of funds among institutions and services:

- AFAD, \$1.47 million
- Turkish Red Cross and the Turkish Religious Foundation, \$4.45 million
- DGMM, \$2.05 million
- Security and public order services, \$2.43 billion
- Health services, \$4.29 million
- Education services, \$4.07 million
- Municipal services, \$4.61 million
- Military operation "Fırat Kalkan", \$429,067
- Humanitarian assistance at the Turkish-Syrian border, \$586,519
- Municipal services, \$82.13 million
- Camp depreciation, \$396,154
- Assistance by other civil society organisations (registered projects), \$224.37 million
- Other social assistance, \$30.66 million⁶

Regarding economic activity and the labour force, the Syrian refugees constitute an important new economic actor, both within the labour force and as skilled entrepreneurs. Most previous studies have focused on Syrians' irregular participation in the labour market, mainly because their regular access to employment is a rather recent phenomenon. Also, the number of issued work permits remains low, especially in comparison to the total number of working-age Syrian refugees in Turkey. Secondary sources



⁶ US dollar equivalents were calculated by the author using the exchange rate of 15 December 2017 (US \$1=3.8 TL).

indicate that from January 2016 to March 2018, Turkey granted 39,935 work permits to Syrians, of which slightly less than half (19,578) were given to Syrians under temporary protection (Timeturk, 2018). Although the Regulation on Temporary Protection gave Syrian refugees the right to work in 2014, the required implementing by-law did not come into effect until 15 January 2016. Accordingly, prior to 2016, most Syrian refugees were relegated to work in the informal sector, deepening the country's problem of unregistered employment while exposing Syrians to potential labour exploitation. In 2015, at least 300,000 Syrians, including those under age 18, were working informally in the country (TISK, 2015). Considering that the population of working age Syrians in Turkey is about 1.6 million, and their labour force participation in Syria was 43.4% before the war, we can estimate that many more, up to 700,000, may be working informally in Turkey (ILO, 2018). Most Syrians in informal employment work in labour-intensive, low-wage jobs in sectors such as construction and agriculture (Del Carpio and Wagner, 2015; Loayza, Ulysea and Utsumi, 2018).

The regulation introduced in January 2016 by the Ministry of Labour providing for work permits for Syrians under temporary protection was an important step towards facilitation of legal and fair access to the labour market. Syrians, for example, have to be paid at least the minimum wage. However, it brought caveats and requirements as well. Syrians are allowed to work only in the province where they are registered, and the number of foreigners under temporary protection employed within a business cannot surpass 10% of the number of Turkish citizen employees. Kaymaz and Kadkoy (2016) note difficulties with the 10% quota system, especially in the southern and south-eastern provinces, where almost half of Turkey's Syrian population resides. In Kilis Province, for instance, only 1,600 of the 130,000 Syrians in the city could be regularly employed if all private sector companies implemented the 10% rule. Given that unemployment levels are already high in these provinces, the quota system may exacerbate an already tough labour market, increasing competition between local and Syrian labourers for low-paid informal jobs (Kaymaz and Kadkoy, 2016).

Access to formal employment thus remains a challenge for most Syrian refugees in Turkey, considering the limited number of work permits granted so far, the limited job opportunities available, the number of occupations open to foreigners and the difficulty of finding a job that matches the skills that refugees bring. Another problem is the general lack of awareness among employers of how to regularly employ foreigners and how to navigate work permit application procedures. The system is dependent, moreover, on employers initiating the work permit application. Taken together these factors have resulted in a low number of work permits issued. Overwhelmingly, refugees have continued to engage in informal employment, occasionally becoming subject to exploitation and discrimination as a result (3RP, 2017: 62).

As mentioned previously, the national unregistered employment rate is 33.3%. Sources analysing the Turkish labour market note its division into two segments: (1) the primary segment, including mainly capital-intensive industries with an increasing demand for highly skilled labour, and (2) the secondary segment, encompassing mainly labour-intensive industries with an irregular and falling demand for labour (Bulbul, 2012). The secondary labour market is also characterised by low wages and low-value jobs. This is where most unregistered employment is found. Unregistered employment is a problem triggered by both social and economic factors. Among the social causes are rapid population growth, high unemployment, urbanisation and migration, child labour, unregistered foreign labour and barriers to unionisation (*ibid.*: 379-380). Economic causes relate to the social security and tax obligations that employers must fulfil for employees, the structure of employment and labour market rigidities. Regarding the structure of employment, for instance, Bulbul (*ibid.*: 381) notes that unregistered employment is particularly rife in agriculture. In 2012, an estimated 84% of agricultural labourers were unregistered, whereas the rate of unregistered employment in non-agricultural work was 25% (*ibid.*: 81).

The impact of Syrians' inclusion in the labour market has been particularly felt at the regional level. A recent study analysing informality and the effects of mass migration on the labour market looked at the case of Syrians in Turkey (Loayza, Ulyssea and Utsumi, 2018). First, the authors found that the South-East Anatolia region, which received particularly large influxes of Syrian refugees, experienced a relatively high increase in informal employment among low skilled workers. Second, this increase was, nonetheless, smaller than the supply shock caused by the refugee arrivals, leading some native low skilled workers to migrate to other regions (ibid.: 8). This means that the refugee arrivals affected other regions too, directly or indirectly, through changes in the supply of low and high skilled workers. Third, high skilled workers throughout Turkey seem to have benefitted from the refugee influx, as it appears to have increased their "skill premium". As an indicator for this, Loayza, Ulyssea and Utsumi (2018) pointed to a drop in the share of informal employment among high skilled workers since the refugees' arrival, particularly in the south-east (ibid.: 30). An earlier study, conducted prior to introduction of work permits for those under temporary protection, found that every 10 informally employed Syrians caused displacement of 6-7 informally employed Turkish workers, while substantially increasing formal employment opportunities for natives (Del Carpio and Wagner, 2015: 18). For every 10 refugees, 3-4 formal jobs were created in the region (ibid.: 19). The study, finally, found different effects of the inclusion of Syrians in the labour market for different segments of workers. Turkish women have been most negatively affected, with reduced opportunities for part-time work and a net displacement of 7 women for every 10 refugees (ibid.: 19).

The Syrian refugee influx has brought new businesses, investments and skills to the Turkish economy. Based on data provided by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), the number of Syrian-partnered firms established annually in Turkey rose from 30 in 2010 to 81 in 2011, to 165 in 2012, 489 in 2013, 1,257 in 2014 and 1,599 in 2015 (Karasapan, 2016). In 2015, 1 in 40 newly established enterprises in Turkey was set up by a Syrian, and the share of Syrian companies within TOBB's registry reached 2.52% (Yilmaz and Çakici, 2016). The Human Development Foundation counted some 8,100 firms set up by Syrians in Turkey as of October 2017, with their investment approaching US \$500 million and providing employment for nearly 100,000 people (INGEV, 2017; Daily Sabah, 2017a). Based on TOBB figures, the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) publishes monthly bulletins with information on companies with Syrian capital. Their August 2018 bulletin reported that 778 companies with Syrian capital had been established between January and June 2018 alone (TEPAV, 2018: 1).

Syrian-owned enterprises are found in a range of industries, from restaurants, construction and trade to textiles, property, travel, transportation and food (Karasapan, 2016). Some studies have noted that Syrian enterprises produce goods and services mainly for Syrians, and in most cases hire friends and relatives (Yaman, 2016: 120). The cities of Gaziantep and Mersin have more than 1,000 registered Syrian enterprises each. By 2016, trade between Syria and these cities, and border cities like Hatay, had surpassed 2010 levels, due to Syrian firms' links with counterparts in Syria and in other Middle Eastern markets (Karasapan, 2017). Istanbul had the largest number of companies established with joint Syrian capital, according to the June TEPAV bulletin, followed by Mersin, Bursa and Hatay (TEPAV, 2018: 2). There is, however, variation. In Adana, where the Syrian refugee population exceeds 200,000, the number of registered enterprises has remained less than 120 (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). However, some enterprises do operate without registering.

Two further studies on regional economic effects (Akgunduz et al., 2015; Bahçekapili and Çetin, 2015), found considerable diversity, even among the most-affected provinces. While an improved foreign trade balance and increased internal migration rate were effects common to all of the provinces ana-

lysed, Bahcekapili and Çetin (2015: 14) found a drop in unemployment in Gaziantep, Kilis and Adıyaman and a rise in unemployment in Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakir following the refugee influx (Bahcekapili and Çetin, 2015: 7). Gaziantep, Kilis and Adıyaman experienced somewhat of an economic revival after 2011. At the national level, too, economists have suggested that the refugee inflows may have been a driver behind Turkey's unexpectedly high economic growth rate in 2015 (Devranoğlu, 2016). Regional economic effects are also related to local sectorial dynamics. Syrians' participation in agricultural work, for instance, seems to have exerted a downward pressure on wages, especially in seasonal work. Kalkınma Atölyesi (2016: 9) argued that Syrian workers in the Çukurova region had largely replaced seasonal agricultural workers from Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman and Mardin.

