



EDUCATION OF SYRIAN CHILDREN IN TURKEY

CHALLENGES and RECOMMENDATIONS



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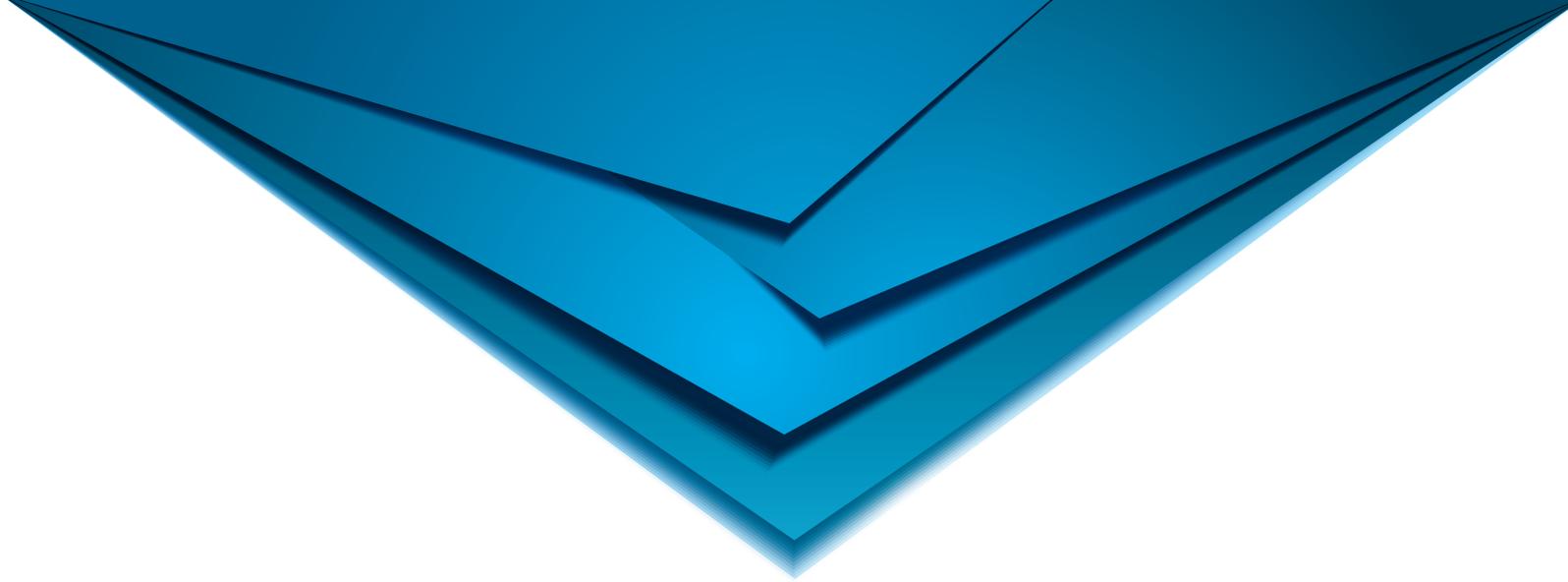
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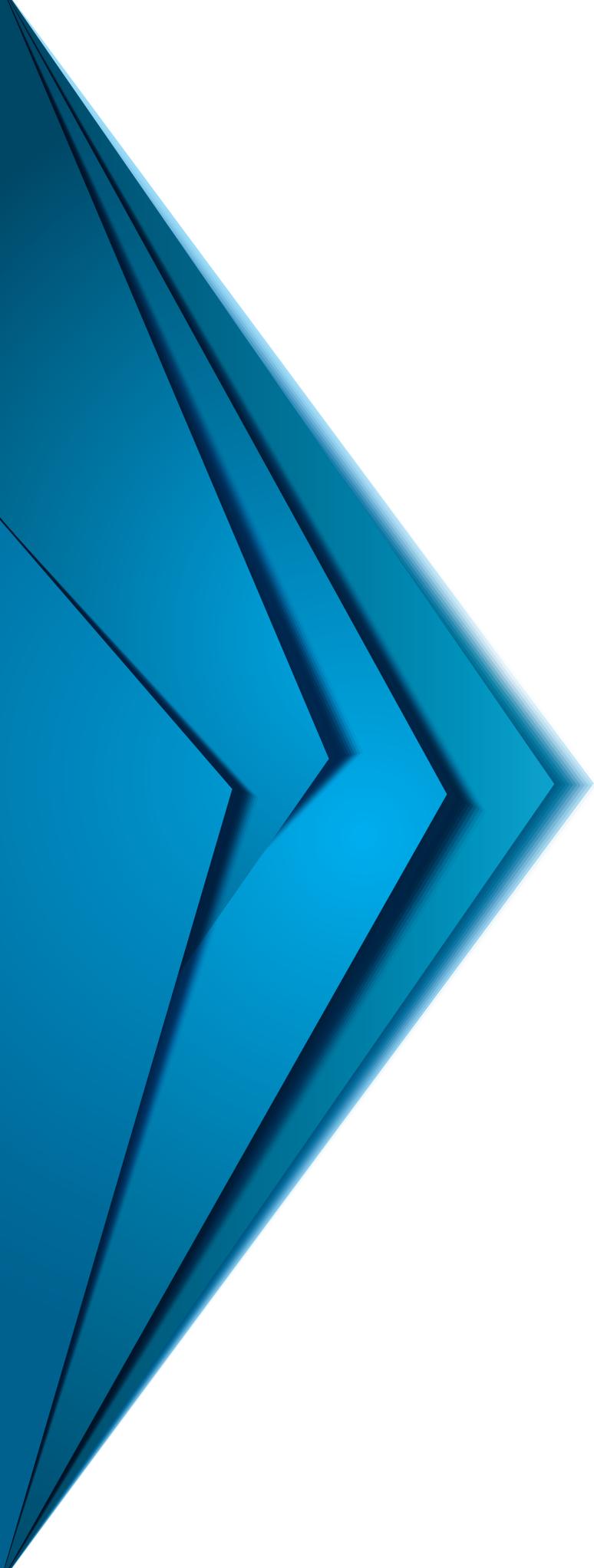
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EDUCATION OF SYRIAN CHILDREN IN TURKEY

CHALLENGES and RECOMMENDATIONS

Coşkun TAŞTAN
Zafer ÇELİK



PREFACE

PREFACE

Millions of people had to leave their country and seek refuge in neighboring countries since the civil war that has been raging in Syria since 2011. Turkey has become a refuge for Syrians during this period. As a result of this, over 3 million Syrians are living in the 81 provinces of Turkey. 1.5 million of the Syrians in Turkey are under the age of 18 and 1 million of them are school age children. More importantly, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have transitioned from childhood to adulthood in Turkey over the last six years. In an environment in which it is unclear when the war will end and stability in Syria will be achieved, hundreds of thousands more Syrian children will continue to live in Turkey and become adults. The skills and qualifications with which hundreds and thousands will enter adulthood are very important. Those young people who enter work life without adequate skills and qualifications will have to work in low skill jobs with low wages. This will lead to uneducated people with a negative image of the future and will lead to the reproduction of poverty. Schooling helps normalize the lives of children and overcome the effects of war and provides children with the skills and qualifications that they will need for their future professions. If children miss out on education, first of all they will lose their hopes for the future and inter-generational poverty transfer and poverty reproduction will take place and social instability will become permanent. Young people who are not schooled will be pushed to the margins of community's and ghettoization and radicalization will take place. Aware of the opportunities generated by schooling and the crises brought about by the lack of schooling, Turkey has been making a significant effort to get the Syrian Children in the school and provide them with a quality education. However, despite this effort almost half of the Syrian children in Turkey are not schooled. Moreover, the obstacles that children face in educational environments await solutions and issues about the quality of the education become apparent.

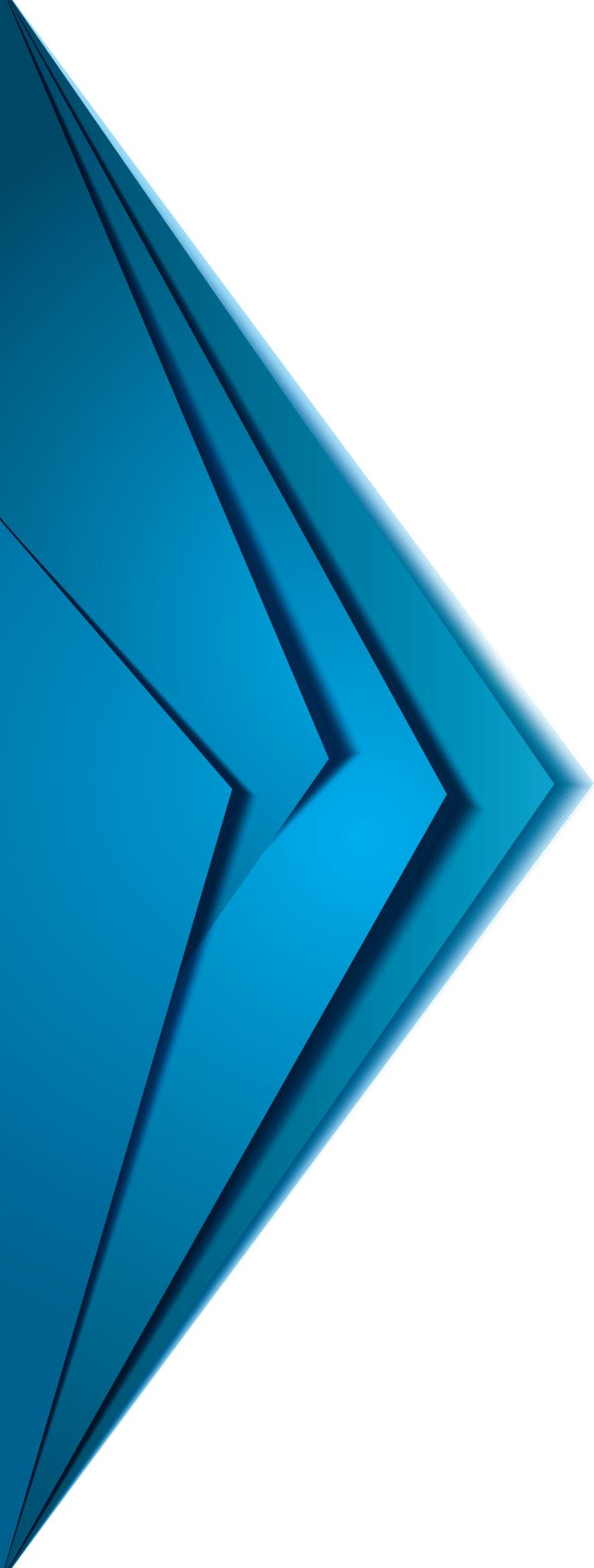
Every Syrian child's access to quality education is critically important primarily for the individual himself/herself, then for the Syrian community living in Turkey and then for Turkish society as a whole. Having all these in mind and being aware of our responsibility as Eđitim-Bir-Sen, we have prepared this report titled Education of Syrian Children in Turkey: Challenges and Recommendations. This report focuses on Turkey's efforts to school Syrian children and provide them with quality education, as well as the obstacles that keep the children unschooled and the difficulties that children face at school. The report also provides recommendations about increasing the schooling of Syrian children and providing them with access to higher quality education.

Primarily the high-ranking administrators of the Ministry of National Education and also province/county and school administrators, all other public institution employees who attend to matters on Syrian children and non-governmental organizations all have major responsibility for providing every Syrian child with a quality education. In addition to this, the international community needs to provide more support and contribution for the education of Syrian children and take on more responsibility. I believe that this report will provide guidance for those in the international and national community who are working on providing Syrian children with quality education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the research team that prepared this report.

Ali YALÇIN

General President

Eđitim-Bir-Sen and Memur-Sen



FOREWORD

FOREWORD

Education is a critical tool for the millions of Syrians to hold on to life and look hopefully towards the future in the host countries. Syrian children can overcome the fate assigned to them and have the opportunity to build a new future for themselves through a quality education. Moreover, through education, Syrian children will get integrated into Turkish society and become part of Turkey's economic and social life. If these children miss out on education, there will be many risks for them as well as for Turkey and its neighbor, Syria. Not being schooled and not having access to quality education will push Syrian children to the margins of society and lead to their ghettoization, radicalization and loss of hope for the future.

Education of Syrian Children in Turkey: Challenges and Recommendations report has been prepared in two stages. During the first stage, interviews were conducted with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), Disaster and Emergency Management Center (DEMCC), the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). The scope of the study, research questions and sample were all defined after this first stage. In the second stage, 60 interviews were conducted in 9 provinces and 15 focus group interviews were done. The sample was quite wide in terms of participation. Focus group interviews and detailed interviews were conducted with children who are not schooled and their parents, schooled children and their parents, Turkish coordinators working at Temporary Education Centers, Syrian teachers and students, Turkish and Syrian students at public schools, school administrators and teachers with province/county administrators and national and international non-governmental organizations engaged with the education of Syrian children.

The report consists in five chapters. The introduction provides general information about the study, while the Chapter 1 provides some facts and figures about the general condition of Syrians. The successive three main chapters deal with the three important aspects of the education of Syrian children, management, access and quality, respectively. Each of these three chapters begins with a review the efforts of Turkey for Syrian children from the point of view of management, access and quality. Following this, each chapter identifies the difficulties that are relevant to the issue at hand. Then, the chapters end with the issues that require policy development. The report ends with conclusions and recommendations where some recommendations are offered for the schooling of Syrian children and providing them with quality education. In the context of the preparing this report, a very wide and multi-dimensional research was carried out by not only receiving the assessments of MoNE administrators at various levels and teachers but also by interviewing Syrian teachers, schooled and non-schooled Syrian children and their parents, as well as the representatives of national and international NGOs.

I believe that this report which for the first time examines the issue of Syrian children's education in Turkey through such a wide perspective will contribute to the schooling of Syrian children and increasing the quality of education they receive, as well as to the development of policies aimed at solving the problems. Our main goal as a union with this report is to examine the issue of Syrian children's education by means of the data obtained through a multifaceted approach, observe and assess schooling policies and school environments, and contribute to the quality of education every Syrian child receive, with recommendations offered hereby. The report will be successful so long as it identifies the difficulties of Syrian children correctly and defines accurately the ways to improve the access to quality education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank to Assoc.Prof. Coşkun Taştan and Assoc.Prof. Zafer Çelik, for preparing this report.

Atilla OLÇUM

Vice General President



CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Preface	I
Foreword	III
Tables and Figures.....	VIII
List of Abbreviations	IX
Executive Summary	1
CHAPTER 1	7
Introduction	7
CHAPTER 2	13
Syrians in Turkey: Facts and figures.....	13
CHAPTER 3	23
Managing the education of Syrian children	23
3.1. Facilities, prominent actors and applications	23
3.1.1. MoNE's organizational structure with respect to educational services provided to Syrian children	26
3.1.2. YÖBİS.....	26
3.1.3. Good practice: PICTES	27
3.1.4. Educational environments and teaching materials	27
3.1.5 Budget and finance	28
3.1.6. Curriculum.....	30
3.1.7. Graduation and accreditation	33
3.1.8. Syrian teachers	35
3.2. Issues related to administration.....	35
3.2.1 Reluctance of some local officials.....	35
3.2.2. Issues about the usage of school facilities.....	36
3.2.3 Issues about bureaucratic processes.....	36
3.2.4. Issues about monitoring-evaluation.....	37
3.3. Some policy considerations regarding the management of the education of Syrian children.....	37

Access of Syrian Children to Education in Turkey	39
4.1. Smoothing the ways to education.....	39
4.1.1. Temporary Education Centers (TECs)	39
4.1.2. Public schools.....	39
4.1.3. Public initiatives for improving the access	40
4.1.4. Civil society initiatives for improving the access	40
4.2. Obstructive factors for access to school.....	42
4.2.1. Economic issues that have obstructive roles on schooling of Syrian children.....	43
4.2.2. Language	44
4.2.3 Cultural factors	46
4.2.4. Transportation problem.....	47
4.2.5. Disorientation.....	49
4.2.6. Uncertainties.....	49
4.2.7. Unwillingness observed among Turkish parents, administrators and teachers.....	50
4.2.8. Issues related with Transition from Basic Education to Secondary Education System (TBESE)	51
4.2.9. Shortcomings in physical facilities	52
4.3. Typology of Unschooled Syrian Children	52
4.4. Policy considerations regarding the access	57

CHAPTER 5 **59**

Quality of Education Provided to Syrian Children.....59

5.1. Effects of planning issues on quality 59

 5.1.1. Resources and quality..... 59

 5.1.2. School administration and quality 60

 5.1.3. Teachers and quality 61

 5.1.4. Curriculum and quality 62

5.2. Issues experienced by students..... 62

 5.2.1. Absenteeism-instability 62

 5.2.2. Lack of motivation and aimlessness 63

 5.2.3. Academic unsuccessfulness..... 64

5.3. In-school and in-classroom applications and quality 64

 5.3.1. Counsel and guidance..... 64

 5.3.2. In-class environments 66

5.4. Issues about work ethics 67

5.5. Lack of parental support..... 67

5.6. Issues about monitoring and evaluation 68

5.7. Policy considerations about the quality of education provided for Syrian children..... 68

CHAPTER 6 **71**

Conclusion and Recommendations71

6.1. Conclusion..... 71

6.2. Recommendations 73

References 77

TABLES

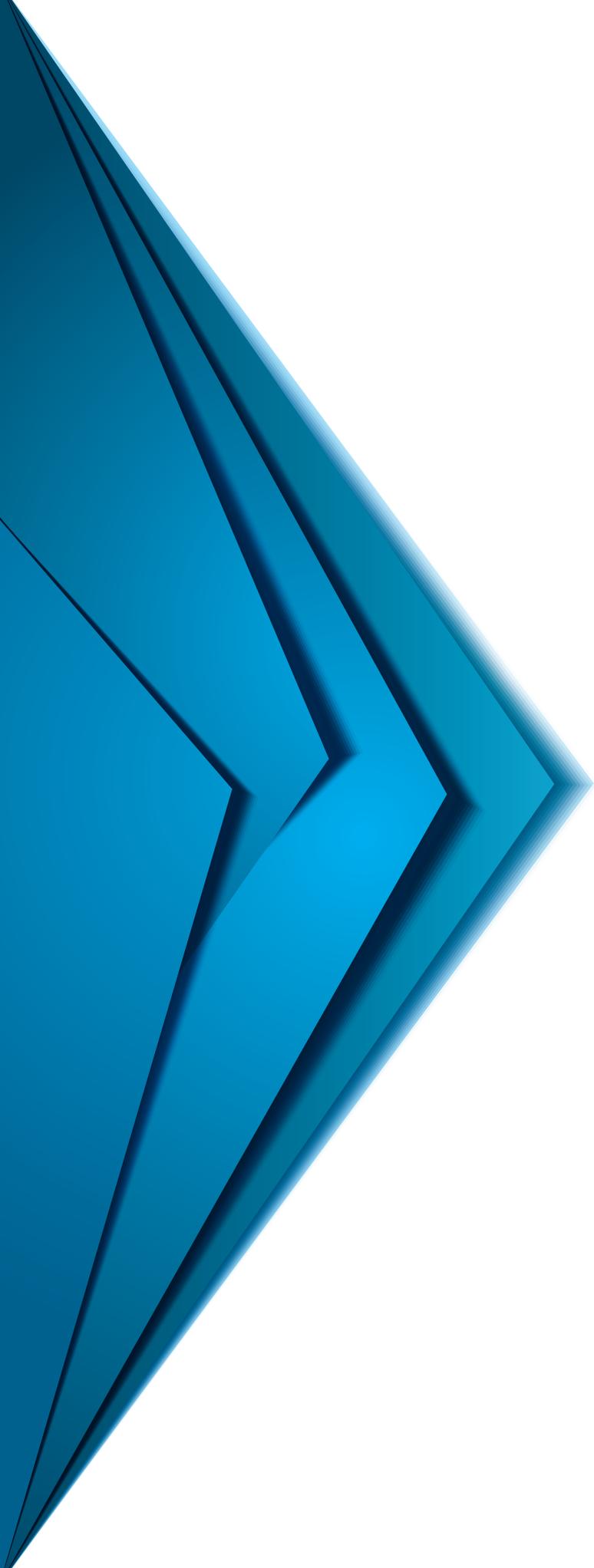
Table 1. Number of interviewees and focus group meetings by citie	11
Table 2. Number of schooled children and the types of schools they are registered to	19
Table 3. Schooling rate of Syrian children	19
Table 4. Weekly schedule of TEC primary and middle schools	31
Table 5. Weekly schedule of TEC secondary education	32

FIGURES

Figure 1. Number of registered Syrians in Turkey by years (2011-2017)	13
Figure 2. Number of TSCs and the ratio of Syrians living outside these centers	14
Figure 3. Distribution of Syrians in Turkey by cities	15
Figure 4. Distribution of registered Syrians by cities (cities with more than 10,000 Syrians)	16
Figure 5. Distribution of registered Syrians by cities (cities with less than 10,000 Syrians)	17
Figure 6. Population pyramid of Syrians in Turkey	18
Figure 7. Ranking of cities by the burden of school-age Syrian population (%)	19
Figure 8. Ranking of cities by the schooling rates of Syrians (%)	20
Figure 9. Distribution of Syrian students at public schools by cities (%)	20
Figure 10. Distribution of Syrian students at TECs by cities (%)	21
Figure 11. Daily route of a TEC student in Altındağ district of Ankara (approximately 3 kilometers)	47
Figure 12. An announcement posted by the administration on the school wall at a TEC	60
Figure 13. A signpost hanged by the administration on a school wall at a TEC	61
Figure 14. Caption: "Counseling"	65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASAM	Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants
BoE	Board of Education
CCTE	Conditional Cash Transfer for Education
CRSEC	Center for Research on Science, Education and Culture
CTTL	Center for Teaching Turkish Language
DEMC	Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency
DNE	Directorates of National Education
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EU	European Union
FRIT	Facility for Refugees in Turkey
HRF	Humanitarian Relief Foundation (İHH)
HSPAEFES	High School Proficiency and Accreditation Exam for Foreign Students
IEED	Immigration and Emergency Education Department's Directorate
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
PICTES	Promoting Integration of Syrian Children to Turkish Education System
PSSE	Public Staff Selection Examination
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RRP	Syrian Regional Response Plan
SETA	Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research
TBESE	Transition from Basic Education to Secondary Education
TEC	Temporary Education Center
TECHSPAEE	Temporary Education Centers High School Proficiency and Accreditation Exam
TDF	Türkiye Diyanet Foundation
TSC	Temporary Sheltering Center
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
YÖBİS	Information System for Foreign Students (ISFS)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Because of the war raging in Syria for 6 years, millions of people were forced to leave their home, while 3 million of them sought refuge in Turkey. Half of the Syrians in Turkey are school-age children under age 18. Moreover, during this 6 years, hundreds of thousands of children became adults and this will also be the case in the following years. Remaining uneducated and/or lacking quality education have important impacts upon individuals' futures, as well as on the future of Syrians in Turkey and the future of Turkish society as a whole. The uneducated ones lose their hopes and are forced to work at low-paying jobs as they lack the necessary knowledge and skills. All this bring about the risk of marginalization, ghettoization and radicalization for the Syrian society. Access to quality education will help Syrians to overcome psycho-social issues caused by war, violence and relocation and will contribute to the normalization of the individuals and the society. A quality education will be helpful in developing hope for a better future, and will allow the Syrians to integrate with the Turkish society and benefit more from economic and social opportunities.