3.2 Sectoral impact

Education

The mass influx of Syrian refugees has posed a particular challenge to the education system, given that school-age children comprise approximately half of the Syrian population in Turkey. As observed in earlier studies, Syrian refugees have encountered difficulties in accessing education due to legal, bureaucratic and language barriers; financial hardship; and lack of the required educational materials, teaching staff and public school capacity (International Crisis Group, 2014, 2016).

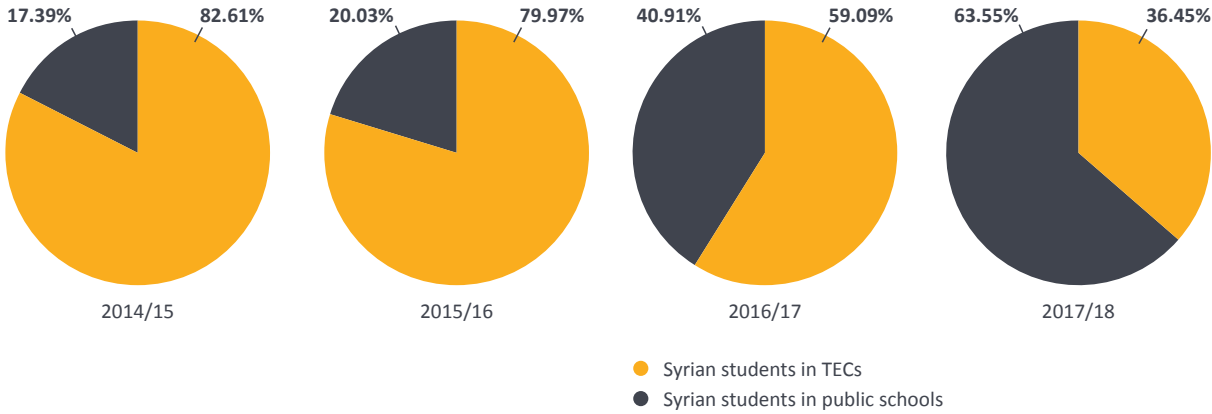
Under Turkish law, basic education for children spans 12 years, divided into three 4-year periods. All children, including foreigners, have the right to access basic education in public schools free of charge. To facilitate foreigners' access to education, the Ministry of National Education adopted legislation initially in 2010. In September 2014, the Ministry issued Circular 2014/21, on educational services for foreign nationals, describing measures for establishing Temporary Education Centres (TECs) and to facilitate Syrian refugee children's enrolment in public schools. Foreigners' school enrolment had previously been conditional upon holding a residency permit. The circular also sketched a framework for teacher recruitment; for smoothing students' transition to higher education through revised records procedures, admissions and an equivalence process; and for adapting the language of education, curricula and success evaluation processes (Alpaydin, 2017). The TECs were to provide curricula in Arabic and Turkish, upon approval of the provincial directorates of national education. School-age children living in camps were to attend TECs within the camps, while urban refugee children could attend TECs if there was one in the city they lived in. Otherwise, they could attend public or private schools. In the year following the circular, the number of Syrian children enrolled in public schools skyrocketed, from 6,000 in 2014 to 60,000 in 2015 (SETA, 2016). By January 2016, the number of Syrian children enrolled in Turkish public schools and TECs had reached 310,000, representing a 44% increase from the previous year (UNICEF, 2016).

As the Syrian crisis became more protracted, more permanent solutions were deemed necessary. The Ministry of National Education initiated measures to integrate refugee children into the regular public education system and to gradually phase out the TECs. Since 2016, the Ministry of National Education has implemented the project Syrian Children: Supporting the Integration of the Turkish Education System. This is part of the EU-funded Facility for Refugees in Turkey. As of September 2016, all preschool and grade one Syrian pupils had begun enrolling in Turkish schools and not TECs. This was followed by registration of fifth and ninth graders in Turkish schools. In September 2017, there were 404 TECs left, spread over 20 provinces, with 291,039 Syrian children enrolled (Kolcu, 2017). The ratio of students in TECs compared to public schools declined by nearly 20% from the 2016-2017 to the 2017-2018 school year. The ratio of Syrian students registered in public schools increased by that same amount over

the period. Meanwhile, overall enrolment rates rose to 62.52% in 2017-2018. Some 610,278 Syrian children are currently enrolled in school in Turkey. These numbers include 14,129 registered in “open schools”, for distance learning. Figures from the Ministry of National Education (2018) show that slightly more male students were registered than female students, respectively, 307,973 and 302,305.

Table 5. Number of Syrian children in school in Turkey, 2014-2018

School year	Syrian students in public schools	Syrian students in TECs	Syrian children registered as students	School-aged Syrian children in Turkey	School enrolment of Syrian children in Turkey
	N	N	N	N	%
2014-2015	40,000	190,000	230,000	756,000	30.00
2015-2016	62,357	248,902	311,259	834,842	37.00
2016-2017	201,505	291,039	492,544	833,039	59.00
2017-2018	387,849	222,429	610,278	976,200	62.52



Source: Ministry of National Education (2018).

The positive impact of financial assistance received through EU-funded education projects is evident in the increased school enrolment. As part of the EU Facility for Refugees, the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education programme has been a useful tool for promoting Syrian students’ enrolment. It provides Syrian students in TECs a cash assistance sum of about US \$15 every three months. Public schools with large numbers of Syrian refugee students also receive assistance. Despite these progressive developments, however, nearly half a million Syrian children are still out of school. The educational system, with its existing capacities already under heavy pressure, still needs 20,000-25,000 additional classrooms and 20,000-25,000 new teachers to provide schooling for all (TGNA, 2018: 177). Furthermore, the educational challenges are expected to grow given that some 170,000 Syrian babies have been born in Turkey in the past four years (TGNA, 2018: 177).

Low enrolment rates in senior grades is a particular challenge. Indeed, enrolment rates are relatively high up to grade 6, then decline rapidly thereafter (table 6). Enrolment rates among 14-17 year olds are

especially low, at less than 24%. Syrian children are dropping out of school for a variety of economic and cultural reasons, including financial difficulties, child labour, the language barrier and early marriages. Education professionals note that younger Syrian students are often better able to overcome the language barrier than their elder counterparts, especially since the former often began integrating into the public school system from an early age. Language remains a huge barrier for elder students, whose school performance may therefore lag, sapping motivation for continued studies.

To tackle the problems, the authorities are working on strategies to increase the number of teachers qualified to teach Turkish as a second language and to assist elder students with learning difficulties. Within the framework of the EU Refugee Facility for Turkey, the Ministry of National Education is currently implementing the PICTES project (Promoting Integration of Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System). This involves the training of 5,600 teachers and assistance to 30,000 Syrians students to facilitate their transition into Turkish public education (Delegation of the EU to Turkey, 2017).

Table 6. Distribution of Syrian students by age and enrolment rates, 2017-2018 school year

	Number of Syrian students in public schools	Number of Syrian students in TECs	Number of Syrian students	Number of Syrian students in age bracket	Number of Syrian children in age bracket	Enrolment rate
Preschool (age 5)	29,457	7091	36,548	36,548	93,791	39.06%
1st grade (age 6)	99,491	14,114	113,605	374,304	92,358	106.75%
2nd grade (age 7)	68,050	12,794	80,844		89,198	
3rd grade (age 8)	38,485	65,921	104,406		85,335	
4th grade (age 9)	30,598	44,851	75,449		84,340	
5th grade (age 10)	44,180	7221	51401	137,613	76,568	50.58%
6th grade (age 11)	20,516	14267	34783		67,721	
7th grade (age 12)	10,967	17790	28757		64,486	
8th grade (age 13)	7402	15270	22672		64,044	
9th grade (age 14)	14,124	2554	16678	61,813	61,434	23.93%
10th grade (age 15)	5,976	5149	11125		62,852	
11th grade (age 16)	2,706	6440	9146		61,069	
12th grade (age 17)	1764	8575	10339		73,004	
Open schools and others	14,133	392	396		-	
Total	387,849	222,429	610,278	53,560	976,200	62.52%

Source: Ministry of National Education (2018).