This report aims at identifying the obstructions to Syrian children's schooling as well as assessing various issues they face at school environment. As a part of this study, schooling issues ranging from the preschool to high school were researched. That is to say, vocational and non-formal education along with higher education were not included in the research. The research was based on two stages. Firstly, meetings were held with actors that are directly concerned with Syrian children's education, such as Ministry of National Education (MoNE), Disaster and Emergency Management Center (DEMÇ), Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDF) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). After the said meetings, scope of the research, research questions and sample was determined. At the second stage, 60 interviews and 15 focus group meetings were conducted in 9 cities. The sample was as wide enough to include unschooled children and their parents; schooled children and their parents; Turkish coordinators; Syrian teachers and students at Temporary Education Centers (TECs); Turkish and Syrian students; school administrators and teachers at public schools; provincial/district officials responsible for Syrians' education and national and international NGOs. The findings are presented and analyzed under three headings, namely management, access and quality.

Management of Syrian children's education process

Turkey started to focus its efforts on schooling Syrian children from 2014 onwards and has accomplished the required institutional structure for it. With the establishment of Information System for Foreign Students (ISFS [YÖBİS]), Syrian students' registration, success and attendance are easily tracked. Syrian children are able to be educated at public schools and TECs. According to MoNE data of September 18 2017, there are 280,602 Syrian students receiving education at 370 TECs. While 201 TECs operate in public school buildings, others operate in buildings provided by various public institutions. Most of the expenses for Syrians' education are covered by Turkey. However, UNICEF provides support by covering equipment and infrastructure expenses of TECs along with the salaries of Syrian teachers. Moreover, countries like Korea and Taiwan support the construction of school buildings and classrooms. Nevertheless, only 300 million out of 3 billion promised by the European Union (EU) is accessible at

the moment. EU has to allow access to the rest of this budget especially for the construction of school buildings and classrooms.

As Turkey aims to completely integrate Syrian children to the Turkish education system, from 2016-2017 academic year onward, the registration of 1st, 5th and 9th graders are made at public schools, instead of TECs. 15 hours per week out of a total 30 and 35 hours are dedicated to Turkish language courses at primary school and high school levels, respectively. While this is a positive development in terms of speeding the process of Syrian children catching up with their Turkish peers, it also causes issues as this application allows less time to be dedicated to other courses. For instance, while 2 hours per week are dedicated to mathematics at TECs, this is 6 hours for public high schools. Credentials are enough for a Syrian child to be registered to a public school; however, if he/she is without any credentials, his/her grade is determined with a test. Syrian children who successfully complete TECs enter a proficiency and accreditation exam. Those who are successful in this exam are considered as graduates and are accredited. However, with the new application, those who are unsuccessful in the said test are able to graduate if they register to open education high school and pass two courses.

As Turkish education system is of centralist nature, approval of MoNE is sought for certain initiatives at the local level which in turn prolongs bureaucratic processes. Because of this prolongation, implementation of certain projects is hindered. Another issue with the administration is that the data which could be used for monitoring and evaluation processes of Syrian children's access to school and the quality of education they receive are usually neglected by local administrators. Most of the Provincial/District Directorates of National Education (MEM) officials that were interviewed during the research were unable to provide precise statistics about school-age Syrian children and their schooling rates; they only replied in speculations by saying "around 50-60%."

Public and civil society personnel are working hard to school Syrian children. At schools visited, it was observed that surveys were being conducted, especially by Syrian teachers, and children were attempted to be schooled. In addition, it was seen that there is at least one NGO that works hard to school Syrian children in all cities the research was conducted. Moreover, Conditional Education Aid Program for Refugee Children was initiated with a protocol between MoNE, Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF.

Syrian children's access to education

According to the September 15 2015 data acquired from MoNE, 54.5% of 976,000 school-age children are schooled. In other words, there are approximately 450,000 unschooled Syrian children in Turkey. Obstructions to Syrian children's access to education are divided into three groups according to the severity. First category consists of obstructions that could be removed relatively easily with a plan in the short-term. Psychological obstructions like disorientation and lack of motivation are some of the examples. It was observed that some children were ready to go to school, but were unable to do so as they lacked the information about the bureaucratic processes. In certain cities, DNEs and NGOs visit their families and are able to school children. These children are referred to as Type-1 unschooled in the report. The second type of obstructions require a robust plan and systematic approaches. For

instance, obstructions faced by children who had to discontinue school for a couple of years or who fell behind their peers are some of the examples. Moreover, children who work as a source of cheap labor to contribute to their family or children who are left schools because of coeducation are also included to this category. It is possible to school these children with planning and implementing certain regulations. These children are referred to as Type-2 unschooled. The third type of obstructions are the hardest to remove; these might be based on economic, cultural or socio-psychologic issues. The hardest economic obstruction occurs when the child is the only breadwinner of the family and the whole family relies on him/her. Those who cannot go to school because of tending a family member in need are also included to this category. These children are referred to as Type-3 unschooled.

The research revealed that the most prominent obstructions to schooling are economic issues. During the interviews with unschooled children, many of them have expressed that they would like to go to school, but are unable to do so as they are obliged to work and contribute to their families. These children also expressed that they could return to school if a certain financial aid was provided to their families. Another obstruction to schooling is the language barrier. It was observed that especially 5th and 9th graders who were not well-versed in Turkish left school after a while because of not understanding the courses and being alienated to the school environment. On the other hand, Syrians are concerned about forgetting Arabic; because of this concern, it was observed that certain families and children distanced themselves from school. Another obstruction is cultural in nature; early marriage, Syrians not wanting to send their children to institutions that provide coeducation and some students wanting to wear the veil at school are some of the reasons.

It was seen that transportation was one of the most important obstructions to schooling. As TECs are not everywhere, families residing far from the school and lacking the means to afford schools buses and public transports affects children's attendance. Moreover, TECs starting at later hours in certain cities and children being on the road after the dark especially causes some families to not send their daughters to school.

On the other hand, some children are not schooled because they and their families do not know bureaucratic procedures like registering their children to school or acquiring required documents. Social and spatial uncertainty that affects Syrians is also a factor. Another obstruction to schooling is the unfavorable attitude of Turkish teachers and parents towards Syrian children. Lastly, Syrian children are not eligible for studying at Science High Schools, where the most successful students are found and Anatolian High Schools where generally the moderate students are placed. The Syrian students are usually placed either to imam hatip high schools or to the vocational schools, where the least successful students are placed. In addition to all, there are children who are unable to continue their education because of the inadequate capacities of classrooms and school facilities.

Quality of education provided to Syrian children

There are many factors that determine the quality of education provided to Syrian children. Planning Syrian children's education is one of the essential elements. There are many challenges to planning a quality education to the continuously growing Syrian population, such as increased mobility between

cities and 2.8 million Syrians' concentration in 13 cities where issues of infrastructure and schools are apparent. Another important factor is the beginning of the class hours at TECs: Usually, the education at TECs start at later hours (14:30) within the double-shift education system because of the shortcomings in the numbers of classrooms and school buildings. School performances of children decline because of starting at later hours and some of these children are occupied with other obligations until the beginning of classes. In addition, schools lack certain educational materials. While the communication between TEC school administration and students or their families take place without any problems, this becomes an issue at public schools as children and their family usually do not know Turkish well enough to communicate. On the other hand, TECs using another location for administrative purposes and carelessly prepared announcements posted on the school walls negatively affect children's feeling of belonging which ultimately has negative effects on the quality of education.

TECs have multiple stages in selecting teachers. In-service trainings and selection according to various assessments like interviews will have a positive effect on teacher quality. With revisions, expressions legitimizing al-Assad administration and antagonizing Turkey were removed from textbooks and the curriculum. Instead of those hostile expressions, texts introducing Turkey and Turkish culture as well as the expressions promoting the peace between the Syrian refugees and the host country have been placed in the textbooks.

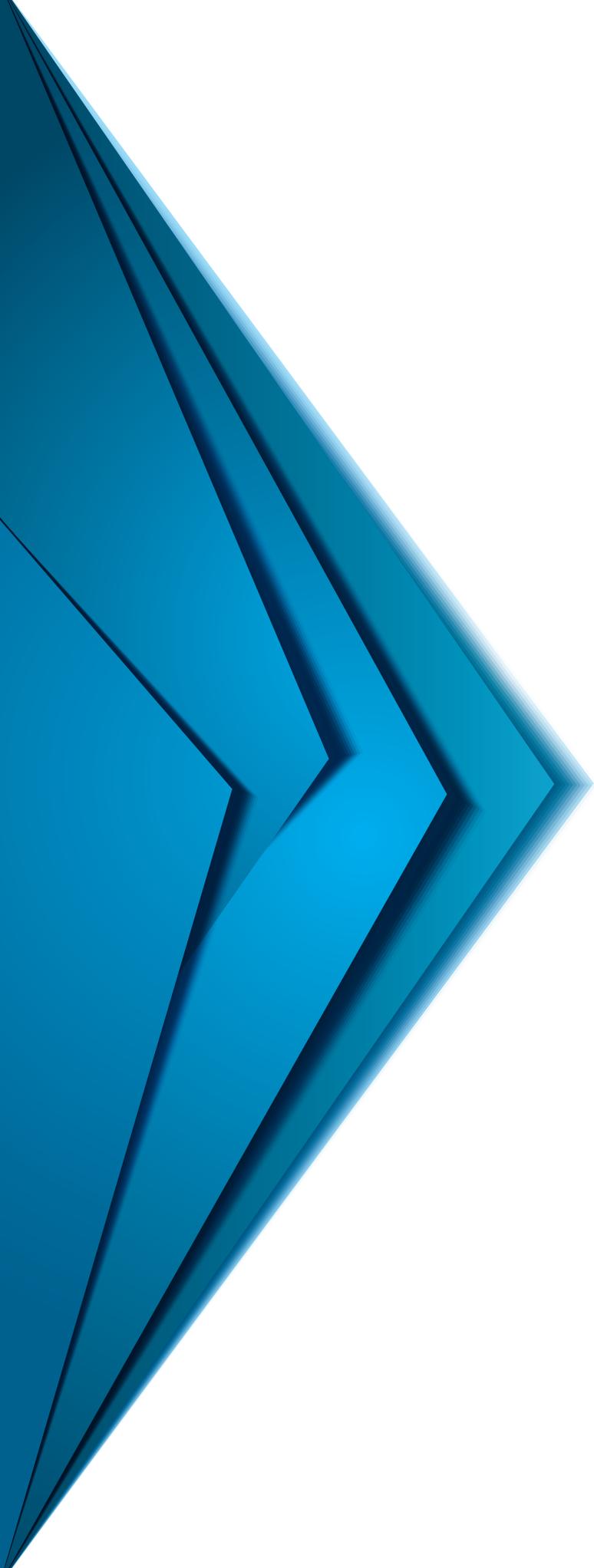
Absenteeism, lack of motivation and aimlessness are the most prominent factors which affect Syrian children's success. As Syrian families continuously move between the cities and relocate frequently, absenteeism becomes an inevitable consequence for the children. Moreover, lack of Turkish language skills affects the success of children at public schools. Certain factors like the effect of war, losing family members and uncertainty of future, cause the prominent lack of motivation and aimlessness in some Syrian children. On the other hand, some interviews conducted as part of the research revealed that some of the Syrian children have high motivations and even are among the most successful students at public schools. Yet, the number of these students are fairly low.

There are observed psycho-social issues among Syrian children who were exposed to war and violence. Counseling for these children are a necessity. However, until very recently, TECs lacked school counselors while the counselors at public schools were indifferent to Syrian children. Syrian children's rehabilitation was mostly conducted by Syrian teachers. Lastly, considering in-class environments, bonding between Turkish and Syrian students are below the desired level.

Recommendations

- Initiative must be taken to increase teachers' and school administrators' awareness about Syrian children. It is important to have civil servants who are committed to Syrian children's schooling.
- Syrian children should continue to study at TECs until they get proficiency in Turkish language. Children will still be in need for support in Turkish language even after the closure of TECs; plans should be made considering this fact. Moreover, Syrian society's concerns about forgetting Arabic and their own culture after the closure of TECs should be regarded and policies addressing these concerns must be developed.

- Even though Turkey dedicates large resources for the schooling of Syrian children, these resources are yet far from enough. For this reason, the international community should take more responsibility and transfer more resources to Turkey. Especially the budget transferred from EU funds must be enabled for school building and classroom construction. Financial aids to classroom and school building construction, transportation, educational materials and staffs will increase Syrian children's schooling rate and allow them to have a quality education.
- Unschooled children are divided into three typologies in the report. Different typologies should be approached with different methods and means, taking into consideration the kinds of obstruction these children face. In the case of the Unschooled Type-1 who are generally specified with disorientedness, children themselves and their parents should be informed and regular household visits by the officials may be quite helpful. Meanwhile, financial aids, transportation support and the like should be provided for the Unschooled Type-2. The Unschooled Type-3 who have been away from school for years or who are the sole breadwinner for the family, can be provided with alternative methods of education like evening schools and financial aid.
- In order to identify children who are not going to school, Turkish and Syrian teachers, school administrators, national and international NGOs and Syrian notables should cooperate.
- To improve schooling of Syrian girls, schools for girls should be supported.
- Considering that certain children prevented from schooling because of school capacity, additional school buildings and classrooms should be built posthaste.
- Highly successful Syrian children should be directed to Science, Anatolian and Social Sciences high schools where the focus is on science and mathematics.
- To ensure the quality of education for Syrian children, they need to receive full day education. In this respect, for TECs to be able to start at earlier hours, TECs' physical and infrastructural facilities should be supported and new school buildings and classrooms should be constructed.
- Syrian teachers should be selected meticulously. These teachers should be improved through in-service trainings.
- At public schools, Turkish teachers' positive attitude towards Syrian children is very important. Teachers should be more sensitive to enable these children to actively participate in classes. Organizing events and activities in mixed groups (i.e., in the cases where Syrian and Turkish students brought together) will create ties between Turkish and Syrian students.
- Make-up classes should be organized for TEC students to compensate their deficiencies in mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign language courses, which are limited in regular course schedules due to the heavy need for Turkish language courses.
- Considering that many Syrian children are experiencing psycho-social issues because of war and immigration, it is very important to provide an effective counseling service to those children.



CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Because of the war raging in Syria for 6 years, more than 13 million people have been displaced. Approximately 5 million of the displaced Syrians sought refuge in neighboring countries like Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. According to August 2017 data, there are 3.1 million Syrians in Turkey, 1 million in Lebanon, 660,000 in Jordan, 240,000 in Iraq and 120,000 in Egypt. Out of 5.2 million Syrians who are hosted by these 5 countries, 750,000 are between ages 0-4, while 1.75 million is between ages 5-17. In other words, almost half of the Syrians who sought refuge in another country are school-age children under age 17 (UNCHR, 2017). Specifically, in Turkey there are 1 million school-age Syrian children between ages 5-18 and 490,000 Syrians between age 0-4 (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü [General Directorate of Migration Management], 2017). In addition to these figures, hundreds of thousands of individuals have become adults over the last 6 years.

Syrian children's and youth's participation in a formal education is an important issue. Moreover, as it is uncertain when Syria will become stable, Syrian people's education and the quality of this education is crucial for their own future and prosperity. Unschooling children face the risks of child labor, early marriage, radicalization and joining radical organizations (Watkins and Zyck, 2014). People who do not receive adequate education will be forced to become a source of cheap labor. When Syrians are not engaged in the education system of the host country, issues of integration are inevitable. Furthermore, when the war ends and Syria becomes stable, education will determine Syrians' contribution to the reconstruction of their country. The education Syrians receive and the quality of it are the two main factors that will affect their individual futures and prosperity. Secondly, through education, Syrians will have the opportunity to integrate with the host society and benefit more from economic, social and cultural facilities of the society. Thirdly, education will ensure the qualified human resource that is required for Syria's reconstruction in the post-war era that will hopefully come one day.

It is expected that this crisis in Syrian children's education will have serious repercussions throughout following decades. If children receive certain supports and get rid of the effects of war through education, they may have the chance to acquire required skills for their future occupations. When children are deprived of education, their hope for the future erodes and causes intergenerational transfer and reinforcement of impoverishment. This situation makes social instability permanent and destroys the expectation of a restructuring. In such a case, opportunities will be taken away from the unschooled Syrian youth and they will be pushed to the margins of the society. The youth may resort to alternative pursuits like going on challenging/deadly journeys or joining radical organizations (Watkins and Zyck, 2014). Realizing these risks, the international community started to address Syrians' education after providing humanitarian aids. In this respect, UNICEF initiated the "No Lost Generation" project in 2013. Despite all, it is hard to assert that Syrians' education grabs the attention of or receives adequate support from the international community and the media. While there are myriads of reports, analyses and researches on the general plight of Syrians, there are only few works on Syrians' education. UNICEF, with the report published in April 2017, analyzed Syrian children's education in the aforementioned 5

host countries along with Syria. While stating that significant progress was made in each of the host countries, UNICEF's report asserts that there is more room for improvement (UNICEF, 2017). Similarly, RAND Corporation, one of the most significant US-based think-tanks, analyzed education policies and applications targeting Syrian children in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. This report was prepared after the field researches conducted in 2014. Obstructions to accessing education, like lack of facilities, language and curriculum, transportation, documents, child labor and early marriage, school tuition fees and security were identified in the report. Despite efforts to increase the number of schools in Turkey, adequate number of schools/buildings were not dedicated to Syrians' education. Developing a strategy to coordinate effort for schooling unschooled children, construction of adequate schools, planning quality full day educational alternatives to public schools and focus on quality of education is suggested (Culbertson and Constant, 2015). Assistance Coordination Unit, on the other hand, has analyzed the condition of schools in Syria with the report published in 2016 (ACU, 2016). A research conducted by the Overseas Development Institute affirmed that the international community was not providing adequate aid to Syrian children and that the international community was not upholding its promises to these countries (Watkins and Zyck, 2014). An extensive research on Syrian children's education at a national level was published by SETA Foundation and TheirWorld in August 2017. Field research was conducted in 5 cities and obstructions to Syrian children along with the condition of schooled children were analyzed in this report (SETA Vakfı and TheirWorld, 2017).

Countries hosting Syrians have been supporting Syrian children and trying to provide them education since the beginning of the immigration. However, these countries lacked financial and human resources along with a robust system in providing education to children. Despite education's importance, international donor institutions and countries have been reluctant in supporting these host countries. It is a challenge for the host countries to provide a quality education to Syrian children without any international financial and human support (Watkins and Zyck, 2014).

Even though Turkey had certain initiatives in terms of Syrian children's education since the very beginning, it could be asserted that Turkey was late in developing policies and in understanding the importance of education for Syrian children. The main reason for this situation is the assumption that the conflict in Syria would end soon and Syrians would eventually return to their country. However, as the war was prolonged and after mass immigration to Turkey continued while Syrians spread across the country, it was realized that the war in Syria would not end in the short-term. For this reason, active policies about Syrian children's education were started to be implemented. Turkey faced many issues in Syrian children's education. First of all, cities like Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep and Istanbul where most of the Syrians live had already issues regarding educational infrastructure. The numbers of students per teacher and per classroom in these cities are above Turkey's average (MEB [MoNE], 2017). In addition, 19.3% of the primary schools in Turkey have double-shift education and 45.9% of students study at these schools. 65% of primary school students in Gaziantep, Adana and Bursa and 55-64% of students in cities like Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Şanlıurfa, Mersin and Osmaniye are educated at schools with the double-shift system (Eğitim-Bir-Sen, 2016). Cities with high population of Syrians are at the same time the cities where schools have many troubles and where double-shift education is a common phenomenon. Another challenge is the mobilization of Syrians within Turkey. More than 60% of the Syrians who fled

their country are currently in Turkey and their numbers increase day by day. In addition, Turkey's policies and applications about Syrian's education are swiftly changing. For instance, 40% of the Syrian children were schooled in 2015; however, in 2016, despite the increase in their numbers, the schooling rate went over 50%. From 2016 onward, Turkey started to actively teach Turkish to Syrians and to focus on integrating Syrian children into Turkish education system. Because of the shifts in policies and applications along with the number of Syrians, analyses and reports on Syrian's education in Turkey quickly lose their currency. This report analyzes the Syrians' education in Turkey in the context of current education policies and with an extensive field research. Ministry officials, teachers working at both TECs and public schools, public school administrators, Turkish and Syrian students, Syrian teachers at TECs, Turkish coordinators, parents of students and unschooled children and their parents along with national and international NGO representatives were interviewed. In this respect, this report focuses on obstructions to schooling and conditions regarding the quality of education for Syrian children in a multidimensional and multilayered manner.

The aim of this research is to identify the obstructions to Syrian children's schooling as well as to underscore the troubles schooled Syrian children face at school. In addition, providing recommendations about improving Syrian children's schooling rate, overcoming issues faced by schooled children and boosting the quality of education are also among the aims of this report. Moreover, Syrian children's in-class and school performances were assessed and their expectations for the future are expressed. Lastly, the possible effects of the closure of TECs' are examined with the help of opinions of administrators, teachers, students and parents.

Even though there are various peace negotiations in Syria, it is expected that stability will only be established in the long-term. In such a situation, it could be foreseen that Syrians will continue to live in Turkey for some more years. Moreover, this is accepted as a policy in Turkey. In this respect, there are discussions on granting work permits and citizenship. Considering that they will continue to live in Turkey for many years, Syrians' adaptation to the Turkish society is crucial. Especially Syrian children's and youth's access to education is one of the critical factors that will speed the adaptation process. Through education, the youth and children are expected to become more qualified for the labor force, contributing to both themselves and the society. Schooling Syrian children will be beneficial for both those who will stay in Turkey and those who will return to Syria. While the staying ones will contribute economically, socially and culturally to the Turkish society, the returning ones to Syria will rebuild their country, cities and society with the education they received in Turkey. In this sense, education is an important soft power strategy. For this reason, schooling Syrian children without any discrimination while providing the utmost quality education is a prominent strategy. On the other hand, children and youth deprived of education will lack qualifications; they will not be able to work at qualified occupations and, more importantly, they will not be able to connect with the Turkish society. This may cause the marginalization, ghettoization and radicalization. It is foreseen that marginalized and ghettoized masses could create many issues. Considering the benefits of education and the hindrances of deprivation of education, most essential aim for this research is to contribute to Syrian children's access to quality education.

This research was conducted using qualitative research method. The research was conducted in two stages. During the first stage, the general scope of the research was determined after meeting with key actors. In this respect, meetings were held with high-ranking officials of MoNE and Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (DEMCC), public institutions that are directly responsible for Syrians in Turkey, TDF, an NGO that focuses on Syrian children's education, and UNICEF Turkey. A meeting was requested from General Directorate of Immigration Management, yet the meeting did not take place as the request was not replied. Therefore, in the first stage, experiences of these institutions regarding Syrian children's education and issues they face at school were gathered. With the findings of the first stage, semi-structured focus group interview and in-depth interview forms were prepared. The first stage was realized in March 2017.

In the second stage of the research, the sample was determined. In order to have a plethora of data, the sample was diversified as much as possible. To realize this, data acquired from institutions during the first stage, data provided by MoNE about the distribution of Syrian children's schooling rates by cities and age along with findings acquired from the literature on Syrian children's education were combined. Then, this combined data was used to determine the cities in which the research would take place. The theoretical profiles of the respondents were also defined at this stage. Cities were divided into three categories: a) Cities with Temporary Sheltering Centers (TSCs), b) Cities with above-the-average Syrian population that does not have TSCs, and c) Transit cities (which are the embarking point for those who want to go to Europe illegally). In addition, the first category has two subcategories: cities that border Syria and that do not border Syria. In this respect, the research was conducted in 9 cities specified below.

- a) Cities with TSCs
 - Cities that border Syria: Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa
 - Cities that do not border Syria: Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye
- b) Cities without TSCs: Istanbul, Ankara, Konya
- c) Transit cities: İzmir

As the aim of the research is to understand the issues Syrian children face in accessing and during education, all segments that could provide the most information about this subject were included in the sample. Maximum diversity sampling technique (a sort of purposive sampling method) was used to identify the respondents. Considering that holding interviews with the same segments in each and every city would be counterproductive in terms of repetitiveness, cost and time, certain in-depth interviews and focus group meetings were decided to be held in certain cities. With MoNE's decision dated March 30, 2017 and numbered 81576613/605.01/4329062, permit for the research was acquired. Cities were visited between April-June 2017 for data collection. A total number of 60 in-depth interviews and 15 focus group meetings were held. The breakdown of the profiles of interviewees and focus group participants can be seen in the following table:

During the field research, audio recordings of interviews were acquired with the consent of participants.

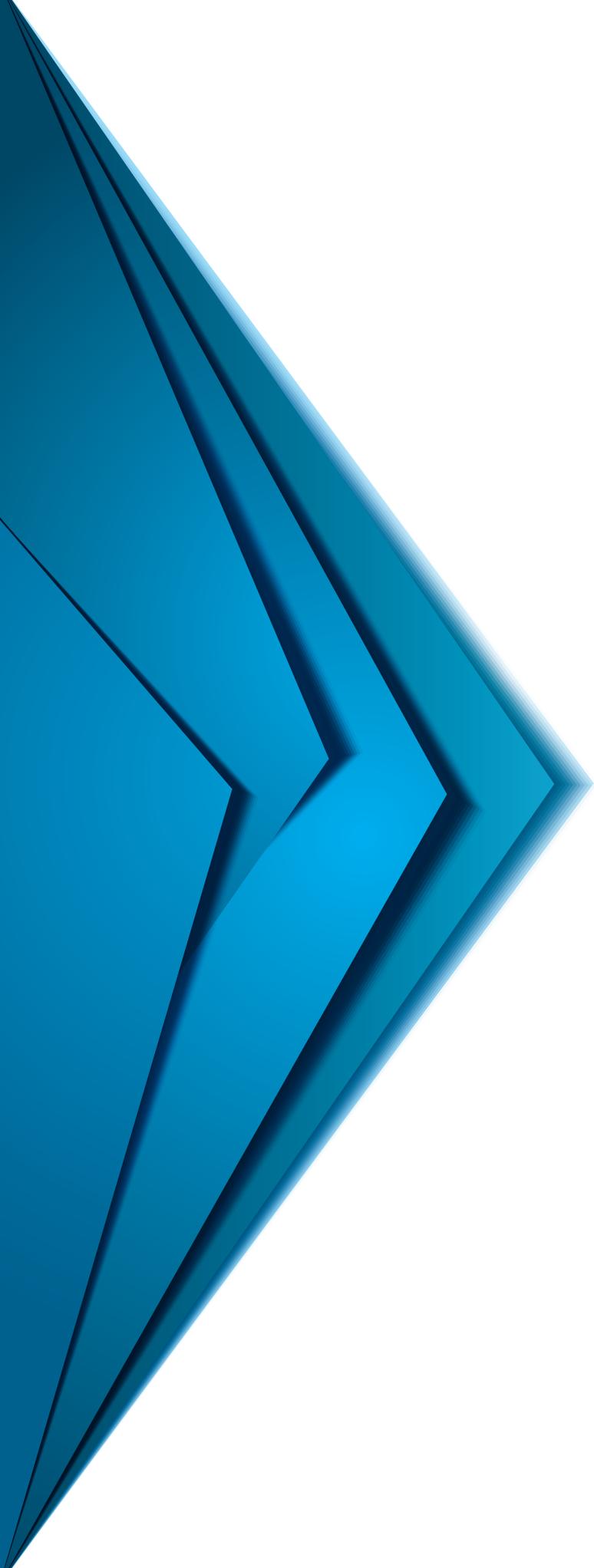
Table 1. Number of interviewees and focus group meetings by cities

	DNE Director	Unschooling Children		Parents of Unschooled Girl	Parents of Unschooled Boy	Parents of Schooled Girl	Parents of Schooled Boy	Focus Group with TEC Teachers	Focus Group with TEC students	TEC coordinators	Public School Syrian Student Focus Group	Public School Turkish Student Focus Group	Public School Teacher Focus Group	Public School Principals	NGO
		Girl	Boy												
Gaziantep	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Hatay	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Şanlıurfa	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Kahramanmaraş	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	-
Osmaniye	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
İstanbul	2	1	3	1	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Ankara	1	-	2	1	1	-	-	1	2	-	1	1	1	-	2
Konya	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
İzmir	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total	7	12	11	5	4	-	1	4	4	8	2	1	4	2	10

Most of the participants allowed meetings to be recorded, while some did not. Detailed notes were taken during meetings. In addition, after meetings in every city, a brief provincial report that evaluates participants' attitudes and behaviors along with the applications taking place in the city were written. With these reports, it was aimed to easily identify the differences between cities as well as to facilitate the reporting process. During the research, Turkish participants were communicated with Turkish, Syrian participants with Arabic, English or Turkish and NGO representatives with English. After the completion of the field research, audio recordings were transcribed. After compiling interview notes, audio record transcriptions and provincial reports, the data analyzed and reported.

In-depth interview and focus group meeting data were analyzed with the content analysis method. In content analysis, the data are gathered under descriptive categories. In order to make a large set of data explainable and understandable, certain concepts and relations should be established (Creswell, 2007; Marcasti, 2004). Codes, categories and themes were created from similar elements of the data. In this manner, under the categories of management, access and quality, access to education, issues that are faced during education and initiatives to improve the quality of education were analyzed.

In order to avoid the exposition of the identities of the participants, anonymity and confidentiality policies were implemented. Only NGOs were referred to as it is. On the other hand, only the city where the interview was conducted and the individual's occupation are cited, as this does not infringe the anonymity principle. For instance, the interview conducted with an unschooled girl in Istanbul is cited as Unschooled.Girl5.Istanbul Focus group meetings were cited as it is, not referring to individuals. For instance, Turkish.Focus.1.Ankara. refers to a focus group meeting held with Turkish teachers in Ankara.



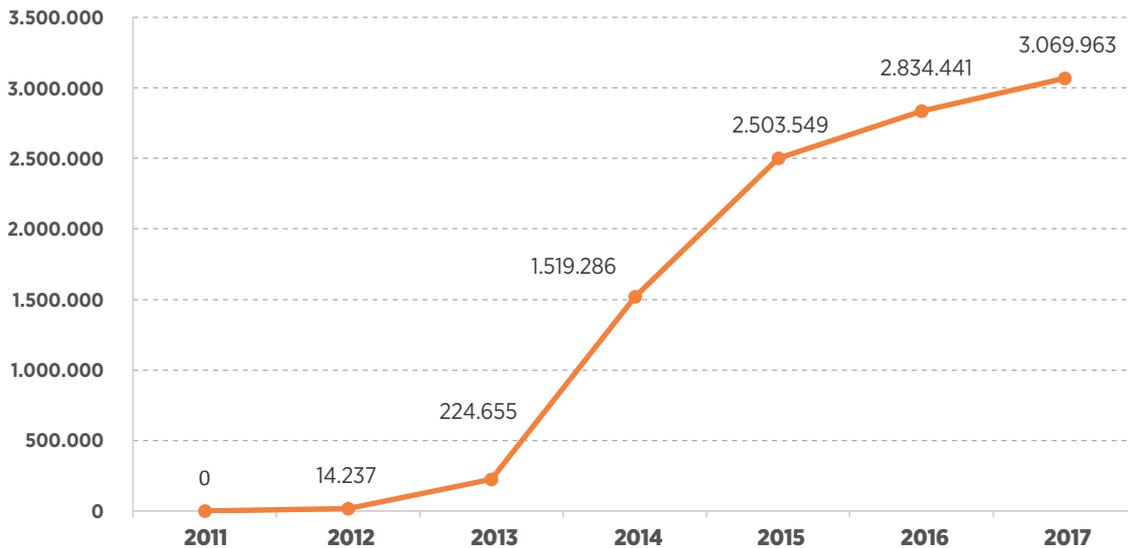
CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 2

Syrians in Turkey: Facts and figures

Since the beginning of war on March 15 2011, more than half of Syria’s population (13.5 million) were forced to leave their homes. While 6.3 millions of this population relocated within Syria, the remaining 5 million people sought refuge in various countries (UNHCR, 2017). Turkey has been following the open-door policy since the beginning of the civil war and opened its borders to the war victims from Syria. In 2011, a group of 252 people took refuge in Turkey on April 29 2011 (Topçu, 2017). From this date onward, the number of Syrians seeking refuge in Turkey has been increasing steadily. The attacks against civilians started to escalate from 2012 onwards and the number of people fleeing Syria and seeking refuge in Turkey skyrocketed. As it is seen in Figure 1, while there were 14,000 Syrians in Turkey in 2012, this number has increased to 225,000 in 2013. Later, reaching 1.5 million in 2014, 2.5 million in 2015 and 2.8 million in 2016. Even though the increase rate started to decline in 2017, currently there are more than 3 million Syrians in Turkey. Therefore, more than 60% of the Syrians who fled their country are in Turkey (UNHCR, 2017).

Figure 1. Number of registered Syrians in Turkey by years (2011-2017)

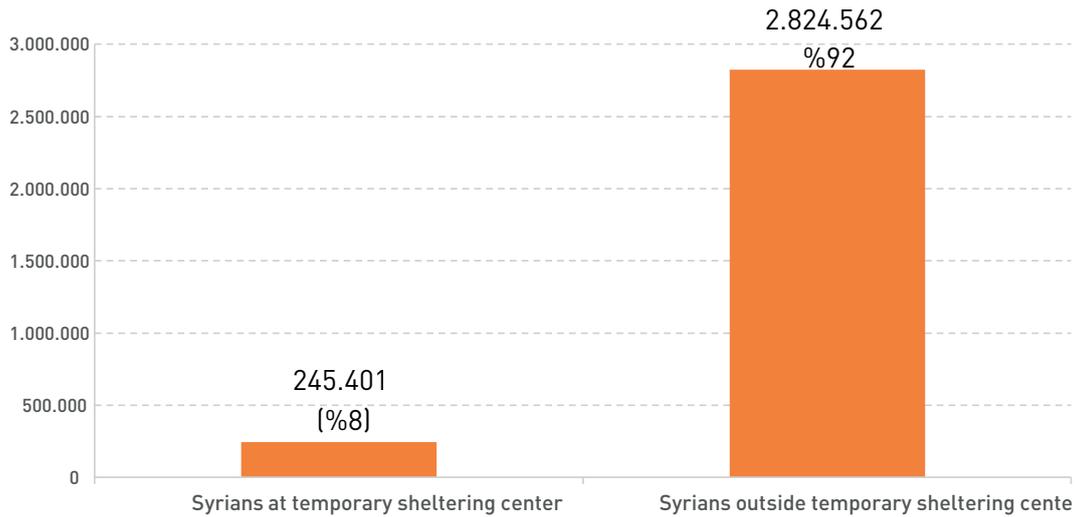


Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The figure was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

With Syrians taking refuge in Turkey, Temporary Sheltering Centers (TSCs) were initially built in cities that border with Syria, like Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Mardin and Kilis. Later, TSCs were also established in cities like Kahramanmaraş, Adana, Adıyaman, Osmaniye and Malatya that are near the Syrian border. As Figure 2 indicates, 245,000 Syrians live at 23 TSCs in 10 cities. The remaining 2.8 million Syrians, on the other hand, live in various cities of Turkey. In other words, only 8% of the Syrians reside in TSCs.

Figure 2. Number of TSCs and the ratio of Syrians living outside these centers

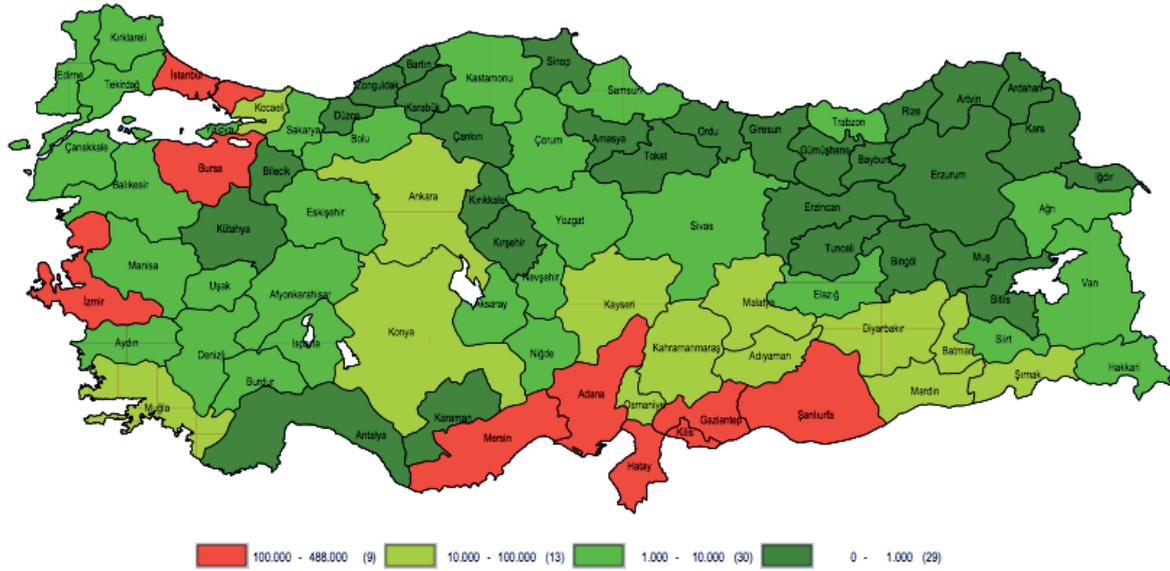


Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The figure was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

With the swift growth in the Syrian population in Turkey, TSCs turned inadequate. Some of the Syrians stayed with their relatives in Turkey at the very beginning of the war. However, as the war was prolonged, Syrians started to spread all across Turkey. As Figure 3 shows, Syrians mostly live in cities near the Syrian border and the largest cities in other regions like Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Bursa. Figure 3 displays that 1.3 million Syrians live in Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep and Kilis. Syrians in these four cities constitute 42% of the total Syrian population in Turkey. When cities near the border, such as Adana, Mersin, Mardin and Kahramanmaraş, are included, this number reaches 1.8 million, corresponding to 58% of the total Syrian population. The largest number of Syrians live in Turkey’s biggest city, Istanbul. As Figure 3 shows, there are 488,000 Syrians living in Istanbul. In addition, there are 113,000 Syrians in İzmir and 112,000 in Bursa. Meanwhile, Ankara hosts 79,500 Syrians, while Konya 78,500. 87% of the Syrians, thus 2.7 million, live in the aforementioned 13 cities. Figure 3 indicates that there are less Syrians in cities of the Black Sea and Eastern Anatolia regions which have lower populations and limited employment prospects. The cities with the least number of Syrians are Bartın (41), Bayburt (42), Artvin (45), Sinop (84), Iğdır (85), Gümüşhane (87), Tunceli (107) and Ardahan (123).

Figure 3. Distribution of Syrians in Turkey by cities

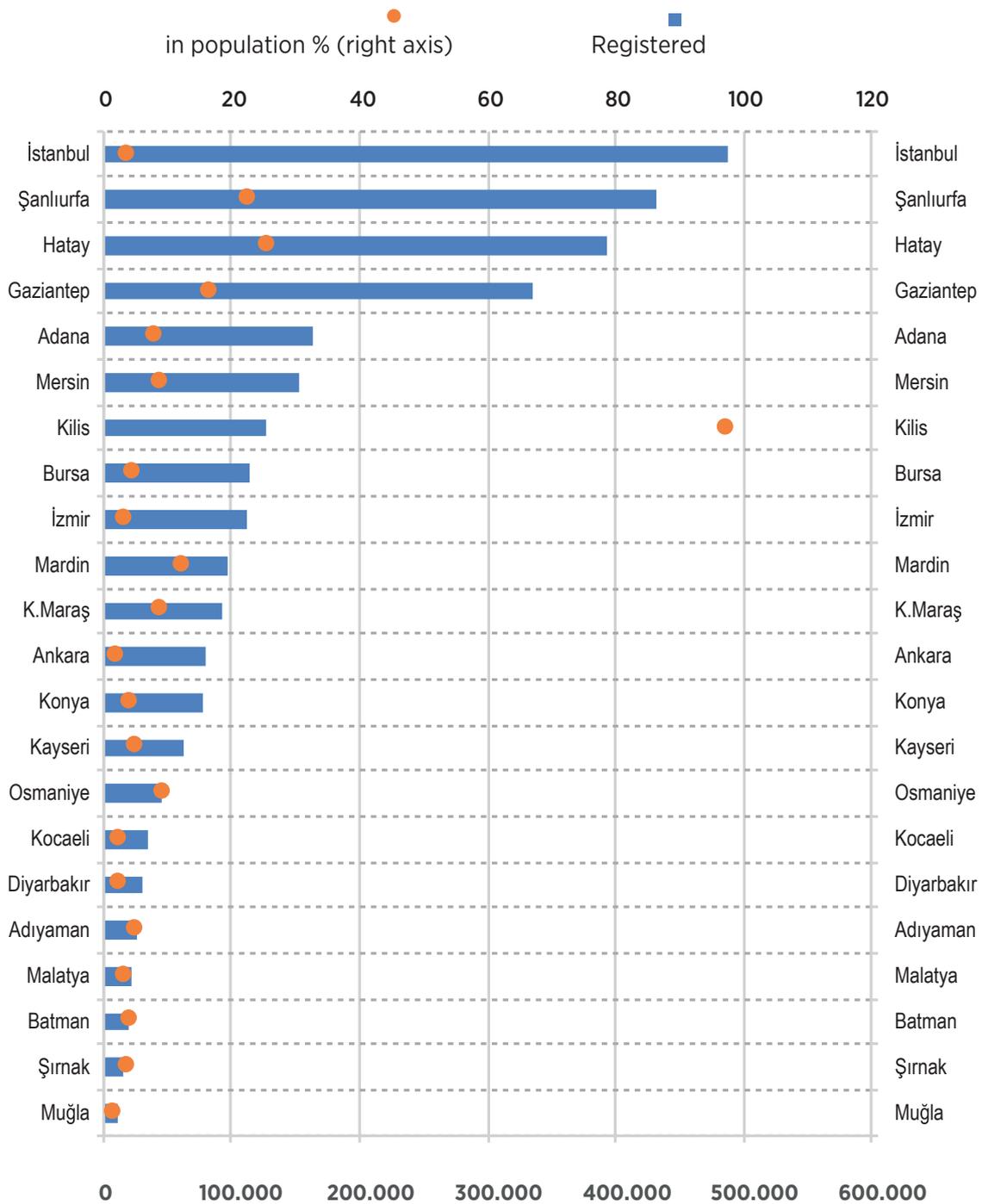


Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The figure was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

Another meaningful data indicating the distribution of Syrians in Turkey is the ratio of Syrian population to the city’s population. In this respect, Kilis, a city bordering Syria, has a Syrian population that is almost on par with the local population (97%). Looking at the Syrian population’s ratio to the local populace in each city, it could be seen that these rates are 25% in Hatay, 22% in Şanlıurfa, 16% in Gaziantep, 12% in Mardin and 9% in Osmaniye and Mersin (Figure 3). These are the cities that have the highest ratio of Syrian populations. On the other hand, Bartın, Antalya, Artvin, Giresun, Sinop, Iğdır, Bayburt, Gümüşhane, Kars, Zonguldak, Kütahya and Erzurum have a ratio below 0.1% (Figure 4).