Statistics on Syrian enrolment in higher education indicate that 26% of Syrian urban men and women, as well as 17% of rural men and 15% of rural women, studied in colleges, at universities or in vocational training before the war (Fricke, Watenpaugh and King, 2014; Yavcan and El-Ghali, 2017). Until 2013, Syrian students in Turkey were subject to the same university admission criteria as other international students, which required them to provide a high-school diploma and passport. However, starting in 2013 a number of measures were adopted to facilitate Syrians' access to higher education (Yavcan and El-Ghali, 2017: 20). Among these was the Higher Education Council Directive issued 18 June 2014 providing Syrian refugee students a tuition waiver within the public university system. This was later extended to all universities in the country. Further legislation has exempted all Syrians in undergraduate, two-year associate and graduate programmes from tuition fees at all public universities (Council of Minister Decrees 2014/6787 and 2015/8040). These initiatives led to steadily increasing university attendance, from 4,597 undergraduate students in 2014-2015 to 12,467 students in 2016-2017. Together with students attending graduate programmes at Turkish universities, the total number of Syrian students in higher education reached 30,291 in 2018 (Ministry of National Education, 2018).

The largest obstacle to Syrians' integration in the higher education system in Turkey remains language – a problem faced in many refugee and migration contexts (Erisman and Looney, 2007; Yavcan and El-Ghali, 2017). Efforts are being made to overcome this, such as expansion of post-admission language courses provided in the regions by TOMER, the Turkish and Foreign Languages Research and Application Center of Ankara University. Also, the Higher Education Council has issued a regulation allowing regional universities to offer programmes in Arabic (Yavcan and El-Ghali, 2017: 27). Universities in Hatay, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa approved Arabic programmes starting in the 2016-2017 academic year.

Some of the other persisting challenges, according to Yavcan and El-Ghali (*ibid.*: 35-36), are low class attendance, problems related to academic performance and financial difficulties. To provide financial support, various scholarships are being offered: by the Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), by UNHCR Turkey and by other international initiatives such as the HOPES programme (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians), the EU's Madad Fund and the Spark Fellowship programme supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*ibid.*: 28-29).

Healthcare

Articles 56 and 60 of the Turkish Constitution entitle every individual to social security and a healthy living environment (Republic of Turkey, n.d.). Circular No. 2010/16 ensures free emergency healthcare services to all, with no distinction made between private and public healthcare institutions (Prime Ministry, 2016). Foreign nationals from countries with which Turkey has a bilateral agreement and who work on the payroll of a company resident in Turkey are eligible for social security and healthcare benefits in Turkey (ADMD Law Office, 2018). The LFIP and Temporary Protection Regulation entitle international protection beneficiaries, including Syrians with temporary protection status, access to social support and medical care (Ayman, Aydın and Kocak, 2018: 560). However, Syrians' access to healthcare is valid only in the city where they are registered, though some studies suggest that under certain conditions they may be able to use care facilities elsewhere (Mardin, 2017: 3). The Ministry of Health provides healthcare services for Syrians in temporary accommodation centres, and unregistered Syrians receive emergency care and some essential public health services free of charge (*ibid.*). According to AFAD's 2013 survey, Syrian migrants' satisfaction with the health services they received was 60% within the camps and 80% outside the camps (AFAD, 2013).

Meanwhile, pressure on the health services has mounted. The numbers of patients seeking treatment in Turkey's care facilities increased considerably with the influx of Syrian refugees. By 2015, more than 500,000 patients had been transferred to hospitals from camps, though these hospitals were often ill-equipped to meet the needs (Oytun and Senyucel-Gundogar, 2015). By 2018, Syrian patients had received some 20 million treatments in outpatient clinics, and 1 million surgeries involving Syrian patients had taken place (TGNA, 2018: 195). A study by the Union of Turkish Doctors pointed to problems of overcrowding in public hospitals, especially those in border provinces, where capacities have been particularly strained since the arrival of the Syrians (TTB, 2017). Such problems have led to social tensions, as locals complain that their own access and quality of services have been affected. Here, like in education, the language barrier is a major obstacle to fulfilment of refugees' right to healthcare (Kirişçi, 2014: 28). Some studies note registration problems, and difficulties presented by refugees' limited access to care outside their city of registration (Mardin, 2017: 6). Language and registration problems have led some to seek care at unregistered health centres, often run by immigrants unable to legally practice their professions in Turkey (TTB, 2017). In 2017, an estimated 2,500-3,000 physicians, 700-800 pharmacists and 5,000 other healthcare workers from Syria were living in Turkey (ibid.).

To better coordinate healthcare services for immigrants and refugees, the Ministry of Health established a new unit called the Department of Migration Health, under its Directorate General of Public Health. To overcome capacity problems and related issues, the Ministry of Health established 103 Migrant Health Centres (MHCs) within the framework of the Sihat project, funded by €300 million from the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (TGNA, 2018: 257). In the MHCs, Syrian healthcare personnel provide services to Syrians under temporary protection with supervision provided by Turkish doctors. In 2017, 764,000 healthcare consultations were provided in the MHCs, and routine vaccinations were provided to 413,000 Syrian refugee children under the age of five. In addition, more than 2,200 Syrian doctors and nurses were trained and certified, of whom more than 780 now work in MHCs throughout the country. Another 1,600 Syrian doctors and nurses are still to be employed. The EU has committed to supporting 178 MHCs, in addition to 10 community mental health centres for refugees (EU, 2018).

The integration of Syrian healthcare personnel into the Turkish public health system requires long-term planning that considers the service needs of both the Syrian and Turkish populations (EU, 2018). Syrian professionals still face numerous difficulties, not least in using the health records system, due to the language barrier. However, the MHCs have been successful overall in addressing the language problems encountered by Syrian patients and in tackling the issue of overcrowding in public healthcare facilities (TTB, 2017). The World Health Organization (WHO) and the University of Gaziantep have developed a curriculum for training Syrian doctors and nurses (3RP, 2017). In the area of women's and girls' health, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Turkey, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies have established "women's and girls' safe spaces" for services related to reproductive health and gender-based violence (UNFPA, 2018).

The property market and housing

Cities that host sizeable populations of Syrian refugees have experienced housing shortages and rising rents (Erdoğan, 2014). Indeed, Syrians' demand for housing, coupled with housing shortages, has led to a doubling of prices. In the south-eastern provinces of Gaziantep, Kilis and Şanlıurfa, rents have risen three- to four-fold since 2011 (Hürriyet Daily News, 2014). From 2011 to 2014, for instance, rent for a stove-heated house increased from approximately US \$53 to \$152 (100 to 350 TL) in Kilis, from \$79 to

\$174 (150 to 400 TL) in Şanlıurfa and from \$79 to \$174-217 (150 to 400-500 TL) in Gaziantep (Hürriyet Daily News, 2014).⁷

The sharp increase in rents is also related to the fact that Syrians are prohibited from owning property in Turkey, due to a legal impediment dating from Turkey's 1934 Law on Property (No. 2644, Article 35(2)). To overcome this stipulation, it has become common practice for Syrian refugees to buy property registered under the name of a Turkish national, as this author observed in fieldwork in 2017 and 2018. Accordingly, it is not possible to provide numbers of Syrians owning property, and hence to assess the refugees' impact on housing from this angle.

Apart from the state-run temporary protection centres, there are currently no other public housing options available to Syrian refugees in urban areas. The Housing Development Administration (TOKI), under the Prime Ministry, is the main official institution dealing with housing and settlement issues, mainly for low- and middle-income families. In July 2016 Turkish authorities mentioned the possibility of providing long-term mortgages for purchasing TOKI housing. However, no such legislative amendments have been forthcoming (Içduygu and Şimşek, 2016: 68). As one of the few efforts to overcome housing shortages, the Gaziantep metropolitan area has established a partnership with TOKI for a mass construction project to house some 250,000 people (Milliyet, 2017).

Environment and waste

Although no nationwide impact statistics are available, reports suggest that more than 550,000 tons of additional waste per year are being generated in the region of South-East Anatolia alone due to the presence of the Syrian refugees (UNDP Turkey, 2017). Hosting more than 350,000 Syrian refugees, Gaziantep is one of the cities that is experiencing the most severe strains on municipal services and infrastructure. To minimise such pressures, the municipality partnered UNDP Turkey from 2015 to 2017 in a project to increase solid waste management capacities in Gaziantep and Kilis. Part of that project was to construct facilities for the efficient transport of 164 tons of solid waste per day from the city centres and Gaziantep's two temporary accommodation centres (UNDP Turkey, 2017).

3.3 Perceptions, politics and diplomacy

Perceptions and politics

Leaving aside long-standing bilateral disputes, Turkey and Syria normalised their relations in the 2000s and created a framework for cooperation in a range of policy areas, including security, trade, public health and agriculture.⁸ Following the signing of a free trade agreement in 2004 (effective in 2007), trade between the two countries more than doubled from 2007 to 2009, rising from US \$795 million to \$1.6 billion (Bilefsky, 2010). While Turkey was not among Syria's top-five export markets in 2000, it became first in 2010 (Bilgic-Apaslan, 2012). Prior to the outbreak of the Syrian conflict, the Turkish-Syrian High-Level Strategic Council had adopted more than 60 cooperation agreements, including a bilateral mobility agreement dated September 2009 which mutually cancelled visa requirements for their

⁷ US dollar equivalents were calculated by the author using the exchange rate of December 2011 (US \$1=1.9 TL) and December 2014 (US \$1=2.3 TL).

⁸ For in-depth accounts of Turkey-Syria relations, see Bishku (2012), Hinnbusch and Tür (2013), Ilgit and Davis (2013) and Abboud (2016).

respective citizens, allowing visa-free entry for tourism for up to 90 days (MFA, 2017). The following year, 1.35 million Turks visited Syria and 750,000 Syrians visited Turkey (Bishku, 2012). The mobility agreement paved the way for the free border crossings early in the crisis.

As observed by Düvell (2013), faced with a refugee influx of this scale, many European countries would likely have experienced a “moral panic”, though this has not been the case in Turkey. Turkish society has exhibited remarkable political and social resilience, owing mainly to the country’s prior experience in dealing with large-scale refugee influxes. Nevertheless, the protracted nature of the crisis has affected host-country perceptions and social integration issues.⁹ In 2015 the Syrian refugee situation rose to the fore in media reports and domestic political discourse. This was due in part to national circumstances, as Turkey held two general elections that year. Moreover, the route followed by the Syrian refugees, travelling via Turkey to Europe, became highly mediatised at that time, spurring intense public debate (Memişoğlu and Başol, 2018 forthcoming). During the campaign period for the 7 June national elections, while some opposition parties kept a moderate tone, others occasionally opted for an anti-refugee rhetoric (Oruç, 2015). Enforced return of refugees to Syria was a recurring theme during the campaigns, especially in the discourse of the main opposition party, CHP. Though enforced return was usually suggested in such a way as to be for the benefit of the refugees themselves, it nevertheless received criticism from rights-based groups (TRT Haber, 2015; Ilgit and Memişoğlu, 2017).¹⁰ AKP’s loss of its parliamentary majority with the 7 June elections, combined with the subsequent failed coalition attempts, nurtured doubts among Syrian refugees regarding their future in Turkey, which may help us to understand why so many refugees decided to leave for Europe during the summer months of 2015 (Memişoğlu and Başol, 2018 forthcoming). Yet, it is equally important to bear in mind other factors not involving Turkey directly, such as intensification of the conflict in Syria and the increasingly restrictive admission policies of EU countries and other major host countries in the region. These ‘cornered and concentrated migrants and refugees in Turkey’ (Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2015: 18).

Following the AKP’s formation of a government after the November 2015 elections, Turkey stepped up efforts to plan for the future of Syrian refugees within the country. This coincided with the EU’s growing engagement with Turkey on the issue and the EU’s commitment of more financial assistance to Turkey to support the socio-economic integration of refugees.

Against this background, and as the Syrian refugee situation dragged on, integration of Syrians into the social and economic fabric of Turkish society became a prominent topic on the domestic policy agenda. The language barrier was the problem most commonly cited as impeding Syrians’ economic, social and cultural inclusion (Içduygu, 2015; Çorabatır, 2016; Şimşek and Çorabatır, 2016; Memişoğlu, 2018). Meanwhile, the pace of integration and relations between the refugees and their host communities varied across the regions, with local circumstances and characteristics either facilitating or impeding the integration process.

Some studies suggest that historical and kinship ties and demographic characteristics of the host city or district, such as ethnic background, have been the most significant determinants of the conditions of Syrian refugees and the attitudes of host communities towards them (Içduygu, 2015). Syrian Kurds, for example, may find it easier to settle in areas with a sizeable Kurdish community, while an ethnic solidarity may be observed between Turks and refugees of Turkmen origin (Kirişçi, 2014). Similarly, Syrian refugees may find it easier to live in neighbourhoods with a sizeable Arabic-speaking community

⁹ For shifts and continuities in domestic perceptions of Syrian refugees, see Erdoğan (2014) and Erdoğan (2017).

¹⁰ Although prominent figures from the ruling party AKP also employed the return rhetoric, their remarks emphasised return as conditional upon the restoration of peace in Syria.

(Turkish citizens), as in Adana and Şanlıurfa, as confirmed by this author's fieldwork observations in these cities in 2017 and 2018. A common language in such neighbourhoods is an advantage and helps give Syrians some sense of social inclusion.

Economic factors also play a role, however, in host communities' attitudes towards Syrian refugees. Host communities have been particularly affected by rising rents and housing costs, greater competition for jobs and the emergence of Syrian business owners (Erdogan, 2014). A study in Mezitli District in Mersin found that locals had a high level of acceptance of Syrians socially; however, when the Syrians' presence affected economic life, such as when Syrians received the legal right to work in Turkey, negative perceptions prevailed. Some 34.5% of local respondents had a generally negative attitude, stating 'Syrians should not be allowed to work', while 41.3% said they should be offered temporary work permits (Aktas and Gülçür, 2017: 243).

Turkey has no dedicated anti-discrimination legislation. However, its penal code contains anti-discrimination provisions concerning racism and punishments for those who discriminate on the grounds of language, race, colour or religion in employment and access to services available to the public and in the exercise of an economic activity (Penal Code of Turkey, No. 5237, Article 122-1a, b, c). Experts nonetheless report a role played by mass media in triggering negative attitudes towards foreigners in Turkey, Syrian refugees in particular (e.g., Memişoğlu, 2018). As will be discussed below, DGMM is working on a comprehensive integration strategy to minimise prejudice against refugees and to eliminate dissemination of misleading information concerning refugees.

Diplomacy

The Turkish government has been internationally praised for its leadership in management of the refugee influx and its provision of generous humanitarian assistance to millions of Syrian refugees. The 2017 Annual Report of the Regional Refugee Resilience Plan (3RP, 2017: 8) states, 'Turkey's 3RP consistently stands out for its strong national ownership and leadership, with UN and NGO partners supporting the Government of Turkey and the established national asylum framework.' However, the cost of maintaining these high standards, especially the initial encampment policy, has been exceptionally high, particularly set against the limited financial support Turkey has received from the international community. An assessment by the Human Rights Commission of the Turkish Parliament found that Turkey had spent more than US \$25 billion on Syrian refugees as of May 2018 (TGNA, 2018: 134). Meanwhile, the country had reportedly received just \$455 million in international financial assistance (ibid.: 76). The durable solution of refugee resettlements to third countries has also been strikingly absent for Syrians in Turkey. According to DGMM, less than 1% of Turkey's Syrian refugee population had been resettled to third countries as of July 2018. Although Turkey initially chose to accommodate the Syrian refugees mostly at its own expense, the Turkish authorities have gradually become more critical and vocal about the lack of global responsibility-sharing mechanisms.

Indeed, cooperation frameworks with various international agencies, the UN agencies in particular, have evolved over the years. Together with AFAD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided coordination and facilitation between national governmental bodies, the UN partners, the international financial institutions and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Line ministries have been central actors too, particularly in carrying out projects with international partners such as the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey.