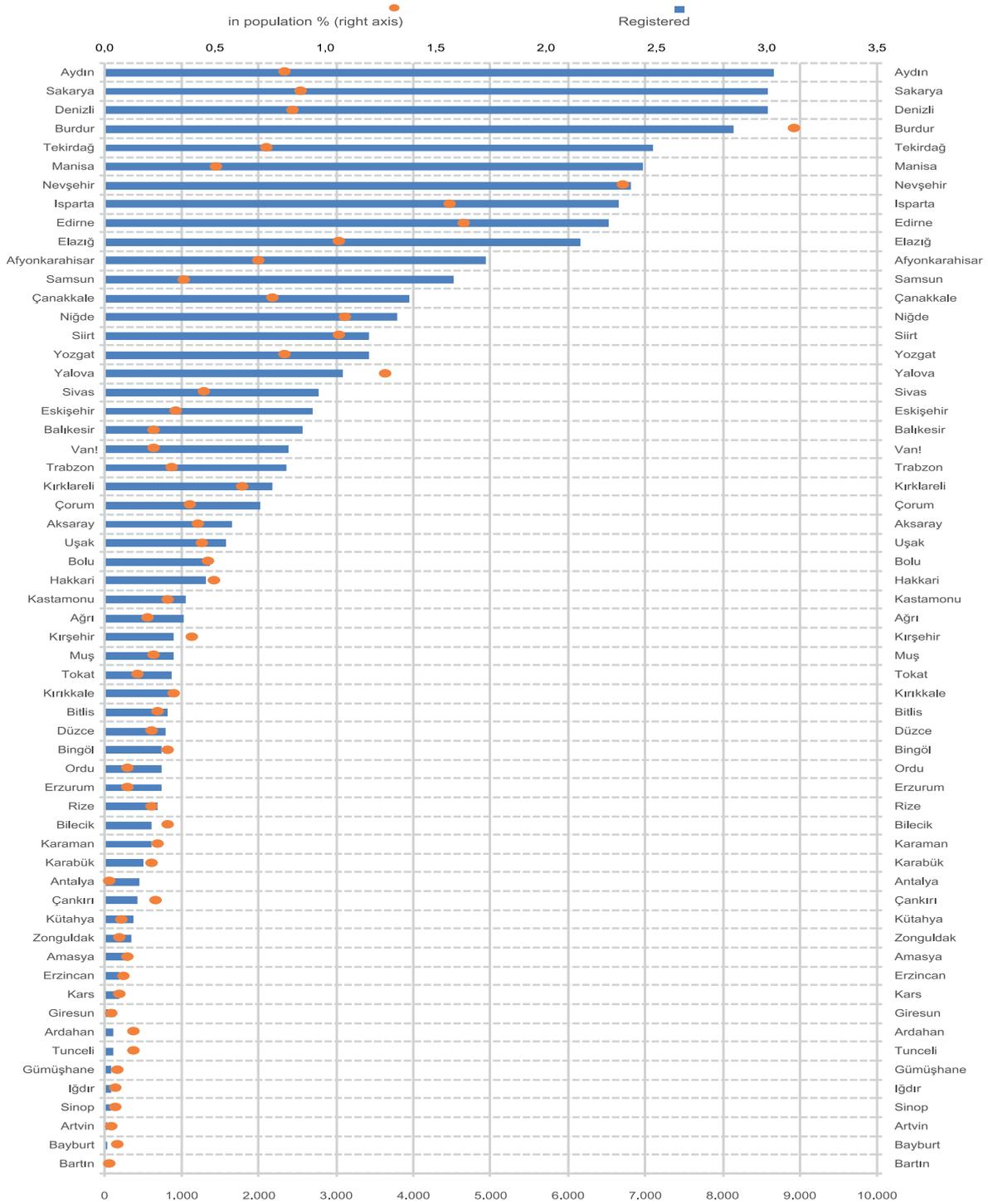
Figure 4. Distribution of registered Syrians by cities (cities with more than 10,000 Syrians)



Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The figure was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

Figure 5. Distribution of registered Syrians by cities (cities with less than 10,000 Syrians)

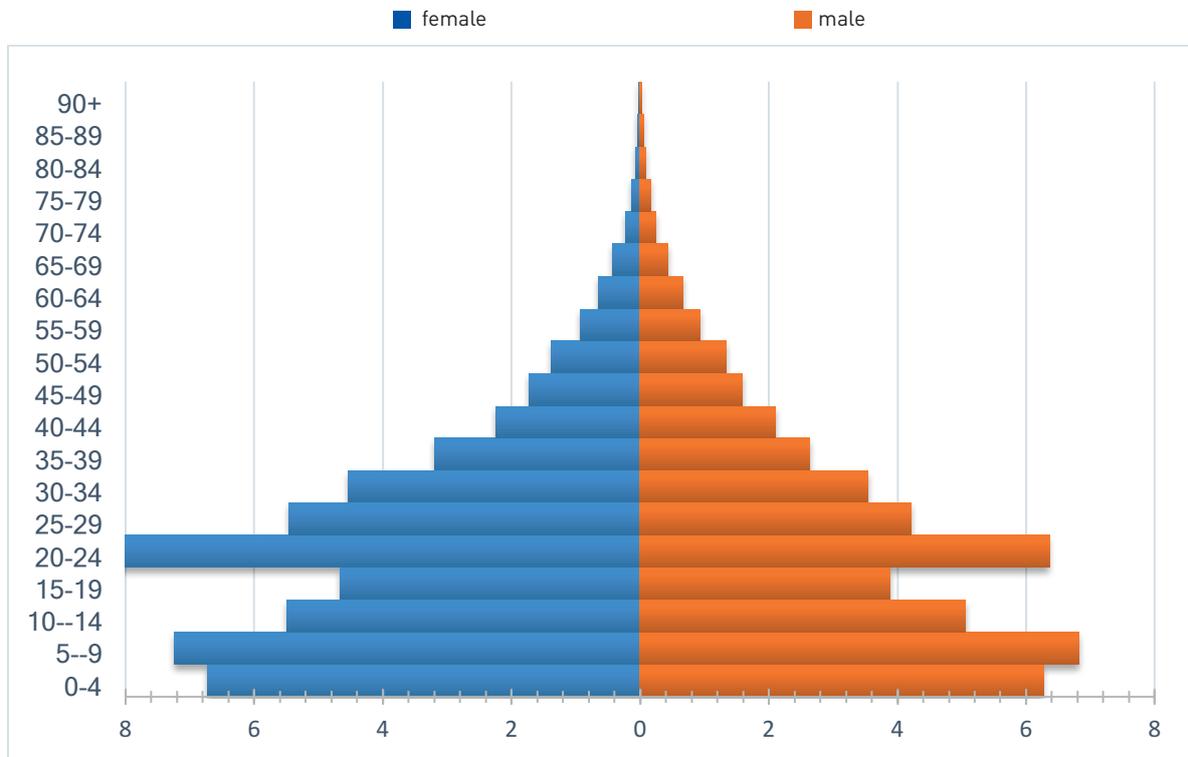


Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The figure was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

Looking at the Syrian population in Turkey in terms of distribution by age groups, it could be seen that 45% of males and 47% of females consist of boys and girls under age 18. In other words, almost half of the Syrian population in Turkey is under age 18. The presence of such a large young population implies the importance of quality education.

Figure 6. Population pyramid of Syrians in Turkey



Source: General Directorate of Immigration Management, 2017.

Note: The pyramid was prepared by using General Directorate of Immigration Management data updated on June 29 2017.

The only source of the data on city-based differences in schooling rates is MoNE and adequate and up-to-date data was not provided by the MoNE despite our several requests, and thus the report lacks this important data. However, we still have a rough image of a sort of ranking among cities in schooling ratios (Figure 7 below). On September 15 2017, MoNE has announced the total number of schooled children in Turkey. As Table 1 and Table 2 indicate, by the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, there are 280,602 and 243,396 Syrian students at 370 TECs and 14,742 public schools, respectively. In addition, 236 students are trained as apprentices, while 8,235 Syrian students continue to study at open education institutions. There are 976,200 school-age Syrian children, while there are 532,469 students registered to schools. The bottom line for the schooling rate is this: Among the Syrian school-age children in Turkey, 54.55% is schooled.

Table 2. Number of schooled children and the types of schools they are registered to

Registration	Number of registered students	Number of schools registered to
E-Okul	243.396	14.742
YÖBİS	280.602	370
Apprenticeship	236	
Open education	8.235	
Total	532.469	

Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled using MoNE data of September 18 2017.

Table 3. Schooling rate of Syrian children

Total school-age population	Total number of student	Total schooling rates
976.200	532.469	%54,55

Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled using MoNE data of September 18 2017.

Looking at the breakdown of the total school-age Syrian population by cities, we see that it is highest in cities like Şanlıurfa (15.16%), İstanbul (14.55%), Hatay (12.81%) and Gaziantep (11.67%) (this is not surprising because these cities are densely populated with Syrians (Figure 6). As it was previously stated, these are also the cities that have the most double-shift school (Eğitim-Bir-Sen, 2016).

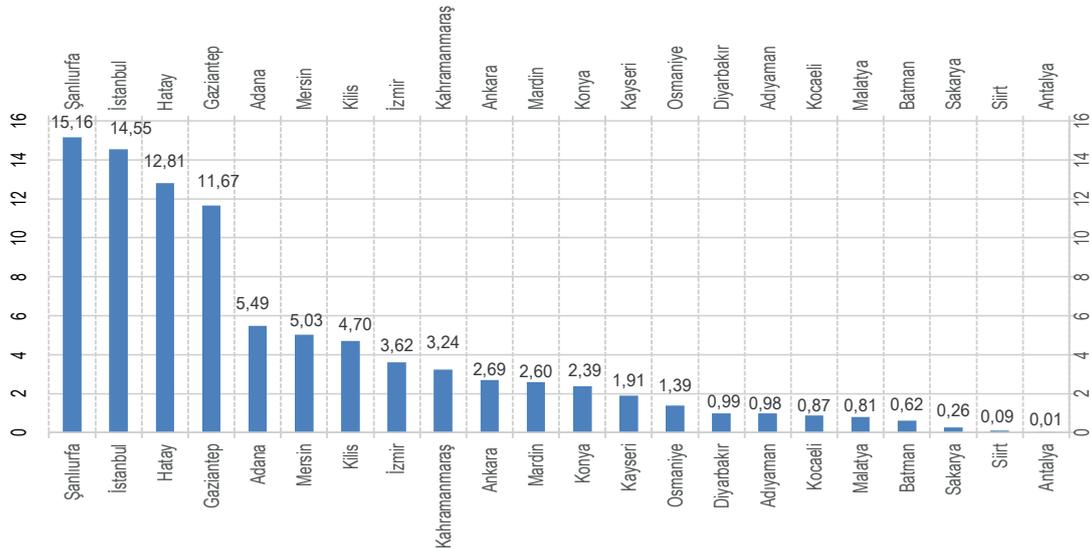


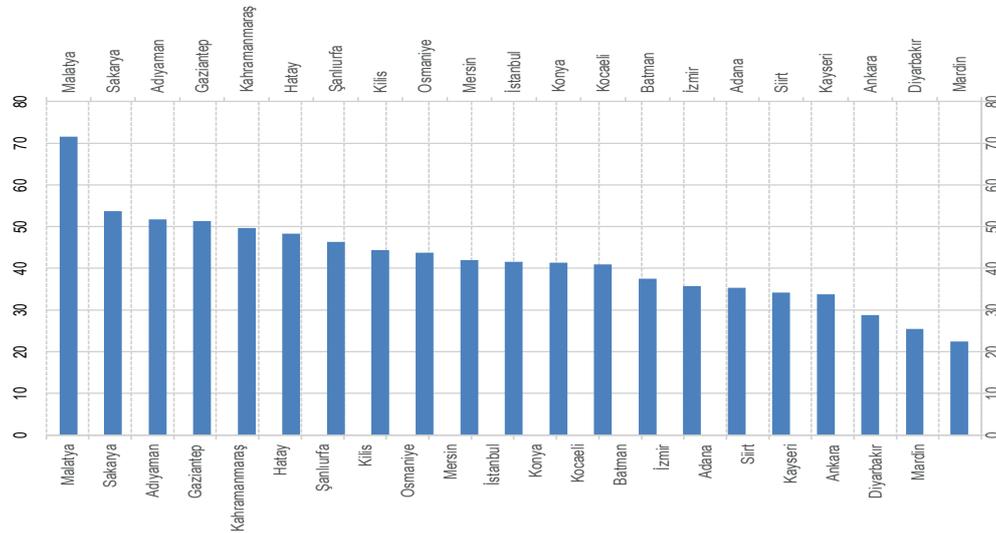
Figure 7. Ranking of cities by the burden of school-age Syrian population (%)

Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled by using MoNE data of March 16 2017.

Figure 7 ranks cities by their schooling rates of Syrians. According to the data, Malatya has the highest schooling rate with 72%, while Sakarya, Adiyaman, Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş have a rate above 50%. On the other hand, schooling rate of Syrian children is below 50% in cities like Hatay, Şanlıurfa, Kilis, Osmaniye, Istanbul and Ankara. It is noteworthy that these cities are the ones with the highest number of Syrians. Considering that certain cities have very low schooling rates, initiatives aiming to improve schooling rates should be especially implemented in these cities.

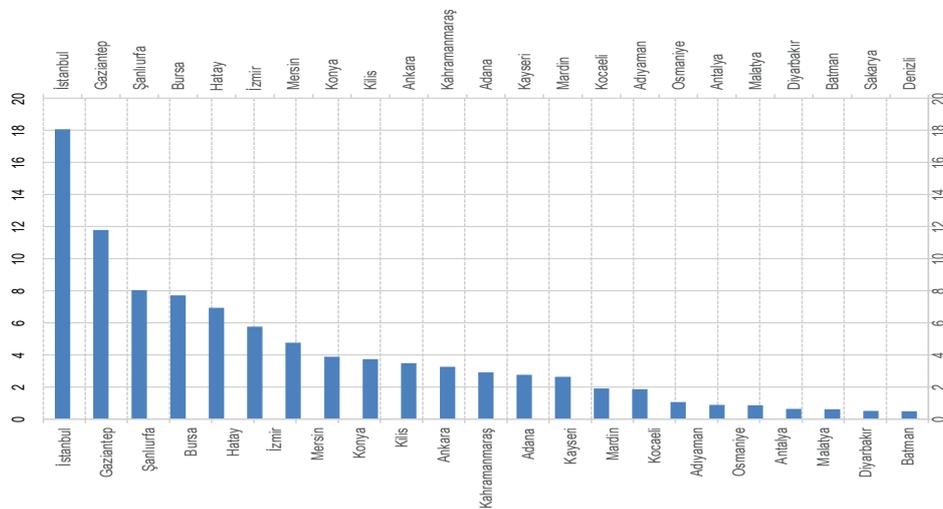
Figure 8. Ranking of cities by the schooling rates of Syrians (%)



Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled by using MoNE data of March 16 2017.

Figure 9. Distribution of Syrian students at public schools by cities (%)



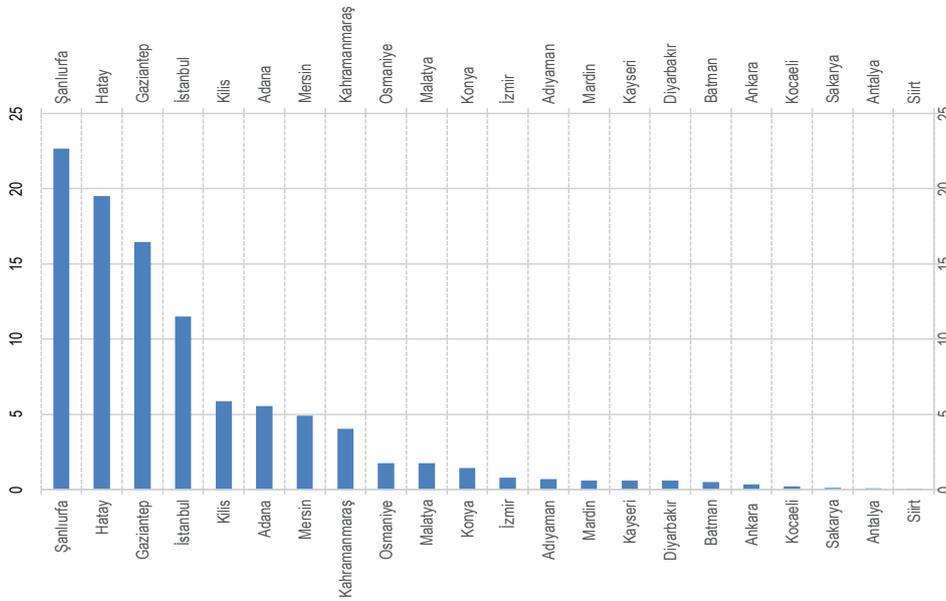
Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled by using MoNE data of March 16 2017.

In Figure 8, the distribution of Syrian students at public schools by cities (%) is shown. According to the figure, 18% of the schooled Syrian children are being educated in Istanbul, 12% in Gaziantep, 8% in Şanlıurfa and Bursa, and 7% in Hatay.

Figure 9 shows the distribution of Syrian students at TECs by cities (%). According to the figure, most of the TEC students are in Şanlıurfa (23%). Şanlıurfa is followed by Hatay (20%), Gaziantep (17%) and Istanbul (12%).

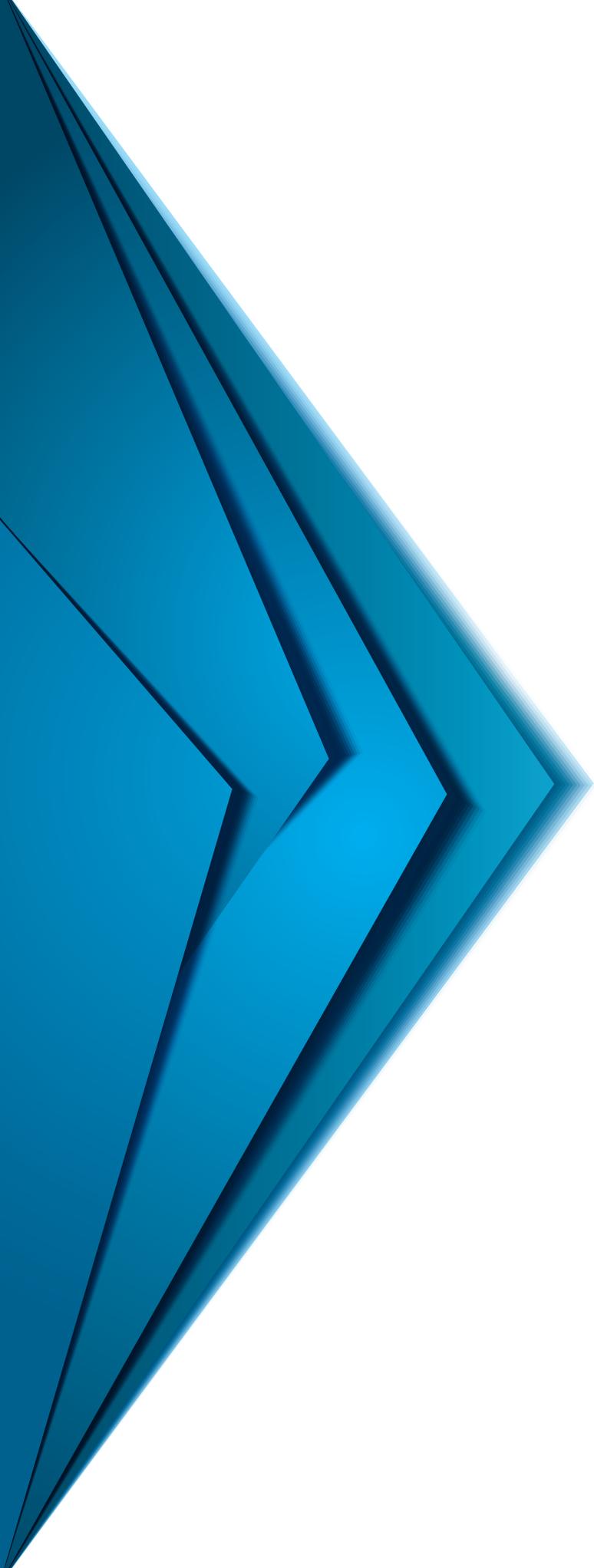
Figure 10. Distribution of Syrian students at TECs by cities (%)



Source: MoNE.

Note: Compiled by using MoNE data of March 16 2017.

As the graphs indicate, Syrian students reside in cities that have the most Syrian population. It could be seen that Syrian students are a pressure on schools in cities like Şanlıurfa, Hatay and Istanbul and that this situation requires the construction of new school buildings and classrooms. In addition, it could also be foreseen that as students transfer from TECs to public schools, the pressure on public schools will increase.



CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 3

Managing the education of Syrian children

This chapter focuses on the measures taken for Syrian children's education and the actors who take part in planning and implementing those measures. After putting specific stress on the administrative and the organizational structure of this educational process, main issues at the administrative level and challenges regarding the opportunities will be exhibited. Lastly, some policy considerations regarding the administrative processes of Syrians' education will be put forward.

3.1. Facilities, prominent actors and applications

Since their first arrival in Turkey, Syrians have been in an immense effort to keep their children in education. As soon as the basic needs have been satisfied, tent schools were established and education was provided to children. Educational activities in these schools were conducted by Syrian volunteer teachers, under the leadership of Syrian Interim Government and with Turkey's infrastructural support. Despite certain physical deficiencies in the camps, education was provided unimpeded. As children's access to schools in camps is easier, schooling rates at these camps have been relatively higher compared to the off-camp rates since the very beginning .

Educational activities outside the camps were first initiated when a Syrian teacher who came to Nizip expressed the Syrian children's need for education to the then-President of Religious Affairs Mehmet Görmez. Görmez requested Mufti of Nizip to arrange a place for Syrian children's education. After a short while, Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDF) noticed the importance of Syrian children's educational issues and started to support Syrian children's education with the "Farkındayım, Yanıbaşındayım" [I'm Aware and Right Beside You] project. Initiated in two Quranic courses facilities in Nizip, educational activities were transformed into formal education for Syrian children through TDF's initiative when school buildings of Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Nizip and Kilis were enrolled for their education. TDF has appointed one deputy mufti in every city to supervise Syrian children's education and as the Quranic courses facilities fell short in locations which had been heavily populated by Syrians, the foundation requested the provincial directorates of national education to allocate public schools for Syrian children's education. The single-shift schools were allocated for Syrian children's education (Topçu, 2017). These schools became the basis of Temporary Education Centers (TECs) that were to be established later.

In the first years of their arrival to Turkey, the Syrian community was perceived as the primary actor in the education of Syrian children and MoNE took the position of only a supportive, secondary actor. As it has become clear that the civil war in Syria would not end soon and as accordingly the Syrian population in Turkey grew more and more, Syrians spread from border cities to a wider surface of the country. Accordingly, Syrian children's education became a prominent issue. After these developments, MoNE started to take more responsibility in Syrian children's education. MoNE first focused on the education of Syrians who live outside the Temporary Refugee Centers (TSCs) in 2013 and sent a directive to all cities regarding Syrian children's education on April 26 2013. The ministry requested the inspection

of facilities that were opened by NGOs and local administrations for Syrian children's education and sociability with this directive; these facilities were to be examined in terms of security and adequacy, and any deficiencies found were to be compensated (MoNE, 2013a). Five months later, with a directive dated September 26 2013, MoNE announced the application regarding Syrian children's education process. According to the directive, Syrian children were to continue their education, those who forcibly discontinued their education were to be recuperated and it was highlighted that they should be educated in any way so that there would not be loss of year at school in case they would return to their home country or go to a third country. It was requested that surplus teachers and, in exchange for additional course fees, teachers with Arabic language skills should be enrolled in Syrian children's education. Moreover, the ones with teaching certificates and the ones who were capable of teaching but not holding any teaching certificate among Syrians were requested to get employed on voluntary basis, without demanding payment (MoNE, 2013b).

The above mentioned directive of MoNE targetted the off-camp Syrians. The number of Syrians in Turkey was around 200,000 in 2013. Syrians used to reside at TSCs and other accommodation facilities in border cities. It was specified that the curricula of programs that are to be implemented at accommodation facilities were to be prepared under MoNE's supervision by Syrian National Coalition Higher Education Commission and that they were to be enriched with subjects like basic life skills, morale education, liberal education and social skills. It was stated that Syrian citizens of Turkish descent, on the other hand, were allowed to receive education according to Turkish curriculum and that those who wanted to learn Turkish were to be provided with the opportunity to do so. In addition, it was expressed that the off-camp Syrian families with 1st-grade-aged kids should register them to the nearest primary school and the education of those who do not have temporary residence permit should be supervised and guided by national and international NGOs (MoNE, 2013b). The Ministry's expectation that the Syrians would be back to their country soon was evident in the directive. Stemming from this expectation, the education provided at the TECs did not have a full-fledged curriculum; the education program focused on providing psycho-social support to children and their integration to the society. Again, as part of this expectation, MoNE rather left the responsibilities of education of Syrians to national and international education-related NGOs, instead of taking a more active role. Lastly, with this directive, registration of the off-camp Syrian kids to the public schools was requested for the first time.

There was a strong expectation in Turkey that the war in Syria would last short and that Syrians would be able to return to their country soon. For this reason, Syrians were not granted a complete legal status. Officially, they were referred as "guests" and they were treated with respect to this ambiguous status. In April 2013, with Law No.6458 "Law on Foreigners and International Protection", Syrians gained Temporary Protection Status. This law granted legal rights to access healthcare, education and social aid. MoNE, on the other hand, prepared a circular dated September 23 2014, entitled "Educational Services for Foreigners", which ensured access to education for Syrian children inside and outside the camps. With this circular, the MoNE tried to guide the way in terms of educational services. In this respect, the circular foresaw the foundation of a ministry commission led by a deputy undersecretary along with provincial commissions in every city that are headed by provincial deputy directors of national education or department chiefs. Provincial commissions were tasked with the processes of equivalence,

transfer and placement. Having a foreign credential was deemed adequate for the equivalency, transfer and placement of Syrian students. Educational level of those lacking education certificates was to be determined through written and oral exams before being placed in a suitable school (MoNE, 2014).

An important novelty with the circular regarding Syrian children's education was the permission to establish TECs under the control of MoNE with the approval of the city governors. Teaching Turkish language was defined as an essential function of the TECs and their general purpose was defined as follows:

[F]oreign students who left their education incomplete by forcibly fleeing their homes shall continue their education here, to be not left behind even for a year in their education whether they return to their country or continue their education at any level in institutions associated with our Ministry. To have unison in application, the activities in question will be determined by the Ministry and shall be conducted over weekly course schedules and education programs (MoNE, 2014).

The circular also required appointing Turkish teachers and foreign language teachers. It also specified that an Ethics Agreement should be signed with Syrian teachers who are to work on voluntary basis and that they should be impelled to act according to this agreement. Issues like providing material, morale and occupational support to voluntary teachers and cooperating with partners to realize it along with supporting students who are in need of material or morale aid were also included in the circular. The circular clearly underscored that procedures regarding students must be performed systematically over e-school and Information System for Foreign Students (YÖBİS [ISFS]) respectively (MoNE, 2014). With this circular, Syrian children were granted the right to be registered to public schools and TECs with foreign credentials (Emin, 2015).

Before the circular, under the leadership of teachers and with the support of NGOs and volunteers, Syrians were receiving education in tents, houses, stores and warehouses. They continued their educational activities in makeshift locations in order to keep up with their education, and to avoid unpleasant experiences after the war and to have a secure and meaningful life in Turkey (Topçu, 2017).

Beginning from the academic year 2016-2017, MoNE abandoned new registrations to the preschools as well as to the 1st, 5th and 9th grades at the TECs. The newcomers to these grades at the TECs are now directed to the public schools. This is because MoNE has decided to close down all of the TECs and include the Syrian kids in education at public schools. In this respect, TECs continue to their educational activities without providing preschool, 1st grade and 5th grade education. Syrian children are given the opportunity to be registered to public schools.

3.1.1. MoNE's organizational structure with respect to educational services provided to Syrian children

From the very beginning, when Syrians started to immigrate to Turkey, a deputy undersecretary of MoNE was tasked with coordinating Syrian children's education. However, no institutional structure concerned with these children's education has been established within MoNE's central and provincial administration. This institutionalization became possible only with the circular dated September 23,

2014, titled “Educational Services for Foreigners”. According to the Circular, a ministry commission would be founded with the lead of a deputy undersecretary and that deputy undersecretary would coordinate Syrian children’s education. A unit tasked with this duty was not specified after the circular. With the foundation of the Immigration and Emergency Education Department as a part of the General Directorate for Life Long Learning in May 16, 2016, a unit to manage Syrian children’s education was finally established. Immigration and Emergency Education Department is tasked with planning, coordinating, applying and supervising education during emergencies. The term “emergency” has been expanded to include immigration. Thus, education of Syrians in Turkey has become a prominent working filed for the department. Procedures regarding Syrian children’s educations are handled by General Directorate for Life Long Learning and associated departments. For instance, EU-funded Project for Promoting Integration of Syrian Children into Turkish Education System (PICTES) is managed by Immigration and Emergency Education Department.

In addition to MoNE’s central administration, there is now an administrative structure at the local level as well. A particular circular has been delivered by MoNE to impose the foundation of provincial commissions in every city. Those commissions are now headed by provincial deputy directors of national education or by the chiefs of departments. In other words, there are provincial deputy directors of national education and department chiefs in every city that coordinate the education of Syrian refugees. This structure goes further into the district level. Founded under the local branches of Life Long Learning, the Immigration and Emergency Education Departments are the most prominent actors in Syrian children’s education at the local level. In addition, commissions founded under provincial and district directorates of national education make decisions on the placement of students to schools. These commissions are also responsible for providing certificates of equivalency and managing the applications.

MoNE has appointed certain teachers as “coordinators” in order to organize and monitor Syrian children’s education more closely. These coordinators are responsible for keeping TECs’ educational activities on par with MoNE’s standards and for managing the communications between TECs and MoNE. There is at least one coordinator per TEC . Cooperating with provincial and district directorates of national education and Immigration and Emergency Education branches, education coordinators carry out tasks like coordinating Syrian children’s education, observation and contributing to in-site administration.

3.1.2. YÖBİS

In 2014, MoNE developed the system named YÖBİS in order to track the registry, success and absence of foreign students (including Syrian children) residing in Turkey. Working similarly with the system for Turkish students which has been in use for years (i.e. e-okul (e-school)), and used only in TECs, YÖBİS is an electronic media that allows the management, observation and assessment of Syrian children’s education digitally. Information regarding a Syrian child’s education is easily accessed through this system. Transfer of TEC students to public schools and procedures following their graduation from TECs are carried out over YÖBİS.

3.1.3. Good practice: PICTES

As it has become apparent that managing the education of Syrian refugees with temporary policies was no more functional, important initiatives were implemented by MoNE to increase the schooling rates among Syrian children as well as to ease the integration of school children with permanent policies. One of such initiatives is PICTES. This two-year project was implemented under the FRIT agreement signed between Delegation of the European Union to Turkey and MoNE on October 3, 2016. Within PICTES, EU has promised 300 million for Syrian children's integration into Turkish education system. Covering 23 cities with the highest Syrian population, the project aims at such activities as language teaching, provision of teachers and supporting staff, counseling and monitoring-evaluation activities (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017

a). Turkish Lecturers and School Counselors were employed as temporary education personnel. These teachers and counselors who are contracted on yearly basis are working at official schools of MoNE, TECs and Public Education Centers (Halk Eğitimi Merkezi). Salaries of these personnel are covered by PICTES.

PICTES' activities are not limited to contributing to personnel employment; as part of the project, also the course materials are analyzed. Even though there are still issues in course materials and curriculum, many problems have been identified and eliminated with respect to the criteria set forth by Board of Education (BoE). Also, orientation of Turkish Lecturers and School Counselors were organized within PICTES. They were trained in subjects like language teaching methods, psycho-social support and sociology of immigration. Similarly, a workshop aiming to make up losses in school subjects, especially in Turkish language courses, was organized for Syrian children in summer. A call for tender has been announced for Syrian children's school supplies and the transportation of 30,500 Syrian children.

3.1.4. Educational environments and teaching materials

Various buildings and physical environments are utilized to help Syrian refugees access to education. Official schools of MoNE come first in terms of supplying classrooms and facilities. Public school facilities are used for two purposes. Firstly, they serve as TECs. Many school buildings have been arranged for double-shift sessions in neighborhoods heavily populated by Syrians. Those schools provide education to Turkish students in the first shift and Syrians in the second shift. Each of these schools are officially recorded with two names. For instance, there is a school named Vali Hilmi Tolun Secondary School in Kahramanmaraş. In the morning, Turkish students are provided education according to Turkish curriculum by Turkish teachers at this school. In the second shift, Syrian children are provided Arabic education by Syrian teachers, in addition to 15-hour Turkish language training. For this reason, the school is officially registered as Vali Hilmi Tolun Secondary School Temporary Education Center, referring to its second shift function. In other words, the second name is used in official affairs concerning TECs, while the first one is used in the official documents regarding the education of Turkish students. A total number of 201 public schools in Turkey used in this way. In addition to this, TECs operate in 46 buildings provided by Disaster and Emergency Management Center (DEMCC), 11 by municipalities, 20 by other public institutions, 25 by NGOs and in 84 privately owned buildings which are rented for the education

of Syrians. In total, there are 432 TECs in Turkey devoted to the education of Syrian refugees (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b).

Inclusion of the Syrian children into the education system came in at a critical time when Turkey had to deal with the problems about the shortcomings in the total number of classrooms. What is more, cities hosting the highest number of Syrian refugees are the cities that double-shift education is more frequent. Turkey continues to build new classrooms with its own resources. In addition, actors and countries like UNICEF, Kuwait, New Zealand and Taiwan have pooled resources for the construction of a limited number schools and classrooms (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b).

3.1.5 Budget and finance

A significant portion of the fund used for the education of Syrian students is provided by Turkey. Almost all of the expenses of these students, like school maintenance and teachers, are covered by MoNE. Syrian students continuing their education at public schools have the same rights with Turkish students. All students at public schools receive textbooks free of charge.

Per the agreement between Turkey and EU, the framework FRIT was established for the transfer of 3 billion financial aid for Syrians. However, it is known that there are challenges in transferring the fund in question. So far, only 300 million has been transferred to Turkey through FRIT.

The expenses of the education provided by TECs are covered by Turkey and institutions like UNICEF and EU along with national and international NGOs. Turkey provides physical and technical infrastructure of TECs. Financial aids to Syrian volunteer teachers are granted by UNICEF; Syrian volunteer teachers receive TL1,300 monthly (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b). Even though this amount was set to match the minimum wage in Turkey, NGOs provide an additional sum to teachers at certain TECs because of the rise in minimum wage and the amount given proves insufficient. For instance, research has revealed that Tzu Chi Foundation grants an extra TL800 salary to teachers who work at 6 TECs in Istanbul's Sultangazi district. This kind of supports are very important but the burden on Turkish state is still heavy since the staff such as the Turkish teachers, coordinators and school administrators are chosen from the employees of MoNE, their salary is covered by Turkey. PICTES is helpful in many respects including the payment of the salaries of the newly employed Turkish Lecturers and School Counselors.

One of the most important component of TECs' budget is the employment and salaries of supporting staff. Janitorial services are especially crucial for TECs of double-shift schools. Research indicates that there is a tendency among the first-shift communities (Turkish students and staffs) to attribute the issues with the cleanliness of schools to Syrian children. Taking responsibility in this matter, TDF has expressed that they have paid the salaries of many supporting staffs at TECs. In addition, employment of 1200 janitors and security staffs has been planned within PICTES (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b).

Another issue is the provision of school supplies to students studying at TECs and equipment aid to TECs. In this respect, UNICEF provides aid for the technological and physical infrastructure of TECs. Field interviews also reveal that supplies in the teacher's lounge and teaching materials at TECs are

provided by UNICEF. In addition, school supplies were distributed to students by UNICEF. It was observed that national and international NGOs were especially helpful in providing school supplies and clothing to children. Though rarely and insufficient in total, foreign resources are mobilized to help the education of Syrian refugees. Korean government has distributed computers, photocopy machines, projectors and printers to 120 public schools with the highest population of Syrian students. In addition, 16% of PICTES (48 million) is dedicated to expenses for equipment, material and resources (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b).

Another fund for Syrian children is Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE). This project aims to increase the schooling rate of children with a small payment for children. With European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations' (ECHO) 34 million contribution, this program is expected to reach 230,000 children by the end of 2017. 56,000 children had received conditional cash support until June 2017, when this report was being prepared. This program targets children being educated at both public schools and TECs. During the academic year, schoolgirls of preschool through 8th grade receive a stipend of TL40 per month, while boys receive TL35 per month. At the high school level, the amount increases to TL 60 for females and TL50 for male students. In addition, it is planned to make an extra one-time payment of TL100 for each child in September and January (Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı [Ministry of Family and Social Policies], 2017; UNICEF, 2017). During the research, it was found that Tzu Chi Foundation started a program that targets the working children who are under age 14. It is hopeful to see that Tzu Chi Foundation was able to re-school 256 children from work, by providing a financial support of equal amount to the children's monthly earnings (TL400-800). Tzu Chi Foundation continues to provide this financial support to the children.

One of the most important obstructions in Syrian children's access to education is about the mean distance between the homes of the kids and the TECs. Usually the transportation costs are unaffordable for the kids and their families. The distance matters in terms of time for walking as well. At this point, providing transportation support to children is crucial. Research revealed that some NGOs contribute to solving this problem. International Organization for Immigration (IOM), for instance, supports Syrian children's transportation in Şanlıurfa and Konya. In addition, Tzu Chi Foundation provides transportation support to children in Sultangazi. Likewise, 10% of PICTES (30 million) is dedicated to transportation (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b).

In short, in addition to Turkey, it could be seen that various countries, international institutions along with national and international NGOs provide diverse supports for children. However, it is not possible to assert that these supports are adequate. Indeed, as a part of the Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP), certain donors (countries and institutions) have promised financial aid to the UN; however, it is definite that there are certain issues in their commitment. These shortcomings have been evident from the earliest times of the crisis. For instance, only 43% of UNICEF's education programs were funded in the mid-August 2014 (Watkins and Zycks, 2014). The general picture has not changed since then. Therefore, the international community must be more active in supporting Syrian children's education. Despite its prominent investments, Turkey cannot overcome issues regarding Syrian children's education by itself. As it was expressed before, cities with the highest Syrian population are places where Turkey has already been having difficulties in establishing educational infrastructure.

3.1.6. Curriculum

When Syrians first arrived to Turkey, expressions that were supportive of al-Assad family and against Turkey were removed from the curriculum and textbooks which were to be used for education of Syrian refugees in tent cities. In 2013, TDF and Syria Education Association have systematically examined 203 books, covering primary and secondary education, and revised them. Photos of al-Assad family, i.e. the actual blameworthy people for the displacement of those refugees, were replaced with more suitable pictures and photos (Topçu, 2017). With the lead of Bülbülzade Foundation, a team consisting of 10 Turkish and 10 Syrian academics and teachers examined the curriculum and textbooks in detail in 2015 and found out that there were supportive expressions for the legitimacy of the current Syrian administration. The curriculum and textbooks in question also included wrong, negative and derogatory expressions about the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey, the host society. In those textbooks, Ottomans and Seljuks were excluded from Syria's history and the narratives of common history and culture were completely disregarded. Moreover, there were highly provocative expressions regarding the territorial integrity of Turkey in the textbooks. With revisions, expressions legitimizing al-Assad administration were removed from textbooks. In addition, negative expressions about the Ottoman and Turkish history were revised and have been replaced by rather peaceful statements promoting the tranquility between the refugees and the host community. Also, industrial, technological and economic development of Turkey are included in the textbooks (BEKAM, 2015). After the detection of the aforementioned expressions in textbooks, all existing textbooks were collected and new textbooks were prepared (NGO2.G.antep.; AFAD).

Syrian children studying at public schools are subject to the curriculum and the weekly schedule. At TECs, weekly schedules shown in Table 2 and Table 3 are carried out. Arabic-medium education is provided at TECs. However, in 2016-2017 academic year, 15 out of 30 hours of classes were dedicated to Turkish language learning for primary education students; for secondary education students, on the other hand, 15 out of 35 hours of class was dedicated to Turkish language learning. As the main aim of the new academic year is the integration of Syrian children into the Turkish education system, Turkish language learning was prioritized. As a result, less time is left for mathematics, natural sciences and foreign language at the primary school level. As it can be seen from the Table5, at the high school level, 2 hours are dedicated to mathematics and 2 hours to natural sciences, while foreign language was rendered as an elective course (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017). With the exception of Turkish language, all courses are taught by Syrian teachers according to Syrian curriculum at TECs.

Table 4. Weekly schedule of TEC primary and middle schools

	Courses	Grades						
		Primary			Middle			
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Compulsory courses	Turkish	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
	Arabic	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
	Mathematics	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
	Social studies	3	3					
	Natural sciences			3	2	2	2	2
	Culture of Religion and Knowledge of Morality			2	2	2	2	2
	Visual Arts	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Music	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Games and Physical Activities	2	2	2				
	Physical Education and Sports				2	2	2	2
	Traffic Safety			1				
	Free Activities	2	2					
	Counseling and Career Planning							1
	Total Compulsory Courses	30	30	30	27	27	27	28
Elective courses	The Holy Quran (4)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Prophet Muhammad's Life (1)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Foreign Language (Languages approved by Cabinet Decree (4)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Brain Teasers (1)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Drama (1)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Reading Skills (1)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Applications of Mathematics (1)				1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
					1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
		Number of Selectable Class Hours				3	3	3
	Total Class Hours	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: General Directorate of Life Long Learning, 2017.

Table 5. Weekly schedule of TEC secondary education

Courses		Grades			
		Highschool			
		9	10	11	12
Compulsory Courses	Turkish	15	15	15	15
	Arabic	2	2	2	2
	Culture of Religion and Knowledge of Morality	2	2	2	2
	Mathematics	2	2	2	2
	Physics	2	2	2	2
	Chemistry	1	1	1	1
	Biology	1	1	1	1
	Physical Education	2	2	2	2
	Visual Arts/Music	1	1	1	1
	Traffic and First Aid	1	1	1	1
	Health	1	1	1	1
Total Compulsory		30	30	30	30
Elective courses	Turkish Language and Literature (4)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	The Holy Quran (4)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Prophet Muhammad's Life (1)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Foreign Language (Languages approved by Cabinet Decree (4)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Diction and Oration (1)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)	1/(2)
	Total Elective Courses	5	5	5	5
Total Courses		35	35	35	35

Source: General Directorate of Life Long Learning, 2017.

15 hours of Turkish language learning will be critical for Syrian children's integration into the Turkish society and education system. However, dedicating less time for other courses because of Turkish will cause Syrian children to lag behind the curriculum. In other words, while any high school in Turkey dedicates 6 hours to mathematics weekly, TECs dedicate only 2 hours. Similarly, while any high school in Turkey dedicates 4 hours to foreign language weekly, TECs dedicate only 1 or 2 hours to foreign language. For this reason, there should be make-up sessions for those educated at TECs.