Since 2015, the 3RP framework has provided coordinated support in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. It brings together more than 270 actors from the UN system, NGOs and the private sector (3RP, 2017: 12). In 2017, 3RP released the first full-fledged two-year response plan for Turkey supporting humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable Syrian refugees and strengthening medium- and long-term resilience interventions (ibid.: 8). 3RP funding for Turkey in 2017 was categorised as follows:

- **Protection.** Turkey received US \$91 million (45% of the required \$204 million) and 2.3 million refugees were supported (80% of the targeted 2.86 million refugees)
- **Food security.** Turkey received \$26 million (33% of the required \$76 million) and 181,825 people were assisted (35% of the targeted 526,250 people)
- **Education.** Turkey received \$119 million (44% of the required \$271 million), assisting 732,193 refugees (surpassing the targeted number of 669,122)
- **Health and nutrition.** Turkey received \$28 million (58% of the required \$48 million) assisting 871,005 people (58% of the targeted number of 1.5 million)
- **Basic needs.** Turkey received \$32 million (17% of the required \$186 million), assisting 1.71 million people (42% of the targeted number of 4.03 million)
- **Shelter.** Turkey received no funding
- **Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).** Turkey received no funding, but assisted 305,799 people (40% of the targeted number of 757,580)
- **Livelihoods and social cohesion.** Turkey received \$20 million (19% of the required \$105 million), assisting 87,414 people (46% of the targeted number of 191,161)
- **Overall.** Turkey received \$316 million, equivalent roughly to 35-40% of the required amount (3RP, 2017: 34)¹¹

Turkey has developed a cooperation framework with the EU in the field of migration and asylum. Together, they have begun implementing a multifaceted agreement designed to curb the irregular flow of Syrians to Europe and improve the conditions for refugees in Turkey. Following adoption of the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan in November 2015, the European Council and Turkey reached an agreement usually referred to as the 18 March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement (European Commission, 2015). That statement includes the following provisions:

- 1) All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands as of 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey;
- 2) For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU;
- 3) Turkey will take any necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for irregular migration opening from Turkey to the EU;
- 4) Once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU are ending or have been substantially reduced, a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme will be activated;
- 5) The fulfilment of the visa liberalisation roadmap will be accelerated with a view to lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens at the latest by the end of June 2016. Turkey will take all the necessary steps to fulfil the remaining requirements;



¹¹ The report states that Turkey received US \$392 million, but the numbers add up to \$316 million according to this author's tally.

- 6) The EU will, in close cooperation with Turkey, further speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated €3 billion under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. Once these resources are about to be used in full, the EU will mobilise additional funding for the Facility up to an additional €3 billion by the end of 2018;
- 7) The EU and Turkey welcomed the ongoing work on the upgrading of the Customs Union.
- 8) The accession process will be re-energised, with Chapter 33 opened during the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union and preparatory work on the opening of other chapters to continue at an accelerated pace;
- 9) The EU and Turkey will work to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria (European Parliament, 2018).

Further on the international stage, Turkey actively contributed to the preparation and drafting of two UN global compacts: the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees (Memişoğlu and Eryurt, 2018 forthcoming). The country hosted several national and regional meetings on the compacts (ibid.). At an international meeting moderated by Turkey that took place in Geneva in June 2017, the Turkish delegation proposed following points for inclusion in the global compact:

- Emphasis on the development-migration nexus, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to introduce policy practices that can be implemented by states to enhance migrants' contributions to national development
- Maintaining a human rights-based approach to the management of global migration
- Emphasis on global responsibility-sharing mechanisms for refugees and enhanced coordination among international stakeholders for the well-being of migrants worldwide
- Presentation of a code of conduct and principles for collecting and analysing data on migration
- Work towards elimination of the root causes of irregular migration, emphasising peace processes and peaceful resolution of conflicts in affected areas
- Provision of development and humanitarian assistance to source and transit countries of migration
- Strengthening and expanding the number of regional and global initiatives promoting international and regional cooperation in the field of migration, such as the Budapest Process currently chaired by Turkey
- Promoting ratification of the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families by more state parties (Memişoğlu and Eryurt, 2018 forthcoming)¹²

¹² These points are based on the concept note shared by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the rapporteurs of the Migration Expert Commission Report for the 11th National Development Plan (2018-2023). See, Memişoğlu and Eryurt (2018 forthcoming).

4 Protection and development policies

4.1 Evolution of the legal framework

As a country that has experienced a number of past mass refugee influxes (Kirişçi, 1996), the Turkish government has maintained an open-border policy almost continually since the arrival of the first 252 Syrian refugees on 29 April 2011 (DGMM, 2015). The country then declared a “temporary protection regime”, covering all Syrians, Palestinians from Syria and stateless persons from Syria. This temporary protection regime initially guaranteed unlimited stay, protection against involuntary returns and access to reception arrangements. Syrians have not been granted official refugee status, however, as Turkey retains a geographical limitation on its ratification of the 1951 Geneva Convention. However, it has expanded the scope of temporary protection, providing Syrian refugees a legal status and facilitating their access to public services, including education and healthcare, as well as to the labour market.

At the initial stages of the refugee influx, most Syrian refugees were accommodated in state-run camps, officially known as temporary accommodation centres, set up by Turkey’s main emergency management body, AFAD, in areas close to the border. From 2014 onwards, DGMM, Turkey’s new migration authority, took charge of registering new arrivals and referring them either to camps or to cities, in coordination with AFAD and provincial authorities. As the crisis became increasingly protracted, with growing refugee arrivals, the camps reached full capacity and Syrians began settling more in urban areas. Currently less than 6% of all Syrian refugees live in camps. As discussed in the previous section, the growth of the urban refugee population has placed mounting pressure on public systems and services, causing housing shortages, rent increases, growing unregistered employment and job competition with host communities (International Crisis Group, 2014, 2016). From the perspective of Syrian refugees, the language barrier has been a major challenge hindering their socio-economic integration (Memişoğlu, 2018). These changing dynamics brought social integration issues to the fore, making “social harmonisation”, as it is officially called and inter-communal relations prominent issues on the domestic scene. Although some of these challenges still persist, Turkey has made significant progress in improving access to education, healthcare and social services, and in policies to give refugees access to the formal labour market.

For a considerable time, the Turkish government regarded the Syrian refugee situation as temporary, as reflected in its referring to the Syrian refugees as “guests”. As a result, most early policy responses took the form of secondary legislation shaped by short-term goals mainly targeting the most urgent humanitarian and social needs of the burgeoning Syrian population. As the crisis continued with no political solution foreseeable for the war in Syria, the Turkish authorities found themselves at the critical juncture of acknowledging the prospect of refugees remaining long term in the country. In November 2014, former Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmuş signalled a shift in the government’s public discourse when he declared: ‘The 1.6 million Syrians are here to stay’ (Hürriyet, 2014). This statement came right after adoption of the Regulation on Temporary Protection on 13 October 2014. This regulation provided for Syrians’ access to social services, including education and medical care, financial assistance, interpretation services and the labour market.

According to the World Bank (2015), the Turkish government has established a global model for refugee response with two distinctive features. First, driven by the pace and scale of the Syrian refugee arrivals, the government adopted a “no-camp approach”, shifting away from emergency responses towards development-sensitive long-term planning. When complemented with adequate protection and mobility, this approach can give refugees opportunity to become socially and economically self-reliant, while increasing their potential to contribute to their host country’s economy and have a successful return once conditions normalise (ibid.: 2). However, the World Bank also acknowledges the potential of such policy to exacerbate housing shortages, increase unemployment, overstretch social assistance programmes and raise tensions between host communities and refugees. In fact, a number of studies have found that in Turkey such problems have arisen particularly in cities hosting sizeable refugee populations (Erdogan, 2014; Oytun and Senyuçel-Gundogar, 2015; World Bank, 2015).

The second distinctive feature of Turkey’s policy framework is its ‘government-financed approach’ (World Bank, 2015: 5). The Turkish authorities have maintained a high standard of emergency assistance, especially in the camps. However, the sustainability of this level of assistance is questionable given the limited financial support provided by the international community. It may also be doubtful that sufficient international funding will ultimately be provided to deliver a sustainable response.

While the Syrian refugee influx has placed Turkey in a position of greater importance on the international migration scene, it has also increased the domestic significance of migration management as a field of public policy (Memişoğlu and Eryurt, 2018 forthcoming). As will be elaborated below, Turkey has progressively expanded the scope of its temporary protection framework over the years. The Syrian conflict’s potential spillover effects on Turkey, and the unforeseen scale of the displacement, also led authorities to impose certain restrictive policies to safeguard national security interests. In this regard, a key turning point was the terrorist attacks of February and May 2013. In February explosives were detonated at the US embassy in Ankara, killing two; in May, twin bombs went off in central Reyhanlı, near the Syrian border, killing at least 51 and injuring 140. This led to recognition of a possible link between Syrian refugee movements and the terrorist threat. Restrictive policies were then implemented, affecting the mobility of Syrian refugees both within Turkey and in international travel. Syrians under temporary protection were required to obtain a travel document from their DGMM provincial directorate prior to travelling within Turkey. Furthermore, a visa requirement was imposed on those arriving in Turkey from third countries, alongside stricter border security and the wall built along part of the Syrian border. As discussed earlier, restrictions on mobility were also a product of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement, which required Turkey to take measures to curb irregular migration flows from Turkey to the EU.