3.1.7. Graduation and accreditation

Turkey's education system has a suitable set of legislations for the education of children who take refuge in Turkey due to war or emergencies without any credentials. According to Accreditation Regulations, in order to assess the level of education, MoNE can conduct a placement examination to those who are unable to provide required documents because of war or emergencies. The regulation states that the provincial commissions may test students' level of education through written and oral examinations along with application; primary education students are tested in Turkish, mathematics and natural sciences and technology, while secondary education students are tested in language and discourse, mathematics and natural sciences (physics, chemistry and biology). Vocational or technical secondary education students, on the other hand, are to be tested in language and discourse along with their field of study. Accreditation is prepared after the examination; students possessing this document are allowed to study at a school appropriate for their level of education (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Denklik Yönetmeliği [MoNE's Ordinance for Equivalence], 2004). In this respect, children who are victimized by war and do not possess the required documents have the right to study at a suitable school after entering the placement exam and acquiring accreditation.

Accreditation regulation states that the criteria of accreditation should be determined by BoE and the procedures and processes regarding accreditation should be conducted by provincial directorates of national education. Even though it is explained in accreditation regulations, from 2014 onwards, many questions regarding the accreditation processes have been relayed to BoE from provincial directorates of national education. In order to clarify the processes about accreditation processes for Syrian children, BoE has sent numerous bulletins to provincial directorates. These bulletins are mostly about finishing the 12th grade and graduation.

In the first bulletin sent by BoE on July 9, 2015, it was stated that a central examination was hold on June 27, 2015 for Syrian and Iraqi students who have concluded or are to conclude their education at TECs or other educational institutions and that Syrian Interim Government's certification examinations were finalized with it. Ministry underscored that accreditations must be conducted according to the result of the said examination (BoE, 2015a). In the bulletin dated August 18, 2015, it was requested to provide temporary accreditation certificates to those who were applying to universities and having issues with residence permit. Secondly, this bulletin requested inspections to schools established by Syrian Interim Government's Ministry of Education and Libya Interim Government's Ministry of Education, which follow respective curricula of their countries, in order to determine whether they were complaint with the legislation. In addition, students who received documents from the aforementioned schools were to go through accreditation processes and transitioned to public schools (BoE, 2015b).

Accreditations of Syrians were provided quickly in the first years. However, as the number of Syrian students grew, issues regarding diplomas emerged. In response, TDF made an agreement with Libyan School to resolve Syrian children's diploma issue and Libyan School agreed to provide diploma to those educated according to Syrian curriculum after an examination. Similarly, Syrian Education Association met with Libyan Embassy and decided to implement Libyan curriculum. In turn, Libya agreed to provide

diploma to Syrian students in Turkey after examinations; meanwhile, Turkey agreed to accredit these diplomas. Because of issues like forgery, MoNE decided to hold the examinations and accredit diplomas itself (Topçu, 2017).

Since 2015, MoNE has accredited those who are successful in High School Proficiency and Accreditation Exam for Foreign Students (HSPAELS [YÖLYDS]) and Temporary Education Centers High School Proficiency and Accreditation Exam (TECHSPAEL [GEMLYDS]). 160 questions were asked in TECHSPAEL in 2016 and 180 minutes were given for the exam. The exam consisted of the following: 40 mathematics, 40 natural sciences (physics, chemistry and biology), 30 Arabic, 10 English/French, 10 geography, 10 history, 10 philosophy and 10 religious sciences questions. Coefficients for the questions vary according to quantitative, verbal and equally-weighted score types and those who surpass 50 out of 100 are considered successful (MoNE, 2016).

Another decision was made on November 11, 2016 for Syrian students who were unable to enter the exam or failed it. According to this decision, students who finished 12th grade at TECs and were not successful in the accreditation exam were to be “registered to Open Education High School with their accreditation certificates; if they are successful in at least 2 courses, they will be considered as graduates (and provided with a diploma accordingly)”. In this bulletin, it was stated that students who are at 12th grade at TECs should be registered to Open Education High School with the provided accreditation certificate and that these students should be provided with a diploma if they graduate, with the condition of entering exams at least for a term. Moreover, it was expressed that TEC students at 9th, 10th and 11th grades could register to Open Education High School. It was also stated that students at these grades who are currently receiving education at schools established by Syrian Interim Government’s Ministry of Education, Libyan Interim Government’s Ministry of Education and Iraq’s Ministry of Education should be accredited and transferred to public schools. Moreover, it was underscored that children leaving the camp should be accredited according to their existing documents (BoE, 2016). In one of the meetings with the Ministry within the research, it was expressed that TECHSPAEL and HSPAELS would not be held any longer as access to open education is provided.

The fairly complicated accreditation and graduation processes could be simplified in the following way: A Syrian student who has successfully finished the 12th grade at a TEC registers to Open Education High School (in case he/she did not enter TECHSPAEL or was unsuccessful in that exam). Then, he/she is expected to enter the exams of two courses of his/her choice. If he/she is successful in these exams, he/she will receive a high school diploma. The details of this process are the following: Upon finishing the 12th grade at a TEC, student takes a form from the school administration, titled “Form of Educational Attainment”. This form has the name of the school, the city and the district. Detailed credentials of the student are also in this form. Starting with “To whom it may concern”, the form goes as the following:

(Student’s name), whose foreign ID number is, has graduated from (name of the TEC) Temporary Education Center’s 12th grade with diploma score during 2016-2017 academic year.

There is the signature of the TEC coordinator and Provincial Education Coordinator beneath this sentence. In addition, the form titled “Accreditation Form”, which is signed by the department chief of Provincial Directorate of National Education, is given to the students.

(Student's name), whose credentials are stated above, has finished the 12th grade at (name of the TEC). In the case of registering to Open Education High School and being successful in 2 courses, he/she will be considered as a high school graduate and granted the right to acquire a diploma.

This form is provided by MoNE Provincial Accreditation Commission to the student. Student goes to the Provincial Public Education Center with this form and registers to open education high school. After the registration, the system indicates that the student has to pass two courses. Student enters exams of these two courses and receives open education high school diploma if he/she is successful.

3.1.8. Syrian teachers

A large percentage of Syrian students in Turkey (60%) are educated at TECs with Arabic-medium curriculum. For this reason, the employment of teachers knowing Arabic at TECs is crucial. In order to meet this need, MoNE has appointed 13.080 Syrian volunteer lecturers to TECs. UNICEF provides TL1,300 salary to these lecturers (General Directorate of lifelong Learning, 2017b). By selecting among Syrians with a higher education diploma according to certain criteria, MoNE has paved the way for these people to become voluntary lecturers. These lecturers contribute to Syrian student's education by being provided in-service training according to the curriculum.

The following were the processes in the selection of Syrian lecturers to work at TECs in 2016-2017 academic year: with the cooperation of MoNE and UNICEF, 489 people were selected for in-service training as part of the "training the trainers" program. Trainings were realized between August 8-19 and August 22-September 2, 2016 in Konya. Then, the participants lectured 19.700 people in their cities between August 29 and September 18, 2016. The participants were examined and those who were successful after interviews were granted with a certificate and the right to serve at schools. Syrian teachers working at TECs were selected among the successful ones. This new process in the selection of teachers could be deemed as an initiative to improve the quality of education (General Directorate of lifelong Learning, 2017b).

In addition to Syrian teachers, as part of PICTES, 5.700 Turkish lecturers who are to teach Turkish to Syrian students at TECs and 500 School Counselors who are to ease the integration of Syrian children will be employed. Public Staff Selection Examination (PSSE [KPSS]) scores and interviews are important for the selection process. These teachers are employed temporarily per project; 1-year contracts are signed. These teachers' duties will be concluded when the project expires (General Directorate of lifelong Learning, 2017b). Data provided by the MoNE on September 15, 2017 tell us that in the educational year of 2017-2018, a total number of 5.959 staffs of Turkish citizen will be employed in TECs (491 psychological counselors and 5.468 Turkish language teacher).

3.2. Issues related to administration

3.2.1 Reluctance of some local officials

Research showed that there are many civil servants and NGO staffs who are interested in the issues of Syrians' education and are doing their best to resolve those issues. Needless to say, MoNE is openly

advocating and encouraging schooling of Syrians. However, despite all this effort, there are many civil servants and local state authorities who do their best to stop or slow-down those efforts with apparently xenophobic attitudes. This point has been underlined by different actors in different contexts throughout the field research. A typical statement that expresses this ideological position is like this: “if you keep treating them [Syrians] like this, they will always want more and will never leave Turkey”. For instance, originally serving as a teacher in a city, a public staff was commissioned by the Provincial Immigration Administration with working on projects regarding Syrians, as this person knew Arabic and had lived for a considerable time in Syria before the war. Simultaneously working for an association that was founded to aid Syrians, this person was active in field researches, home visits and distribution of aids for almost 4 years. This person took an orphaned Syrian to his house, covering education and livings expenses of the orphaned Syrian and treating the youth like family. However, after a while, this person was removed from the duty by the Provincial Immigration Administration. Asking the reason, the person received the following answer from the official: “You’re spoiling Syrians; keep doing this and they will never leave Turkey. For this reason, it is more suitable for you to return to your former position” (NGO1. Konya). Similar negative dispositions of administrators in various cities are also reported by different participants; certain participants even expressed that some teachers and school principals have similar dispositions (TEC.Coordinator.G.antepe.; TEC.Coordinator.Urfa). It was observed that certain school principals are making it difficult for the Syrians to use the schools. Moreover, it was expressed that the principals of schools transformed into TECs are causing trouble to TEC coordinators and Syrian teachers, stonewalling the usage of facilities. This disposition causes many unwanted consequences on the education of Syrian children.

3.2.2. Issues about the usage of school facilities

One of the most important issues that is voiced by Syrian teachers are about the usage of school facilities. In certain cities, Syrian teachers have expressed that they had limited access to schools’ physical and technical facilities, including the teacher’s lounge. During one of the focus group meetings, Syrian teachers at the TEC stated that it was their first time at the teacher’s lounge. Some of the teachers said that they were not allowed to use certain equipments even like chalks and photocopy machines. Normally, preschools are situated at the entrance level of the school facilities for the convenience of the kids. In some cases, it is observed in the field research, that the preschool classrooms for Syrian children was situated at one of the highest levels of the buildings with serious lack of equipment (TEC. Focus.G.antepe). In some schools, chemistry teachers have expressed that they were not able to access the required materials for experiments (TEC.Teacher.Focus.K.maras). Further researches are required to uncover the extent to which these negative conditions are common.

When TECs are barred from using certain materials or educational equipments in the school, these are provided by UNICEF. TEC coordinators at some of the schools have expressed that their chairs and desks were acquired either through UNICEF or by their own means. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of TECs, some of the Syrian teachers have asserted that additional educational materials and test materials for courses like physics and chemistry must be added to the provided school supplies and equipment aid. Turkish school principals’ and teachers’ positive dispositions towards Syrian children would allow the swift resolution of issues that emerge due to the lack of educational materials and infrastructure.

3.2.3 Issues about bureaucratic processes

One of the issues voiced by TEC coordinators is about the speed and functioning of bureaucratic processes. As there is a justifiable lack of bureaucratic and administrative repository in terms of Syrians' education, administrative flexibility is required at the local level. However, decisions about education are made by the central administration and relayed to the local administrations which then implement these decisions. This chain-of-command causes issues, rendering initiatives of local administrators irrelevant. For instance, summer school was planned at a TEC and when they were ready to carry out the plan, an official letter came from the ministry stating that all Syrian teachers are granted leave of absence. The TEC coordinator who planned the summer school complained that his efforts were in vain. Similarly, local administrators have expressed that they are experiencing issues as a result of the delayed delivery of official letters.

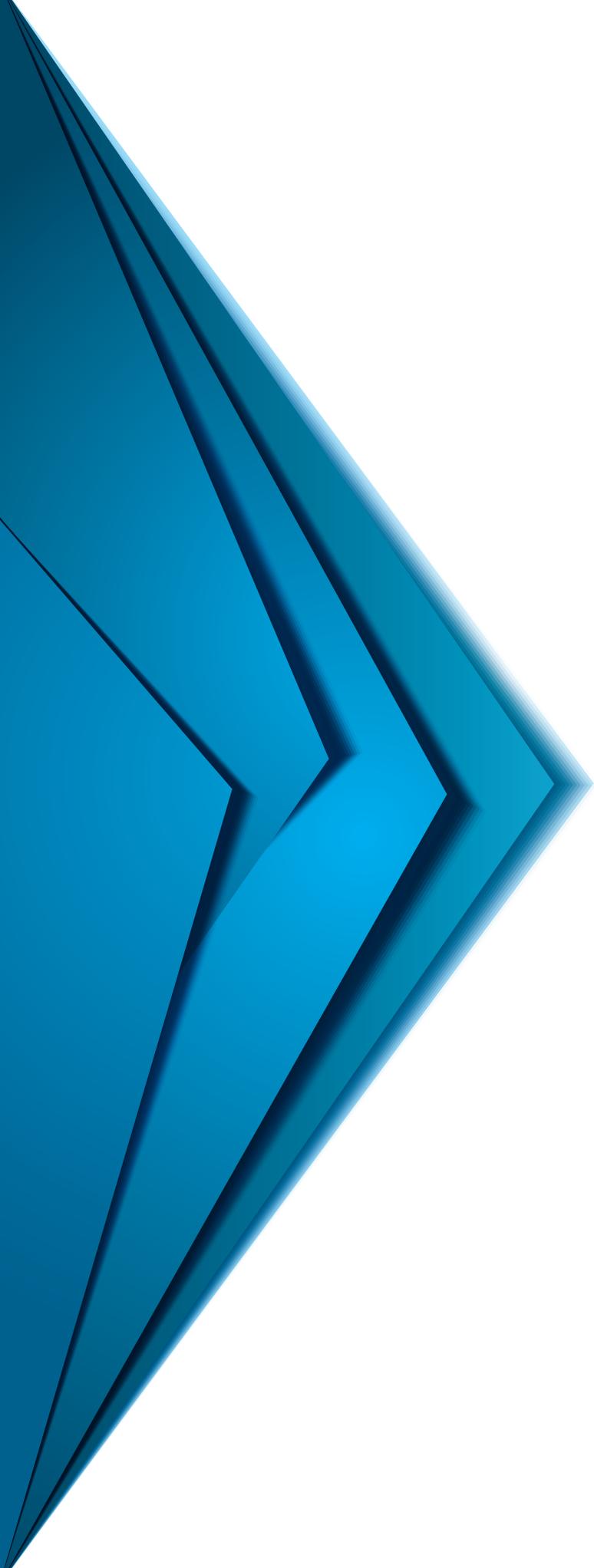
Because of bureaucratic processes, some projects cannot be initiated on time and some others cannot be implemented effectively. Both the local administrators of MoNE and NGOs complain about this situation. An official of the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Immigrants (ASAM) said the following: "Our projects about schooling Syrian children and integrating them with the society are frequently rejected with the excuse of receiving approval from district and provincial administrations. As bureaucratic processes are time consuming, we are unable to realize our integration projects. Moreover, the association itself has its own bureaucracy. Combining it with MoNE and other public institutions' cumbersome bureaucracy, we are having issues initiating our projects. We don't have much time for bureaucracy" (NGO1.Ankara).

3.2.4. Issues about monitoring-evaluation

One of the prominent findings of the research is about the monitoring and evaluation processes. There is an apparent lack of proper interest in collecting, maintaining and analyzing the data about the education of Syrian children. For instance, research shows that almost none of the provincial and district directorates of national education had kept the records of data on the frequency and the rate of Syrian school-age children, nor their schooling rate. When asked about the schooling rate of Syrians in their district or province, officials in question answered with rough estimates, saying something like "I believe it's around 50-60%". Needless to say, data about schooling rate should be recorded meticulously as it is one of the prominent indicators of success level of projects and initiatives. Similarly, data on school-age children are important in terms of making detailed analyses and preparing a roadmap.

3.3. Some policy considerations regarding the management of the education of Syrian children

- A political decision has to be made on whether Syrian teachers will continue to be employed in the case of TECs' closure. Unemployment of approximately 13,000 Syrian teachers may have adverse effects on integration in general and schooling rates in particular.
- Notice of decision makers and new financial resources are needed for dedicating funds for the maintenance, repair and renovation of TEC facilities.
- It is expected prominent NGOs which have been working in coordination with MoNE for years to be accredited. Moreover, decision should be taken to speed up and ease bureaucratic processes of NGOs in question.



CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER 4

Access of Syrian Children to Education in Turkey

In this chapter, firstly the initiatives carried out by the public along with national and international NGOs regarding Syrian children's access to school are discussed. Then, obstructions to the schooling of Syrian children are examined. The chapter ends with policy considerations regarding the issues related to Syrian children's access to education.

4.1. Smoothing the ways to education

Important initiatives are taken in the last few years to include the Syrian children in education. Syrian children are able to receive education at TECs or public schools. In addition, civil servants and NGO officials are carrying out certain activities to increase Syrian children's access to schools. Facilities and applications regarding the schooling of Syrian children will be examined in this part.

4.1.1. Temporary Education Centers (TECs)

The beginning of Syrians' education in Turkey goes back nowhere but to a Quran course in a district of Gaziantep, i.e. Nizip. In 2013, for the first time Quran course facilities in Nizip were used for this purpose. This educational application which employed around 100 Syrian teachers whose salaries were covered by TDF is the basis of TECs (Topçu, 2017).

The data provided by MoNE on 16 March 2017, there were 432 TECs all around the country and 31 of them were located at TSCs in 22 cities, while the remaining 401 TECs were established outside of TSCs in various cities. Also, the same data set indicated that 287,019 Syrian students were registered to TECs. Recent data, however, shows that the number of the TECs has been shrunk. Data provided by MoNE on September 15, 2017 shows that there are currently 370 TECS in 20 different cities. This shrink is quite in consent with the policy of MoNE towards closing down TECs gradually. Data of the same date tells that there are currently 13.080 Syrian teachers employed in the country.

TECs are unique solutions for the education of mass immigrants. Two essential factors led to the emergence of TECs: mass movement of a population within a short period of time and the uncertainties about the future of Syrian Civil War and al-Assad regime. During these times, TECs played a crucial role in the education of children. With the prolonged civil war in Syria and the declining possibility of Syrians returning to their country in the short term, today MoNE has acknowledged that trying to address Syrian children's education with temporary measures and policies is unrealistic. For this reason, MoNE has decided to gradually close TECs down. In this respect, TECs were barred from registering new 1st, 5th and 9th grade students and these students are being directed to public schools. The aim is to close all TECs down in a few years and coeducate Syrian students with Turkish students according to the Turkish curriculum.

4.1.2. Public schools

Nearly half of the Syrian students are registered to public schools. The data provided by MoNE on September 18, 2017, there are 238.175 Syrian students registered at more than 14.000 public schools. These students are educated in the same class conditions with a common curriculum.

An increase in the number of Syrian students at public schools is expected with the gradual closure of TECs. Moreover, the improving schooling rates of Syrian children and the natural increase in the number of school-age children will lead to an increase in the number of Syrian students at public schools. While the public schools will provide prominent facilities and opportunities to Syrian children, there are also concerns regarding the emergence of new issues. It is asserted that the increased number of Syrian students at public schools which are situated in neighborhoods highly populated by Syrians might cause certain issues.

4.1.3. Public initiatives for improving the access

Various actors are implementing projects and programs through various channels for Syrian children's access to school. The most extensive systematic program regarding improving schooling rate is conditional cash transfer. As economic issues are among the most prominent obstructions to children's access to school, this program is expected to boost schooling rates. In this respect, a prominent project has been realized: CTE. This program is funded by ECHO. It is implemented according to the protocol signed between Ministry of Family and Social Policies, MoNE, Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF. The aim of the program is to increase the schooling rate and cover the educational expenses of refugees by expanding the Conditional Education Aid Program which has been in effect since 2003 for Turkish citizens. In accordance with the program, 56,000 children were provided TL3.8 million aid through 33,000 cards until May 31 2017 (UNICEF, 2017). Students at both TECs and public schools are eligible. Regular attendance is a condition for eligibility. According to this program, schoolgirls of preschool and those of 1st-8th grades receive TL40 per month. Schoolboys of the same profile get a stipend of TL35 per month. On the high school level, girls get TL60 and boys get TL50. In addition to these, it is planned to give an extra TL100 for each child in September and January (Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı [Ministry of Family and Social Policies], 2017; UNICEF, 2017).

Aiming to increase Syrian children's schooling rate, another important initiative by public institutions is family visits which are conducted by teachers, school principals and staffs of provincial directorates of national education. Research shows that family visits really help with school enrolment rates. Interviews conducted in Konya and Istanbul as part of the research indicate that these visits have profound effects on schooling rate. It was expressed that an effective family visit is important for the following: detecting children who are not schooled, identifying the reasons for not sending their children to school on an individual and case-by-case basis, and expressing the importance of education for the future of children (and family). It is reported that additional visits with the purpose of informing and persuading families were conducted in certain cities after identifying issues onsite.

4.1.4. Civil society initiatives for improving the access

It was observed that NGOs were as active as public institutions in improving schooling rate of Syrian children. Certain NGOs conduct field surveys in order to establish contact with impoverished Syrian families and to satisfy their needs. When a child who is not going to school is identified by an NGO during these field surveys, the steps required to school the child are taken. For instance, Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) is one of the NGOs regularly conducting such

field surveys. A project of ASAM that was implemented in the Aegean region is exemplary. As part of the project, a Mobile Counseling Team was formed. This team consists of a leader, social workers and supporting staff. Conducting regular field surveys with a land vehicle, when the team detects a child who is not at the school, they first identify the reason why the child is not schooled onsite. Then, if the child is not registered to a school, they register the child to a school in coordination with the child's parents (if they are available), Provincial Immigration Administration and Provincial Directorate of National Education. A similar program is carried out by ASAM's Al Farah Center in Ankara.

Research indicates that it is challenging for NGOs to focus merely on education. Founded with the aim of working on Syrian children's education, many NGOs were forced to work on other issues like shelter, healthcare and nourishment after observing urgent needs in the field. Elbir Association founded in Konya is a typical example of this situation. Even though it does not conduct regular field surveys like ASAM, Elbir Association takes the initiative when its staffs find children who are not being educated at schools during distribution of aid-in-kind. Primarily founded for the education of Syrian children, this association expanded to help with food, shelter and healthcare as urgent needs started to emerge. While the association's administrators are aware of education's importance, they have expressed that they could not be indifferent to Syrian's demands for help. Still, this association continues to maintain its primary aim and work on increasing Syrian children's access to education whenever possible.