4.2 Refugee protection-focused policies

Under Article 3 of the Temporary Protection Regulation enacted in October 2014, temporary protection was granted to foreigners ‘forced to leave their countries and ...unable to return to the countries they left and arrived at or crossed [Turkey’s] borders in masses to seek urgent and temporary protection and whose international protection requests cannot be taken under individual assessment’ (Republic of Turkey, n.d.). In practice, this created an alternative asylum system for mass influxes, operating in parallel to the international protection system for individual applicants (Corabatir, 2016).

While aligned with the general principles of the EU Directive on Temporary Protection (Council Directive, 2001), Turkey’s temporary protection regime has some key differences. Whereas the EU Directive states that temporary protection is granted for a maximum duration of three years, the Turkish law

sets no limit of stay for those under temporary protection. Meanwhile, Turkey's temporary protection regime does not automatically allow temporary protection beneficiaries to switch to the other types of international protection stipulated in the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP). After completing the registration procedure, refugees are provided identification (ID) cards and a registration number which give them access to all of the rights and services enshrined in the Temporary Protection Regulation. However, these ID cards are not equivalent to a residence permit, and they do not provide a path to long-term residence in Turkey (Simsek and Corabatir, 2016).

Furthermore, the specifics and implementation framework of temporary protection are determined by the Council of Ministers. The regulation states that when the Council of Ministers decides to terminate the status, the following decisions may be taken: (1) to fully suspend the temporary protection and return temporary protection beneficiaries to their countries; (2) to collectively grant a status which the temporary protection beneficiaries satisfy, or to individually assess the applications of those who applied for international protection; and (3) to allow persons benefitting from temporary protection to stay in Turkey subject to conditions to be determined within the scope of LFIP. Accordingly, the future legal status of Syrians is in part a matter of political discretion, rather than being solely based on the legal framework for refugee protection (Memişoğlu, 2018: 13). However, the regulation does protect all Syrian refugees against forced return to Syria (UNHCR, 2018).

Syrians seeking protection in Turkey are obliged to register with the authorities in order to receive healthcare and education services, social assistance, psychological support and access to the labour market within the temporary protection framework. Since early 2016, Syrians have been subject to a pre-registration phase (and security check) before being registered as temporary protection beneficiaries. Applicants who pass the security check are provided a temporary protection ID card by DGMM; those who do not pass the security check within 30 days are interviewed by DGMM before further action is taken (UNHCR, 2018).¹³ Due to their large numbers, refugees are said to face substantial delays in getting pre-registration appointments, and the issuing of ID cards is halted at times. This has negatively affected the circumstances of some refugees, particularly those in need of healthcare and other public services (International Crisis Group, 2016: 8; AIDA, 2018). Certain vulnerable refugee groups (children aged 0-12, refugees in need of urgent medical treatment, pregnant women, persons over age 65 and unaccompanied children) are issued ID cards without awaiting completion of the 30-day pre-registration phase, according to the 27 November 2017 DGMM Circular on Principles and Procedures for Foreigners under Temporary Protection.

Being offered a legal status that carries the term “temporary” itself poses challenges for Syrian refugees in their daily lives. First, the explicit temporary character of this status, coupled with the common labelling of Syrians as “guests” from the early days of their arrival, has made it difficult for Syrian refugees to figure out their future prospects in Turkey. Second, the general lack of awareness among the public about temporary protection, alongside frequent changes in administrative procedures and discrepancies between central-level policies and local-level implementation, have marred the Syrians’ sense of legal stability in Turkey (Memişoğlu, 2018: 13). Third, the language barrier, the complexity of the Turkish bureaucracy and the general confusion among refugees regarding where to obtain reliable information on their legal status have compounded miscomprehensions among Syrian refugees about the actual scope of their legal rights and obligations (ibid.: 14).

¹³ For applicants who do not pass the security checks, the authorities take necessary measures in accordance with LFIP Articles 52 and 60. See, DGMM Circular on Principles and Procedures for Foreigners under Temporary Protection, 27 November 2017.

A major protection-related challenge, which also has a bearing on development policies, is the fact that some 18% of the Syrians under temporary protection live below the extreme poverty line, according to May 2017 statistics. This indicates that they lack the means to provide for even their most basic needs (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2017). In an attempt to alleviate the hardship of the poorest, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme was launched as part of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey. This is a large-scale multi-purpose cash assistance initiative to complement existing national social assistance programmes. The Ministry of Family and Social Policy, the Directorate General of Citizenship and Population Affairs, AFAD, DGMM and the Turkish Red Crescent implement the scheme, which currently provides assistance to 1.3 million vulnerable Syrian refugees. Refugee families receive 120 TL (around US \$34) per family member per month.¹⁴ The money is delivered via a debit card, also known as a “Kızılay card”, which can be used to pay for food, rent, fuel, medicine and other bills (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2017). Refugees eligible for ESSN are single adult females between ages 18 and 59 with no other family members; single parents with no other adults (ages 18-59) in the family and with at least one child under age 18; the elderly, age 60 and older, with no other adults (ages 18-59) in the family; families with one or more disabled people; families with four or more children; and families with a large number of dependents (Turkish Red Crescent, 2018a).

4.3 Development-related policies

In 2011, the State Planning Organisation, which has existed since the early 1960s, was reorganised to form the Ministry of Development.¹⁵ The Ministry of Development is responsible for planning and guiding Turkey’s development, coordinating policies and strategy development at the national and regional level, and carrying out studies and preparing major policy documents and plans (Ministry of Development, 2018). Twenty-six regional development agencies operate under the Ministry of Development, working on regional strategies and development issues (OECD, 2014).

A key resource for understanding Turkey’s development policy is the five-year national development plans that have been continuously formulated and adopted since establishment of the State Planning Organisation. The Ministry of Development also prepares yearly programmes, in line with the priorities set out in the development plans. The drafting of the forthcoming 11th National Development Plan (2019-2023) is currently nearing completion, coordinated by the Ministry of Development. Preparation of the plan has involved meetings of 43 working groups with different specialisations, including one on migration policies. Each specialised working group prepared a report or needs assessment in their specific area, and these were later fed into the larger planning process.¹⁶

The previous 10th National Development Plan (2014-2018) outlines Turkey’s medium-term priorities. The document does not specifically address forced displacement in the context of the Syrian refugee influx, perhaps due to policymakers’ perception of the influx as temporary at the time. However, some of the priorities in the plan are closely linked to international migration and the Syrian refugee situa-

¹⁴ US dollar equivalents were calculated by the author using the exchange rate of the source date, which was August 2017: 1TL=US \$3.5.

¹⁵ As noted in the introduction, the Ministry of Development is still undergoing a reorganisation process. It is too early to comment on its new institutional structure.

¹⁶ Although the reports of the specialised working groups are not yet publicly available online, information on the working procedures is available (in Turkish) at www.kalkinma.gov.tr/Lists/Yaynlar/Attachments/785/On Birinci Kalkınma Planı Özel İhtisas Komisyonları El Kitabı.pdf

tion. These were further elaborated in yearly programmes prepared by the Ministry of Development (Memişoğlu and Eryurt, 2018 forthcoming).

Measures to tackle irregular labour migration, for instance, were emphasised in the yearly programmes of 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. These highlight the need to strengthen inspection capacities and for the relevant authorities to undertake awareness-raising activities, especially targeting Syrians under temporary protection, the aim being to increase their knowledge on how to regularly access the labour market.

A priority formulated in detail in the 10th National Development Plan and in the subsequent yearly programmes is attracting a highly skilled international labour force (Ministry of Development, 2014: 10). Towards this objective, some crucial administrative and legislative steps were taken. In July 2016, the International Workforce Law (No. 6735) was passed covering all types of foreigners in Turkey. The law's preamble states that work permit applications from foreigners had reached 80,000 in 2015, up from 10,000 in 2009, signalling changing dynamics and the high potential of Turkey's international labour force.

The new law grants highly skilled foreigners an initial work permit for a period of one year with the possibility of a two- or three-year extension as long as the worker continues to be employed by the same employer. Persons holding a long-term residence permit or an eight-year work permit are eligible for an indefinite work permit. Certain groups may be exempted from the need for a work permit, particularly highly skilled professionals contributing to science and technology, EU member state citizens and persons of Turkish origin. This law also creates the "turquoise card", a new permanent work permit to facilitate the immigration of highly skilled foreigners to Turkey. Migrants' qualifications and their contributions to academia, industry, investment, science and technology are among the factors considered for eligibility. However, persons under temporary protection are not eligible to apply for a turquoise card (Law No. 6735, Article 11). Considering that Syrians constitute the largest foreign population in Turkey, incorporating qualified Syrians into this system, or formulating a similar policy for them, has been identified as a means to strengthen Turkey's labour force while helping to overcome employment-related barriers faced by highly skilled Syrian refugees (Memişoğlu and Eryurt, 2018 forthcoming).