There are also other NGOs with different methods than ASAM and Elbir Association that actively work on and dedicate special resources to improving children's access to education by detecting children who are not going to school. In this respect, NGOs like Humanitarian Relief Foundation (HRF [İHH]) and Bülbülzade Foundation could be given as examples. HRF actively supports education at every level in both Turkey and Syria. Beside their various activities in aiding Syrians, HRF also implements special projects that aim to take Syrian children off the street and provide education to them. For instance, with this project, more than 50 children who were working and begging on the streets were put to school by HRF in Hatay's Reyhanlı district. Similarly, Bülbülzade Foundation works on projects to increase schooling rates in an area that covers 94 neighborhoods in Gaziantep. Even though these are small-scale or regional projects, they contribute to the schooling rate.

Beside national and international institutions that are concerned with Syrian children's education, there are NGOs founded by Syrians as well that work diligently on these matters. In order to provide insight about the characteristics of their work, it would be beneficial to elaborate on some of the programs and projects of these NGOs. SAED Charity Association is one of the said NGOs. Founded in 2014 by Dr. Asaad Asaad in Hatay's Reyhanlı district, SAED provides support to Syrians' education from preschool to higher education. These activities are realized mainly through 4 different schools. First of them is a preschool founded in Reyhanlı; there are around 150 students at this preschool. SAED covers the rent of the building and the salaries of teachers. The second school of SAED is Temkin in Reyhanlı; this is a TEC that operates at Abdülkadir İşcan Middle School. At this school, Turkish and Syrian students are educated simultaneously at different classrooms and according to different curricula. Turkish students are educated at 8 classrooms, while Syrians study at the remaining classrooms. Teachers' salaries are covered by UNICEF. SAED, on the other hand, covers the school supply or transportation expenses of

students. The third school founded by SAED is located in Şanlıurfa and was named after the association. While the association covers the rent of the school building, UNICEF provides the salaries of teachers. The last of these educational institutions is Al-Amal School which was conceptualized by Dr. Asaad Asaad, the founder of SAED. During the interview, Dr. Asaad has expressed that “the school, which is not directly associated with SAED, was founded for providing a kind of religious higher education” (NGO1. Hatay). In this respect, the school reminds theological schools of higher education. Dr. Asaad has stated that he has been seeking to accredit Al-Amal which provides 2-year religious education programs that consist of 15-30 credits.

Operating in Istanbul’s Sultangazi district, Taiwan-based Tzu Chi Foundation works especially on schooling children. Indeed, establishment of TECs in Sultangazi was realized with the cooperation of Tzu Chi Foundation and the district directorate of national education. Moreover, all needs of TECs in the district were satisfied by the foundation. On the other hand, with a special program, Tzu Chi Foundation has parted 256 children under the age of 14 from work and schooled them. As a part of the program, a financial aid on par with their wages was provided to these children. In addition, Tzu Chi Foundation provides financial aid and shuttle to address transportation issues of Syrian children. Trying to address Syrians’ issues in general, Tzu Chi Foundation actively works on increasing schooling rates of Syrian children.

4.2. Obstructive factors on access to school

Obstructions could be divided into three categories according to their level of difficulty. First category consists of obstructions that could be removed relatively easily in the short-term with a plan. Disorientation and psychological challenges (like the lack of motivation) are some of the examples of this type of obstruction. It was observed that while children are ready to go to school, they were unable to do so as their family lacked information about bureaucratic processes. Reaching these children’s families smooths their access to education. In certain cities family visits realized by provincial directorates of national education and NGOs resolve these kinds of issues and integrate children who were left out because of trivial matters to the educational system.

The second category of obstructions requires strength in planning. For instance, children who were unable to go to school when they came from Syria to Turkey are examples of this kind. Take the example of a 10-year old child who has never gone to school or 12-year old child who had to discontinue education for 2 years. Would it be easy for these kids to get into the education system? It is challenging to get these children into school, but it is possible. Similarly, poverty of a certain level is also one of this type of obstructions. For instance, a family with three children who live at TL300 monthly income will not send their children to school because of poverty. Poverty in this case might not be resolved swiftly; however, it is possible to prevent poverty from being a mere reason for not sending children to schools. Similarly, coeducation is an unfamiliar and undesired phenomenon for the majority of Syrians. There are families who do not send their children to school just because of this reason.

The third category of obstructions is the hardest to remove or resolve. This category includes economic, cultural or socio-psychological reasons. The most prominent economic obstruction is the family’s reliance

on the income brought by the children. In father's absence, the children (especially the eldest boy) are responsible for bread-winning. Factors like having a seriously ill family member in the household, rents being relatively expensive, or having more than average number of people in the household increases the possibility of children participating in income generating activities, and consequently falling apart from the school. Syrian children work in the industrial jobs and/or as unskilled workers in metropolises. In the border cities and rural areas, they generally work as agricultural workers.

4.2.1. Economic issues that have obstructive roles on schooling of Syrian children

The most prominent obstruction to Syrian children's schooling is their obligation to work as they have low income. Especially boys are obliged to work even at a very young age as they have lost their fathers to war or their fathers are not available to work (Unschooler.Boy2.Istanbul). Even though they have elder sisters, these boys are obliged to become primary breadwinners (Unschooler.Boy3.Istanbul). In cases when their parents work at a job and they have a baby or an elderly in need of care in the household, girls tend to stay at home, taking care of the baby or the elderly, thus missing school (Unschooler.Boy4.Istanbul). During the interviews conducted in Istanbul, it was expressed that employers preferred to employ children instead of their parents. This is because the children are perceived as cheap labor. Therefore, when their parents fail to find a job, children have nothing to do but to work. As the research indicates, in most cases the house rents are higher than their usual values to Syrians in all cities. Because of expensive house rents and low income of parents, children are forced to work at a young age to contribute to the family budget.

In specific conditions where parents have lower income or not any income at all, children are unable to access the school and education. The research revealed that financial difficulties and economic issues are the most prominent obstruction to children's education. Many children who are obliged to work, thus cannot attend the school, have asserted that they would quit the job and immediately return to school if their income (even half or a portion of it for some) was to be replaced with a financial aid. As it was mentioned before, Tzu Chi Foundation was able to return 256 "working children" to school in Istanbul by providing TL600-800 monthly financial aid (with the condition that they continue their education).

In cases where children leave schools because of working, it was interesting to observe that it parents are harder to get persuaded than the working-kids themselves. What makes this situation more dramatic is that, parents' high level of education does not play any significant role in being open for recommendations on returning the working-kids back to school. For instance, when a Syrian English teacher at a TEC was asked about the reason behind his son's leaving the school, the reply was "I regret it and I feel terrible for him, but that is the way it is. He is working in order to help me pay the rent and our monthly expenses". When asked what could be done for his son who works at a flour plant to return the school, the parent clearly stated that he/she did not want his son to return to school, preferring him to have a job that generates income (Parent.of.Unschooler1.Ankara). Similarly, a 59-year-old Syrian parent was asked whether he/she would want his/her 14-year-old son to return to school if there is an opportunity to do so; the parent's answer was "No, I wouldn't want that. He is the breadwinner of

this family". When this Syrian parent whose son has never been to school and has been working as a carpenter's apprentice since they arrived to Turkey was asked what could be done to return his son to schools, the answer was "nothing could return him to school now". Furthermore, the parent made the MoNEy gesture and reminded the electric and water bills that should be paid, showing a strong will in not sending his son to school (Parent.of.Unschooled2.Ankara).

When economic issues are in question, most of the children are eager to return to school. However, some believe that going to school is nothing but a waste of time and working and/or learning a vocation is much more important. Examining the conditions of a Syrian child who believes that leaving the school is not a loss will provide an insight about the challenges of Syrian children's schooling. For instance, Ahmet, a 15-year-old Syrian, came to Turkey in 2013. He lives together with five siblings and parents. Monthly income of Ahmet's family is TL1,200. Ahmet works as an apprentice to a Syrian barber. He did not go to school for 2 years since his arrival in Turkey. When he started to think about going back to school, he realized that he "fell behind". Ahmet went to school for a while; however, he could not accept the fact that all of his classmates were younger than him. "I don't regret not going to school. I'm currently getting a skill and one day (within 3-4 months) I'll start to get use of this profession," said Ahmet (Parent.of.Unschooled.Boy1.Ankara). An important point here is that, some of these children have not heard at all about the opportunities of open high-school education (Unschooled.Girl5.İst). Other studies on the reasons why the Syrian children are away from school indicate that economic issues and children's obligation to work constitute the most prominent obstruction to schooling (Culbertson and Constant, 2015; SETA, 2017).

4.2.2. Language

Language is among the most prominent obstructions to Syrian children's integration to the education system. Even though they have different vernaculars, all of the Syrians speak Arabic. This is the main obstruction to Syrian children being educated at Turkish public schools. Beside Turkey, Syrians have also sought refuge in Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt; Arabic is the official language of these countries. For this reason, while Syrian children are able to adapt the education system in these countries, language is a natural barrier to their schooling rate. Unlike other countries, Turkey is forced to take more initiative for Syrian children's schooling (Culbertson and Constant, 2015). In order to integrate Syrian children to Turkish education system and remove the issues related to language, Turkish language lecturers are employed as part of the project Promoting Integration of Syrian Children to Turkish Education System (PICTES). In this respect, Turkish language courses were increased to 15 hours a week at TECs. Yet, despite all the initiatives, language continues to be a prominent obstruction to schooling.

Problems related to the language are more challenging for the 1st, 5th and 9th grade Syrian students who have been registered to public schools per MoNE's decision. The effort to get the Syrian kids in Turkish education system and thus contribute to their integration is meaningful and useful but it has complications as well. For instance, a child who was educated in Arabic language at TECs and was unable to learn adequate Turkish is forced to receive education with Turkish students at a public school. Moreover, as this child's Turkish is not very well, his/her ties to school are weakened, causing him/her to leave school. During interviews with parents of unschooled children, education coordinators and Syrian teachers, it was revealed that many children of 5th and 9th grades were not attending classes

despite being registered to the school. As they were unable to learn Turkish well, they have challenges in following the lectures and bonding with their classmates. As a result of this, children leave the school after a while.

While MoNE works on new approaches on teaching Turkish language, there are certain issues with its application. For instance, 1st, 5th and 9th grade students being registered to public schools as part of the compulsory education caused certain issues about Turkish language learning. Syrians who know a little or no Turkish are put in mixed classrooms, are expected to progress on two tracks of education simultaneously: While they are learning Turkish on one hand, they have to learn the courses like mathematics, physics and history on the other hand. There is a supposition here: Push the Syrian children in situations and they will learn Turkish anyway. However, research showed that this supposition is not realistic especially for 5th and 9th grade students. Trying to learn Turkish, Syrian students miss the contents of other courses. As a result of this, these students' academic success drops down below the class average. Moreover, in some cases this may lead to the isolation for Syrian students. During focus group meetings with Turkish teachers, it was expressed that there were Syrian students who were unable to speak Turkish despite having been educated together with Turkish student for 2 years (Turkish.Teacher.Focus1.Ankara). Similarly, during interviews, Turkish teachers stated that they were taking affirmative action for Syrian students whose academic success is below the average because of language and that Turkish students reacted to them because of their actions (Turkish.Teacher.Focus3.Konya), (Turkish.Teacher.Focus2.K.maraş) On the other hand, it was observed that Syrian children who did not register to schools and worked at a job for 2-3 years are more self-confident, have better communications with the school administration and adapt more easily to school (TEC.Student.Focus1.İstanbul).

There are various strategies in the field to prevent children from leaving school because of the language barrier. First of all, it was expressed that some of the children repeat 4th or 8th grades at TECs in order to cause a delay in going to public schools without having proper language skills. The second strategy observed was the implementation of intensified Turkish language courses for Syrian children at public schools. For instance, at a public school, Syrian 9th graders were gathered in a separate classroom. In this classroom, Syrian students are provided with an intensified Turkish language course along with the courses defined and imposed by the curriculum, even though class hours of the latter are reduced. This classroom is designed like a Turkish preparatory school for Syrian children. The school principal said that "these students will start to be educated together with Turkish students next year; that is, they will be back to their regular and official 10th grade classrooms with a better Turkish language skills" (TEC.Student.Focus1.İzmir). Though not officially defined, variances of this application were observed in numerous cities and schools in different cities.

It was observed that there is a widespread concern among Syrian teachers, students and parents that Syrian children may lose their Arabic language skills as a result of being embedded into the Turkish education system. We are yet far from evidences to decide whether these concerns are realistic or not, but one thing is certain: These concerns constitute a psychological obstruction to Syrian children's integration to the Turkish education system. The concerns regarding forgetting Arabic distances Syrians from Turkish language and Turkish curriculum. A frequently used argument is embodied in a Syrian teacher's following statement: "Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran. It is the language of Islam. Certain measures must be taken, so that children do not forget Arabic while receiving Turkish

education” (TEC.Student.Focus1.Ankara.). Concerns about forgetting Arabic was frequently uttered by both teachers and students especially when their opinions about the closure of TECs were asked.

4.2.3 Cultural factors

High school education is not compulsory in Syria. With regional variances, preschool, primary school and middle school education is compulsory. In-depth interviews and focus group meetings indicate that education had not been a primary concern for Syrian people even in the normal, pre-war conditions in their country. This is also maintained by Syrians in Turkey. In other words, education is a secondary objective for the most Syrians in Turkey and this causes schooling rates to be low, especially at high school level.

Girls’ marriage at younger ages disrupts their school life. Early marriage being a factor that has an adverse effect on schooling was also confirmed by other researches (SETA, 2017). In this respect, at a focus group meeting with Syrian teachers in Istanbul, it was asserted that early marriage was common in Syria, that is, 14 or 15-year-old girls are mated. It was expressed a similar situation is taking place also in Turkey and that 5 schoolgirls being educated at the school of the focus group have left the school because of marriage (TEC.Teacher.Focus1.Istanbul). In terms of early marriage, it was stated that sometimes girls were married in exchange for TL10,000-15,000, a kind of a dowry (NGO1.G.ante).p).

Coeducation does not exist in Syria. In other words, girls and boys are educated in different classrooms at the same school. In some cases, this attitude is carried to the extent of avoiding the enrolment of opposite-gender teachers. With this cultural background, coeducation in Turkey is usually viewed negatively by Syrians. For instance, a 14-year-old girl interviewed in Gaziantep said she does not want to go to school “because of girls and boys are being educated in the same classroom”. A TEC coordinator said the following: “Coeducation must be given up. Syrians are not able to adapt to this system; they find this application bizarre. Even the teachers are of the same sex of the classroom [female teachers for girls, male teachers for boys] in Syria; for this reason, they are unable to get used to coeducation” (TEC.Coordinator.K.maraş).

There are great similarities between Syrian and Turkish societies in terms of belief, tradition, lifestyle and even food. However, these similarities are overruled by differences in certain aspects of life. Differences that would not cause problems under normal conditions turn into issues under extraordinary conditions, especially when integration is in question. For instance, there is a significant number of Syrian girls who prefer to wear the veil. There are not any regulations that prevent them from receiving education at TECs with their veils. However, there are certain issues at public schools. Aware of these complications, a female student has expressed concerns about her veil in case the TECs are closed down: “It’s [closure of TECs] not important; however, if I will be forced into a mixed classroom, I will have issues. I would not want to remove my veil” (TEC.Student.Focus2.Ankara).

In cases were girls reside far from a school, some families do not send their daughters to schools because of various concerns. Cultural pressure towards girls, as much as concerns for security, have adverse effects on schooling.

In certain examples, it was observed that children did not want to attend school because education’s importance was disregarded. Deeming education meaningless, some of them want to begin to work and

become an income-owner as early as possible. In such examples, it was observed that these children had already left their schools in Syria. Moreover, in some examples, children do not want to continue their education as they see courses as meaningless, with the exception of courses on the Holy Quran, religious knowledge and home economy (Unschooler.Girl2.Ş.urfa., Unschooler.Girl3.Ş.urfa.).

4.2.4. Transportation problem

It was observed that Syrians usually live in the poorest neighborhoods, shantytowns, and near the industrial zones. These neighborhoods are places where even the locals have issues accessing education and urban life. For instance, certain neighborhoods (like Solfasol) of Ankara's Altındağ district are places where even the internal immigrant population have issues in integration to the urban life. Similarly, even the locals of these neighborhoods have a low schooling rate when compared to Ankara's other districts. Syrians' settlement to these neighborhoods constitutes another factor that increases the challenge of children's schooling. This is the case also for Syrians who settle in similar neighborhoods in other cities.

Transportation is one of the most prominent obstructions to schooling in these kinds of neighborhoods. As public transportation service is not developed in these neighborhoods, transportation to school is a serious issue for some children. During a focus group meeting with Syrian children at a TEC in Ankara, the children have complained about this issue. Consisting of a group of 16 students of 5th to 8th grades, the focus group meeting revealed that one of the students was walking between his/her home and the school. This school is 3 kilometers long and each trip takes at least 1 hour. The researcher has accompanied this student to his home from school. The route is shown over Google Earth in the following figure.

Figure 11. Daily route of a TEC student in Altındağ district of Ankara (approximately 3 kilometers)



During a focus group meeting with Syrian teachers, it was expressed that DEMC organizes free shuttles between TSCs and downtown in certain cities and that it eases children's access to schools outside of camps. Teachers asserted that this kind of applications must be made commonplace (TEC.Teacher.Focus1.K.maraş). Schooling rate being higher in campsites rather than outside of the camps proves the linear relationship between means of transportation and schooling.

The research revealed that transportation, together with economic issues, is one of the factors that has the most impact on schooling. It was observed that families residing far from schools had issues sending their children to school in almost all cities that were visited. It was expressed that girls left TECs early before the sunset or did not go to the school at all, especially those in Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa as the classes start at late afternoon. As the distance between home and school increases, children have the increasing need to use public transportation or shuttles between school and home. This proves to be another economic issue for the families.

An alternative to transportation is boarding schools. In order to ease their access to school, boarding opportunities were provided to Syrian children in certain cities. Governorates have sent official letters to Provincial Directorates of National Education, requesting them to adopt facilitative approaches. However, interestingly, this application was finalized due to regulations. For instance, a school principal in Osmaniye provided accommodation to Syrian students. However, when the "being a citizen of Republic of Turkey or Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" criterion, which is stated in 2nd clause's sub-clause A of the 4th article of "Regulations for Boarding, Scholarship, Social Aids and School Guesthouses at Public Schools", was reminded to him, the school principal was forced to remove Syrian children from the facility. As a result of this situation, these Syrian children who live far away from school were dropped out from the school.

There are forecasts that access to school will become more challenging in terms of transportation in the case of TECs closure; majority of the Syrian students do not have the economic means to buy service from private transportation companies. It was revealed that there were Syrian students who had to leave school in certain cities (Istanbul, Ankara and Kahramanmaraş) as transportation expenses were high. On the other hand, students who walked to school were observed having issues in returning home especially during winter as it gets dark. For this reason, transportation planning should be made by calculating the impact of closing down TECs might have on each individual school.

There are transportation and financial aids provided by both public and private actors. During the research, it was observed that IOM provided shuttles for children in Şanlıurfa and Konya. A protocol was signed between the General Directorate of Life Long Learning and IOM for the transportation of 20,000 Syrian students. In addition, 30 million was dedicated for children's transportation as part of PICTES and a tender was initiated for the transportation of 30,500 students during 2017-2018 academic year. Even though these transportation activities were yet to start at the time of the research, improvements for transportation services is expected in 2017-2018 academic year.

4.2.5. Disorientation

One of the most prominent issues that emerge with immigration is immigrants' lack of the knowledge of the cultural, social, economic and bureaucratic structure of the host country. Immigrants/refugees tend to comprehend easier structures first and they are interested in the structure that will allow them to survive according to the hierarchy of needs. Food and shelter are usually parts of mechanisms that are relatively easy to figure out. These mechanisms are usually founded by various aid institutions and public institutions and access to these mechanisms are generally easier. On the other hand, cultural and bureaucratic structures are harder to decrypt and require immigrants/refugees to dedicate more time and resources to comprehend.

Educational system, considering all the bureaucracy around it, is not a mechanism that could easily be figured out for immigrants/refugees. Moreover, education is usually located towards the bottom in the hierarchy of needs, especially during disasters and emergencies. For all of these reasons, immigrant's/refugee's access to education system is eased by facilities provided by the host community or third parties. It was reported that there were Syrians who had been left out the education system as they had been unable to decrypt the related bureaucratic procedures. Similarly, as part of the research, it was revealed that some of the children lost time because they did not know the mechanisms of returning to school after they were dismissed from school due to personal reasons or relocation. Combining this with the cumbersome nature and hardships of bureaucracy, disorientation could be considered as an obstruction to schooling. Even though the process to be registered to public schools were eased and foreign credentials were considered adequate for registration, participants of various backgrounds have expressed certain difficulties in the application of these initiatives. For instance, certain hardships regarding appropriation of foreign credentials and other bureaucratic processes for registration of Syrian children who newly arrived to Turkey were underscored. A significant number of Syrians have issues with residence and similar bureaucratic procedures that are required for registration, as they live in shantytowns that are deconstructed because of urban transformation or that they live in areas that do not have numbering systems. Even though some of these issues are resolved by school principals or officials through initiatives, regulations are needed to address these issues systematically. Some of the Syrian children are unable to attend school because of issues in acquiring residence documents or credentials (NGO1. Konya. TEC. Coordinator. G.antep, NGO1. G.antep).

4.2.6. Uncertainties

Research revealed a subjective and clandestine obstruction to schooling: The feeling of uncertainty Syrians have about their social and physical position in Turkey. This feeling of uncertainty was underscored especially during the focus group meetings conducted with Syrian teachers and students. For realistic educational expectations, a level of personal planning for the future is required. In other words, for a person to plan a career through education, he/she should hold a feeling of belonging in terms of time, culture and location. Syrian students have complained about the uncertainties of their future; they do not know where they will be a couple of years later, whether or not they will be granted citizenship or even where they will be residing as a family. General Director of Syrian Teachers Union asserted that

some of the children avoid facing problems -not learning Turkish as they believe they will return to Syria in a short time, for instance- and are unsuccessful because of this uncertainty (NGO1.G.ante). Unwillingness to learn Turkish and lack of motivation to attend Turkish schools was observed in many cases. Statement of a Provincial Directorate of National Education official summarizes this situation: "Children feel like they don't belong here. Indeed, they're not accepted by our children. Therefore, there are issues" (DNE1.G.ante).