The International Workforce Law also introduced a number of new institutional arrangements, such as establishment of the Directorate General of International Labour Force under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (at present restructured as the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services). The International Labour Force Advisory Board was also established with the aim of formulating a comprehensive and effective international labour force policy, with participation of the secretariat of the Directorate General of International Labour Force and other related institutions. As stipulated in the new law, decisions of the International Labour Force Advisory Board are to be made in conjunction with the Migration Policy Board¹⁷ (introduced below, see further the annex) with consideration of international labour mobility and regional developments, employment-related developments, sectoral and economic changes, development plans and programmes, and bilateral and multilateral treaties to which Turkey is a party. Coordination between the International Labour Force Policy Advisory Board and the Migration Policy Board could be of major importance in effectively integrating the development-migration relationship in policy implementation.

¹⁷ Along with transition to presidential system, the Migration Policy Board has been abolished (by Statutory Decree No. 703) and later renamed/restructured as Migration Board on 13 September 2018 (by Presidential Decree No. 17 dated 13 September 2018). For further information, see the annex.

As highlighted in the Ministry of Development's yearly programmes, the Turkish authorities have tackled multiple development-sensitive issues related to migration addressed in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. A foremost example is forced and child labour and human trafficking. In line with SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, Turkey is reformulating its anti-trafficking laws to provide comprehensive protection and assistance to victims. The National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (2017-2023), prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, emphasises migrant and refugee children under temporary protection as among those most vulnerable to child labour. It ensures that all action plans include and address their specific needs. More generally, progressive adjustments are being made in the national anti-trafficking institutional and legislative framework. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) established the Department of the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking under DGMM to carry out activities and actions related to combating human trafficking and protecting its victims. To implement its mandate, the Regulation on Combatting Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims (No. 29656) entered into force on 17 March 2016. This legislation lays out a comprehensive framework for identification and protection of domestic and foreign victims of human trafficking, as well as for the prevention and combating of crimes of human trafficking through institutional coordination and cooperation.¹⁸

The Ministry of Development (2017) summarises other priorities emphasised in the yearly development programmes as follows:

- Launch of a comprehensive data registration system for all foreigners including refugees (from the 2014 and 2015 programmes; the "GOC-NET" migration registration system became operational in 2015)
- Analysis of the impact of migration on cities hosting sizeable migrant and refugee populations and formulation of tailored policies to mitigate negative impacts (2015 programme)
- In line with Turkey's strategic goals and national interests, establishment of the Migration Policy Board, composed of high-level officials from relevant institutions, to guide formulation and implementation of national migration policies and strategies (2016 and 2017 programmes)
- Preparation of a national migration policy document, in line with SDG 10, to reduce inequality within and among countries (2018 programme)
- Development and implementation of harmonisation and integration policies and programmes for migrants and refugees legally residing in Turkey (2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 programmes)

The "harmonisation and integration" priority has its legal basis in the LFIP, which stipulates that DGMM should facilitate a mutual harmonisation and integration process for foreigners and host communities with the assistance of relevant stakeholders and support their self-determination by helping them acquire knowledge and new skills (LFIP, Article 96). To this end, DGMM has prepared a draft harmonisation strategy and national action plan outlining seven strategic priorities:

- In the context of legal harmonisation, strengthening the legal status of migrants and their access to rights and services
- Strengthening reception, orientation and access to information services for migrants
- In the context of harmonisation of the education system, enhancing migrants' regular access to all levels of education and development of teaching materials aligned with the needs of migrants and benefiting from cultural pluralism in the education system

¹⁸ The regulation also attempts to align the national legislation with the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which Turkey ratified 2 May 2016.

- In the context of harmonisation of healthcare services, improvement of migrants' efficient access to healthcare services, providing "migrant-friendly" healthcare
- In the context of harmonisation of the labour market, analysis, planning and support of migrants' inclusion in the labour market, protecting and promoting migrants' labour rights
- In the context of harmonisation of social assistance, development of inclusive social assistance programmes for migrants and strengthening these programmes' integration aspects, while enhancing inter-agency coordination among institutions in this area
- In the context of harmonisation and civic participation, management of host community perceptions in such a way as to contribute to social harmonisation, enhanced inter-communal dialogue, opportunities for migrants to take part in decision-making mechanisms and inclusion of migrants in migration policymaking

5 Conclusion


This report has assessed the impact of the Syrian refugee influx on Turkey and described Turkey's national response, focusing on two key dimensions: refugee protection and the development-related policies that have been formulated within the temporary protection framework currently offered to the more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees in country. As discussed, Turkey's policies have undergone considerable evolution. Initially, short-term measures were implemented, aimed at meeting the most urgent humanitarian needs of the rapidly growing refugee population. These policies, however, were later shifted towards acknowledgement of the prospect of a medium- to long-term stay of Syrians in Turkey.

Syrian refugees in Turkey are a generally young population. The 0-18 age group currently comprises nearly half of their number, making access to education a particularly high policy priority looking forward. Regarding legal aspects, Turkey's temporary protection regime has developed both in response to the Syrian influx and in line with the country's newly reformed legislative and administrative framework in the field of migration and asylum. Turkey has substantially expanded the scope of protection it offers under its temporary protection regime, in line with the growing needs of the Syrian refugees. It has been especially active in facilitating refugees' access to education, healthcare and other social assistance programmes. Nevertheless, being offered a legal status that also happens to carry the term "temporary" poses challenges to the Syrian refugees in their daily lives, marring their sense of legal stability in Turkey.

Turkey's approach to the Syrian refugee crisis and its diplomatic engagement with international actors have been particularly noteworthy, especially the collaborative framework developed between Turkey and the UN agencies and the EU. Turkey and the EU began to implement a multifaceted agreement starting in March 2016, designed to curb the irregular flow of Syrians into Europe. That agreement entails direct financial assistance to Turkey for improving the conditions of the refugees it accommodates. The so-called EU Refugee Facility for Turkey funds various projects, including a large-scale cash-assistance scheme. However, very significant challenges facing Turkey remain, as global responsibility-sharing mechanisms have been largely absent. The international community has yet to provide adequate assistance to the main refugee-hosting countries in the region, given the scale and duration of the Syrian crisis.

This report raised questions regarding the sustainability of the services currently provided by the Turkish government, especially in light of the still limited international financial assistance and the striking lack of third-country refugee resettlements. Considering that nearly 20% of Syrian refugees are under the poverty line, getting by on meagre resources, the imminent need for greater commitment from the international community is undeniable. Responsibility-sharing mechanisms need to be improved to complement the national support systems erected within refugee-hosting countries.

This report also unpacked the sectoral impact of refugee arrivals, discussing refugees' considerable impact on the Turkish economy and labour market, on education, healthcare and housing, and on the environment and waste management. Furthermore, Syrians' arrival on the formal and informal labour market, as employees and as self-employed persons, has had multiple effects on the Turkish economy.



This analysis pointed to the need for inclusive development strategies, for two main reasons. First, inclusive policies would facilitate Syrians' access to legal employment, thus minimising the problem of unregistered employment and conditions that create unfair competition on the labour market. Second, enhanced support mechanisms would help address the diverse needs of skilled Syrian professionals and facilitate their entry into the workforce. Such policies would positively impact the social acceptance and inclusion of Syrians within their host communities. To effectively implement inclusive development strategies, policies need to be complemented by capacity building measures within the relevant authorities. For example, employment of qualified personnel with relevant language and vocational skills would ease communication with migrants. Lifting restrictions on access to the labour market for professions such as dentists, lawyers, architects and engineers could be considered. Although one of the priorities identified by the 10th National Development Plan is to attract highly skilled foreigners, and steps have been taken towards this objective, Syrians under temporary protection are not currently included in the turquoise card scheme. Incorporating qualified Syrians into this system, or formulating a similar policy for the Syrian refugee population, would strengthen Turkey's own labour force.

Annex: Stakeholders and responsibilities

This annex seeks to clarify the responsibilities and mandates of Turkish stakeholders engaged in migration, as related to both refugee protection and development, following the recent institutional changes in the country.

In line with Turkey's strong state tradition (see Heper and Keyman, 1998), starting from its declaration of an open-border policy for Syrians fleeing war in 2011, Turkey's response to the Syrian refugee crisis has been led mainly by state actors. Meanwhile, institutional and policy frameworks have continuously been adapted to the changing dynamics of the refugee situation on the ground. The two key bodies coordinating the national response have been AFAD, under the Prime Ministry, and DGMM, under the Ministry of Interior. Policy formulation and implementation, however, have involved a range of state agencies, including the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of EU Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of National Education, alongside the various provincial branches of these ministries and local governments. The Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR) is the public body responsible for job placement services, collecting labour market information, undertaking labour market programmes and managing unemployment benefits. While ISKUR's provincial offices also assist foreigners, the agency does not yet have units specifically for assistance to foreigners at the national or local level.

International organisations work closely with governmental agencies and provide complementary support in assisting Syrian refugees. The foremost involved UN agencies are UNHCR, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), WHO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The EU is a major actor too, alongside intergovernmental organisations (such as ICMPD), foreign governmental institutions (e.g., Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)), and international NGOs such as GOAL, CARE, OXFAM and Save the Children. As will be elaborated below, local and national non-state actors have become important players as well.

AFAD, Turkey's main emergency management body, was established in 2009 to coordinate disaster and emergency relief, including mass population inflows. After setting up the first refugee camps for Syrians in 2011, AFAD was in charge of coordinating the refugee arrivals, initially in camps but later outside camps as well (AFAD, 2018). Given that DGMM became fully operational later, in 2014, AFAD had the leading role especially in the early years of the crisis, meeting the urgent humanitarian and social needs of the rapidly rising numbers of Syrians in Turkey. To accommodate and provide social services to Syrian refugees, AFAD had constructed, as of June 2018, 20 temporary accommodation centres. These hosted 220,000 people in 30,000 container dwellings and 27,000 tents. Some 6,000 of those in the camps are Iraqis, with the remaining population being Syrians under temporary protection (AFAD, 2018). The temporary accommodation centres have schools, health centres, consultancy and vocational training centres, and a political representation system by which camp residents can elect their own leaders (*ibid.*).

As is well documented in reports published by international organisations, the temporary protection centres provide a high standard of assistance to refugees (European Parliament, 2016; UNHCR, 2016; WHO, 2014). However, as the Syrian refugee situation has become increasingly protracted, the Turkish

government has shifted its emergency response to long-term planning for non-camp refugees. Policies facilitating socio-economic integration of refugees are gaining prominence. This has placed greater emphasis on the role of institutions such as DGMM and other governmental agencies actively working to formulate policies to address the integration process and obstacles.

A legislative amendment of January 2018 transferred the establishment, management and operation of the temporary accommodation centres from AFAD to DGMM. DGMM is now the sole authority responsible for the centres' management.

Following the entry into force of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP), DGMM became Turkey's core migration and asylum authority in charge of managing all foreigner-related issues, including entry and exit rules, visa regulations, residence permits, international protection and protection of victims of human trafficking. The LFIP established the Migration Policy Board, chaired by the Ministry of Interior and consisting of the undersecretaries of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Ministry of EU Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communication. The main objective of the Board is to determine Turkey's migration policies and strategies and monitor their implementation, to prepare strategy documents and programmes in the field of migration and to determine methods and measures to be applied in cases of mass influxes. It should however be noted that along with transition to presidential system, the Migration Policy Board has been abolished (see, Statutory Decree No. 703) and renamed/ restructured as Migration Board (see, Presidential Decree No. 17) on September 2018. As stipulated in the relevant decree, the Board is responsible for formulating, coordinating and implementation Turkey's migration strategies concerning foreigners. Chaired by the Minister of Interior, the Migration Board consists of representatives from the line Ministries, institutions and organisations as determined by the Ministry of Interior. The first meeting of the restructured Migration Board took place on 21 November 2018. As part of changes in administrative structures, it should also be noted several new policy boards have been established under the Presidency (See, Presidential Decree No.1). The Security and Foreign Policies Board within this new framework also has migration-related responsibilities, including formulation of national migration policies and strategies, monitoring and making recommendations on policy implementation, following international and regional developments concerning migration policies and legislation, and reporting on their reflections concerning Turkey.

The organisational structure of DGMM consists of three pillars: the central organisation, the local organisation and the foreign organisation. DGMM's local organisation became fully operational in all 81 provinces in May 2015, taking over the majority of foreigner-related responsibilities from the provincial police departments. The central organisation consists of 12 service units or departments. Within the foreign organisation, the International Protection Department was set up to carry out tasks and procedures related to temporary protection (DGMM, 2015, 2018a). The Temporary Protection Regulation identifies DGMM's tasks, including to conduct identification and registration procedures of foreigners seeking temporary protection, and refer them to temporary accommodation centres or to cites in coordination with the governorates and AFAD (Temporary Protection Regulation, Articles 21-24). Since early 2017, DGMM has carried out a verification project to update registration data on Syrians residing in Turkey under temporary protection. Coordinated centrally by DGMM, the project is conducted by the ministry's provincial directorates and supported by UNHCR Turkey. The verification project includes obtaining missing information and collecting biometric data, contact information and detailed background such as occupation, education and vulnerabilities of refugees (UNHCR, 2017b). DGMM is also responsible for issuing travel documents for Syrians under temporary protection, authorising resettlement procedures to a third country and evaluating requests for family reunification.

In line with national-level institutional mandates, the local response to the Syrian refugee influx has been undertaken mainly by the governorates, alongside representatives of the central administration and provincial units of the relevant governmental agencies, such as DGMM, AFAD, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). The governorates are also in charge of coordination between state and non-state actors, the UN agencies and other international agencies involved in the local refugee response within their provinces.

Local, national and international non-government actors have become important in complementing governmental services and assistance mechanisms for Syrian and other refugees in Turkey. A 2016 mapping study identified – in that year – 48 national and 17 international NGOs assisting Syrian refugees in Turkey (Syrian Refugees and NGOs in Turkey, 2016). Some were directly involved in providing humanitarian assistance, while others specialised in consultancy services, research, advocacy and awareness-raising targeting both refugees and host communities. Among these, the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) warrants particular note, with its long-standing track record in refugee advocacy and extensive nationwide network. Established in 1995, ASAM currently has 46 offices in 41 provinces. As an implementing NGO partner of government authorities and UNHCR Turkey, the organisation provides social, legal and psychosocial support; runs multi-service support centres; and carries out numerous courses and activities to facilitate refugee integration (SGDD, 2018).

On the humanitarian side, the Turkish Red Crescent/Kızılay, as Turkey's oldest and largest humanitarian NGO, has become a prominent actor in the refugee response. Aside from carrying out the ESSN scheme, the organisation operates 14 community centres across Turkey from which refugees and host communities alike can access services. Centres are currently located in Istanbul (2), Konya, Ankara, Kilis, Bursa, Izmir, Adana, Mersin, Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, Kahramanmaraş and Mardin (Turkish Red Crescent, 2018). As of March 2018, Kızılay community centres provided protection services to 86,000 people; psychosocial and health services to 93,000 people; social, cultural and harmonisation activities for 69,000 people; child and youth activities for 48,000 people; and livelihood support activities for 14,000 people (ibid.).

In major refugee-hosting cities, newly established and already existing local NGOs have become prominent actors in the local refugee response (Memişoğlu and Ilgit, 2017). In Şanlıurfa Province, for instance, more than 60 civil society organisations and unions worked in coordination under an umbrella organisation called the Humanitarian Association Platform. Since 2012, the platform has worked closely with the authorities to assist vulnerable Syrian refugees (Çorabatır and Hassa, 2013: 13). To enhance coordination among civil society actors, umbrella platforms also exist at the national level, such as the Centre of Refugee Aid Organisation, informally known as the Refugee Council, established in 2016. Coordinated by IGAMDER, a refugee-advocacy organisation based in Ankara, the centre brings together more than 20 rights-based and faith-based organisations, as well as associations founded by refugee communities (Kart, 2016; IGAMDER, 2018). In cities where Syrian refugees are more socio-economically active, Gaziantep and Mersin in particular, the number of formal NGOs run by Syrian refugees (which get the Turkish “association” status once registered) has surpassed 50. With offices in Gaziantep, Mersin and Istanbul, the Syrian Businessmen's Association (SIAD) is an influential NGO run by Syrian refugees who have set up businesses in Turkey.

The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) describes itself as the highest legal entity representing the private sector (TOBB, 2018). However, it has assumed no direct role in management of the Syrian refugee situation. Units of its provincial chambers of commerce and chambers of industry do contribute to the socio-economic integration of Syrian refugees. In Gaziantep, both the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industry have assumed proactive roles in offering consultancy services and language and vocational courses to Syrian refugees residing in their city (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017).

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