4.2.7. Unwillingness observed among Turkish parents, administrators and teachers

Most of the Turkish society and institutions embrace Syrians. With the personal sacrifices of many administrators, important progress was made in Syrian children's education. On the other hand, there is another segment of the society that is against Syrians' existence in Turkey, let aside sharing the economic resources and other resources of accommodation and education. There are students, parents and administrators, therefore the elements of education, among those who see Syrians as a socio-economic threat and object their residence in Turkey. This approach is seen in various segments of the host society, and the members of the educational system are not an exemption. For instance, during the interview, General Director of Syrian Teachers Union asserted that many Syrian students were prevented from registering to public schools with various reasons despite the MoNE's decision that TECs would no longer register Syrian students for 1st, 5th and 9th grades. The most frequent excuse expressed by the school administrators is the inadequacy of the physical facilities of the school. However, it is reported that children's lack of adequate Turkish language skills is the real excuse behind this apparent "excuse" (NGO1.G.ante). Another prominent reason why Syrian children are barred from registering is Turkish students' and parents' objections. This issue has been raised by various participants in various contexts. The belief that Syrians in a classroom will hinder the general quality of education plays an important role in the said unwillingness. Syrians try to find shelters in neighborhoods with poor infrastructure, sometimes lacking even water and electricity. It was expressed that there were Syrian students who had to leave school because of the pressures coming from other students and parents, as these children lack the water for their personal hygiene and are occasionally infested with lice (NGO1.Konya). This belief becomes prominent especially when the number of Syrian children are on par with or more than Turkish students. This situation puts pressure on administrators and emerges as a psycho-social obstruction to Syrian children's schooling (DNE2.Ankara.)

The first occasion that reflects teachers' and school administrators' unwillingness is the usage of school as a TEC. School teachers and administrators in certain cities tend to blame Syrian children and teachers for all the issues. Turkish teachers and administrators claim that Syrians leave classrooms untidy and dirty, while also mistreating the school facilities. On the other hand, Syrian children and teachers along with TEC coordinators assert that classrooms are being deliberately left dirty by Turkish students, teachers and school administrators do not motivate Turkish students in keeping the classrooms tidy and that Syrian students usually tidy up the classroom at the beginning of classes. This issue emerges especially in cities where there is a prominent Syrian population. In this respect, during the meetings with Syrian teachers and TEC coordinators, it was underscored that the school

principal is the most important actor. An example from the field will be helpful to show the underlining effect of the school principal behind peaceful and successful school environment: A school visited in Gaziantep was deemed as the best TEC in the city by Arab teachers. The effort behind this success was straightforward: The principal of this school had not fail to pay regular visits to the classrooms, telling Turkish students not to react to Syrian students, while similarly telling their parents to be well-disposed towards Syrian students. Despite all, it was stated that Turkish students, parents and teachers behave badly towards Syrian students. For this reason, an hour-long period was implemented between Turkish students' exit and TECs beginning hours. This implementation aims to relieve possible tensions between Turkish and Syrian students. It was expressed that the most prominent sources of this issue are school administrators and teachers; their approaches to Syrian students reinforce Turkish students' behavior.

Looking at examples without issues, it could be seen that there are places where competition between Syrian and Turkish communities for accessing resources (financial aid, employment etc.) is nonexistent. Another aspect of these better examples is that Syrians live in different parts of cities and neighborhoods together with the Turkish community, establishing better relations and avoiding ghettoization. For instance, there is not any distance between Turkish and Syrian teachers at certain schools in Istanbul; they use the same teachers' lounge. Moreover, TECs start right after Turkish students' classes. It was also observed that some Turkish teachers becoming friends with Syrian families, visiting each other at their respective homes.

4.2.8. Issues related with Transition from Basic Education to Secondary Education System (TBESE)

As it was mentioned above, MoNE has decided to lead the newcomers of 1st, 5th and 9th grade Syrians to public schools. Here, the 9th grade newcomers turn a particular issue. According to the current high school placement system, all students finishing 8th grade are placed to a high school according to their TBESE score. In other words, all students who finished 8th grade are placed to a high school, whether or not they enter TBESE or whether or not they make any preferences (Çelik, 2015). As a result of this highly problematic central placement system causes many problems, more than 170,000 students out of 1.2 million did not make any preferences and an additional 90,000 were not placed to any high school in 2017. Therefore, around 260,000 students were placed to open education high school ("TBESE 2017 Selection", 2017). Every school's success score is determined according to this placement system; while the most successful students continue their education at science high schools and certain Anatolian high schools, while the least successful students go to imam hatip and vocational high schools.

Syrian students' placements are not done according to TBESE. Unable to prefer a high school according to their TBESE score, Syrian students who finish 8th grade are placed to high schools (imam hatip and vocational high schools) closest to their residence by the provincial transfer commissions. An already problematic placement system being used for Syrians complicates the issue further. A Syrian NGO official expressed that Syrian students with extraordinary success are being forced to imam hatip and vocational high schools that are attended by students with the lowest scores. The said official asserted that this issue transformed into a process undermining academic success. Research Provincial, district

and school administrators place Syrians to imam hatip high schools because those schools have intensive curriculum on Arabic and religious knowledge. Some Syrian students demand this because they feel more comfortable at imam hatip schools, but the research revealed the objections which claim that Syrian children's success is affected negatively as there are less class hours dedicated to mathematics and natural sciences and the average success of students attending these high schools are low.

4.2.9. Shortcomings in physical facilities

Another obstruction to access is the inadequacy of classrooms and physical facilities. During the interviews, it was expressed that children were not registered to schools in certain cities because of the inadequacy of classrooms and physical facilities. In simpler words, students were not registered because the school is at full capacity. This is a problem per se, but should be taken as a sign of a future problem: The closure of TECs will deteriorate the inadequacy of physical capacity, unless some new classrooms are produced. That is to say, to keep the current students of the TEC at school after the closure of TECs, additional classrooms and facilities should be built immediately.

4.3. Typology of Unschooled Syrian Children

Syrian children could be divided into three categories according to the severity of obstructions they have to face to access education. First category consists of obstructions that could be removed relatively easily in the short-term with a plan. Disorientation and psychological challenges (like the lack of motivation) are some of the examples for this type of obstruction. It was observed that while children are ready to go to school, they were unable to do so as their family lacked information about bureaucratic processes. The second category of obstructions requires a meticulous planning to be resolved. Children who have not been to school for two or more years and work to support their families along with girls who do not attend school because of coeducation are included to this category. The third category of obstructions is the hardest to eliminate. This category includes a combination of economic, cultural or socio-psychological reasons. For instance, it is extremely challenging to school child who is the sole breadwinner of the family.

Having these said, we can divide the unschooled children into three types according the obstructions that keep them out from the school.

Type-1 unschooled

Despite all aids and provided facilities, refugees usually cannot adapt to the daily routine, norms, laws, institutional and bureaucratic functioning of the host society in a short period of time. It requires time for refugees to understand the new paradigms and adapt to them. The said period of time is full of uncertainties for the refugee; they focus on survival strategies to save the day. They need time to prepare rational and long-term plans. To have these plans in effect, they first have to be stable in terms of residence and income. Finding their ways to education in the clouds of the aforementioned uncertainties requires time. It is observed that there are a significant number of children who were left out of education because of either lack of motivation or disorientation. These children are addressed as Type-1 unschooled in this report and they could be schooled with minute expenses and relatively easier initiatives.

Type-1 unschooled: Aya

Aya is a 16-year-old girl. She came to Konya 2 months ago. They came to Turkey 1.5 years ago. They first resided in Mersin. They had issues there in terms of income. Hearing that there are more employment opportunities in Konya, they moved there. She has 5 siblings. Aya is the fourth child of the family. After receiving education at a TEC in Mersin for a month, she left the school. For some reason, she failed to get an identity card in Konya and the school she applied told her that the registration period is over, she is unable to continue her education (although this is against the attitude of the MoNE in general). She is eager to go to school. Economic issues also prove to be an obstruction for Aya's education, but it is secondary. The most prominent obstruction is her family's relocation; as this was realized midterm and there are bureaucratic issues, they are disoriented. With proper guidance and a minute expense, Aya will return to school.

Type-2 unschooled

On the other hand, it is harder to integrate children who were wounded physically or mentally in the Syrian Civil War to the education system. The civil war itself along with the process of escaping causes a series of trauma. It is almost impossible for children to overcome these traumas by themselves. These traumas may have damaged the brain and neural system of the kids, along with causing psychological disorders. For instance, during a focus group meeting with teachers in Istanbul, it was stated that illnesses like epilepsy caused 5 students to take a break from school because of illnesses (TEC.Teacher.Focus4.Istanbul). During another interview, a Syrian child expressed that she does not go to school because of neurological disorders and takes care of her sibling at home (Unschooled.Girl4.Istanbul). Even though some of these children overcome their problems and are able to continue their schools, it is obvious that these experiences have adverse effects on schooling rate. These unschooled children are addressed as Type-2 unschooled in this report. These children may also not go to school because of reasons that do not include harrowing experiences. For instance, to school a child who entered into Turkey as a 6-year-old five years ago (now being an 11-year-old) requires many conditions (such as settling, determining sources of income and a proper guidance). However, it may take months or even years to satisfy all of these requirements. In such situations, children may lag behind their peers as they are not able to read and write in any language, including Arabic.

Those who are the most unfortunate in terms of registration, continuing education and academic success are “lone young” refugees. These individuals immigrate without their parents or legal guardians. These children, whose families could not accompany them because of being elderly, sick or disable, or who lost their families, seek refuge in Turkey by themselves and they do not have many opportunities to follow. Education, on the other hand, ranks last in their hierarchy of need. These individuals seek for an income generating activity first. If their family members are left in Syria, they also might have to think about their families’ needs as well.

Type-2 unschooled: Abdullah

He is 13 years old. When his family fled to Turkey, he was only 6. He had just started 1st grade when they left their country. He did not have the opportunity to go to school in Turkey. His father, elder brother and brother-in-law were killed in war. Including his elder sister who lost his husband and her three children, 15 people live in the house. Abdullah was unable to learn to read and write. His disorientation is less when compared to the first years; thus, he is almost ready to return to school. However, from which grade will he start? While his peers go to high school, he cannot go to a primary school. Therefore, he needs to find an appropriate school, register himself, and continue his education. It is not impossible for Abdullah to go to school; however, he needs proper guidance, as well as regular support and care.

Type-3 unschooled

The most prominent obstructions to Syrian children's access to education are generally related to economy, health, time (age), and family structure. There are children with severe psychological disorders due to the adverse effects of war in Syria. These children are taken into rehabilitation to heal their traumas; however, rehabilitation is a long process. Therefore, children suffering from psychological and neurological disorders have to stay away from school until they are at perfect health. When they are ready, however, they lag behind their peers. Moreover, there are cases in which physically wounded children are unable to go to school because of disability. Some children, on the other hand, are obliged to work as their parents cannot. If the family does not have another source of income, it is not possible to compensate the income generated by the child. As conditional cash transfers and Social Adaptation Aid are insufficient (when the number of family members is high or there are ill family members), children's income is vital for the survival of families. These situations usually prevent boys from going to school; however, girls may also be forced to stay away from school as it is the case of Rama. If there is a male in the household, no matter how young he is, females generally do not work. For this reason, forced to stay away from school because of work is much more frequent among boys. Consequently, for girls, early marriage is the most frequent reason for leaving school. Girls are usually married at the age of 14 or 15 in Syria. This tendency continues to exist among refugees in Turkey. These children are addressed as Type-3 unschooled in this report.

Type-3 unschooled: Rama

Rama is 11. She lives in Basmane district of İzmir with her family. They came from al-Hasakah 8 months ago. She finished the 4th grade while she was in al-Hasakah. She got registered to Konak TEC in Turkey; however, as she was unable to continue, she was dismissed. Her family consists in parents and 6 children, 4 boys and 2 girls. Rama is the second child. The eldest (Rama's sister) is 15, but does not work. Her family's average monthly income is TL400. This amount is earned merely by Rama. She works as a tailor's apprentice. No one else works in the family. Her father is a cardiac, had an operation. Her mother takes care of her father. Beside her elder sister, all of her siblings are younger than Rama. It is impossible for Rama to go to school under these conditions. Her family needs a regular income, if she is to go to school.

Type-3 unschooled: Yahya

"I want to go to school and become an engineer"

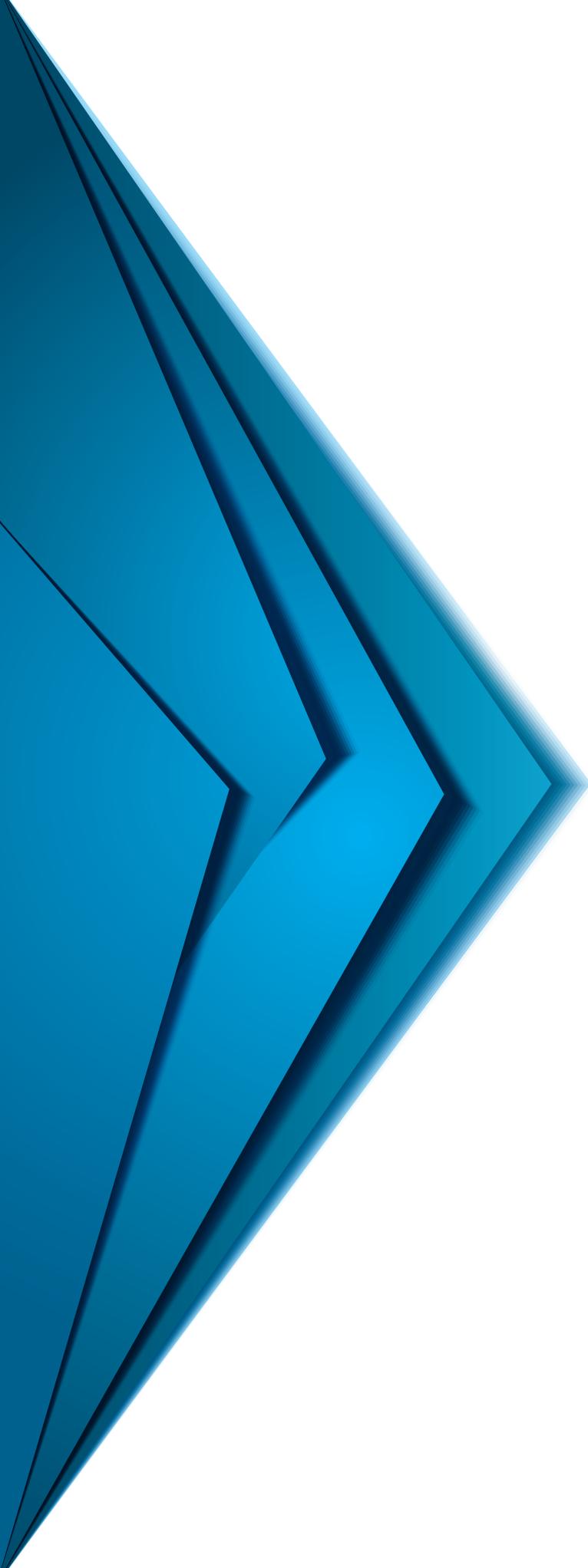
He is 17. He lives with his elder brother. He had been working at a bakery until it closed down. He did not work in Syria. As they were unable to cross the border (probably due to the recently constructed border wall), his parents remained in Syria. His brother works, while Yahya seeks for a job. He had to leave school in Syria while he was a 12th grader at a vocational high school. "If I did not have to work, I would be in school now" he says; however, considering social, economic and psychological conditions, he looks far away from thinking about the school. He says "If I had the opportunity, I would finish high school and become a computer engineer." Yahya and his brother have to send MoNEy to their family in Syria. For Yahya to go to school, apart from cultural and psychological conditions, there are two main conditions: His family needs to get relocated in Turkey and the whole family should have an adequate income. Even if Yahya registers himself to school, it seems he cannot attend it regularly. For this reason, he may be educated through open education high school with adequate planning and regular supports.

Type-3 unschooled: Ayşe

Ayşe is 17. She has a child and lives separately from her husband. 3 years ago, a Turk went to Syria and came upon Ayşe's family. He married Ayşe who was 14 at the time. He told Ayşe's family that he had a well-paying job in Turkey. After marrying him, Ayşe saw that the man worked as a porter and is uneducated. Meanwhile, Ayşe got pregnant. She did not think about divorce; however, due to economic hardships and cultural disparities, irreconcilable differences emerge. Ayşe, taking her 1.5-year-old baby with her, started to live in Ankara together with her parents. For Ayşe to return to school, a person must take care of her baby and she needs to receive financial and morale support. All of these requirements being satisfied simultaneously is impossible for her father, who works as a teacher at a TEC.

4.4. Policy considerations regarding the access

- There is a need for policies that will allow successful Syrian children to attend Science and Anatolian High Schools.
- The current placement system places even the most successful Syrian students to the least successful schools. For this reason, a new placement system is needed.
- Perceiving the Syrians as “temporary” or “guests” causes issues in terms of their feelings of belonging. It should be considered that their integration with the education will improve, they will make plans about their future and will be able to implement these plans more easily, if they improve a sense of belonging to the Turkish society. In this respect, political statements that will address uncertainties about Syrians’ future in Turkey should be made.
- There are many Syrian students who are rejected by school administrators from registering to schools with the excuse of inadequate physical facilities. MoNE should actively take precautions to prevent such applications.
- While a significant portion the Turkish population is positive towards Syrians, there are those who are negative towards them. Negative approaches of Turkish parents, students, teachers and administrators become a prominent factor that hinders schooling. In order to resolve this issue, political party leaders, media and various notables should take on more responsibility and avoid negative statements targeting Syrians. Moreover, it is definite that the positive statements of the aforementioned will ease the school lives of Syrian children.



CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 5

Quality of Education Provided to Syrian Children

Programs and projects initiated to ensure a quality education for Syrian children along with obstructions will be discussed in this chapter. There are many elements to a quality education. First of all, a qualified teacher could provide a quality education despite the lack of educational materials, physical facilities and many other disadvantages. In addition, planning based on objective data and adequate resources are an important part of quality education. Adequacy of financial resources, physical and technical facilities along with human resources are also components of quality education. Moreover, administration supervising planning and needs, monitoring-assessment processes and a well-planned curriculum are prominent tools of a quality education. Students' readiness to learn and motivation determine their ties with school when they come across certain difficulties.

5.1. Effects of planning issues on quality

As a result of a massive refugee influx since 2011, Turkey was caught off-guard in terms of education. In fact, no country can be ready for an influx of 3 million people. As previously indicated in Introduction and Management chapters, MoNE, tasked with planning and applications of education in Turkey, prepared plans with the assumption that Syrians were in Turkey temporarily and that they would return to their country in the short-term. However, from 2014 onwards, MoNE started to implement more long-term programs for Syrians' education. This shift in approach was not able to yield swift, proactive and fundamental resolutions to the issue as the number, demographic composition and spatial distribution of Syrians constantly change. By 2017, it could be asserted that Syrians are relatively stable in terms of demographic, social and spatial aspects. However, as the field research indicates, Syrians' internal mobility is still a fact. To put it more clearly, there were 2.9 million Syrians in Turkey (460,000 in Istanbul), by February 2017 during the planning of this research, however the most recent data (of September 14 2017) shows that their number increased to 3.18 million all across Turkey (507,000 in Istanbul). Syrians' mobility across Turkey, even at the provincial and district levels, makes preparing realistic plans based on objective data that could improve the quality of education challenging. The increased mobility causes issues in tracking school-age children and increases the pressure on schools in certain regions.

5.1.1. Resources and quality

Another factor that determines the quality of education is the existence of adequate resources. The largest share of financial, physical, technical and human resources used for Syrians' education is provided by the public. For instance, according to 2016-2017 academic year data, only 25 TEC facilities out of 432 were covered by NGOs and international institutions. Majority of the facilities TECs use are school buildings provided by MoNE. A significant portion of the remaining facilities is provided by the usage of various public resources (General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2017b). During the interviews with TEC coordinators and Arab teachers working at TECs, it was expressed that there was a lack of educational materials. Moreover, there are inadequate number of computers that are to be used by teachers. As it was mentioned earlier, the main reason of this issue is Turkish school administrators'

and teachers' unwillingness to share school facilities with Syrians. Therefore, issues caused by the lack of resources, like experiment equipment, school equipment, heating and janitorial services, affects quality of education adversely.

TECs operating on the second shifts due to the lack of facilities is also an important factor for the quality of education. In certain cities, TECs begin classes at 14:30. It was expressed that the late schedule of TECs negatively affects children and especially during winters, children are forced to leave early before it gets dark. During interviews with coordinators and Arab teachers, it was asserted that rescheduling TECs to earlier hours will improve the quality of education and students' motivations.

5.1.2. School administration and quality

As it is the case with curriculum and classroom environment, the most prominent obstruction to the communications between school administrators, parents and students is language. Lingual issues are resolved by Arab teachers and administrators at TECs. However, this issue is not resolved systematically at an institutional level at public schools. It was observed that Turkmen students and students those with an important level of confidence in Turkish language directly communicate with the administration. Moreover, it was revealed during the interviews that students with Turkish language skills have a stronger feeling of belonging to the school, are more self-confident and have better communications with the school administration. Yet, students who do not know Turkish have minimal interactions with the administration. Similarly, it was revealed that parents of these students either do not attend PTA meetings or just sit through the meetings as they are unable to understand what is being said (NGO1.G.antep.). When it is necessary, direction signs and announcements are written in Arabic. However, these signposts and announcements are made in such a way that they embody the temporariness attributed to Syrians: Rather sloppy signposts and announcements printed on A4 paper are posted on columns, walls and windows of schools.

Figure 12. An announcement posted by the administration on the school wall at a TEC

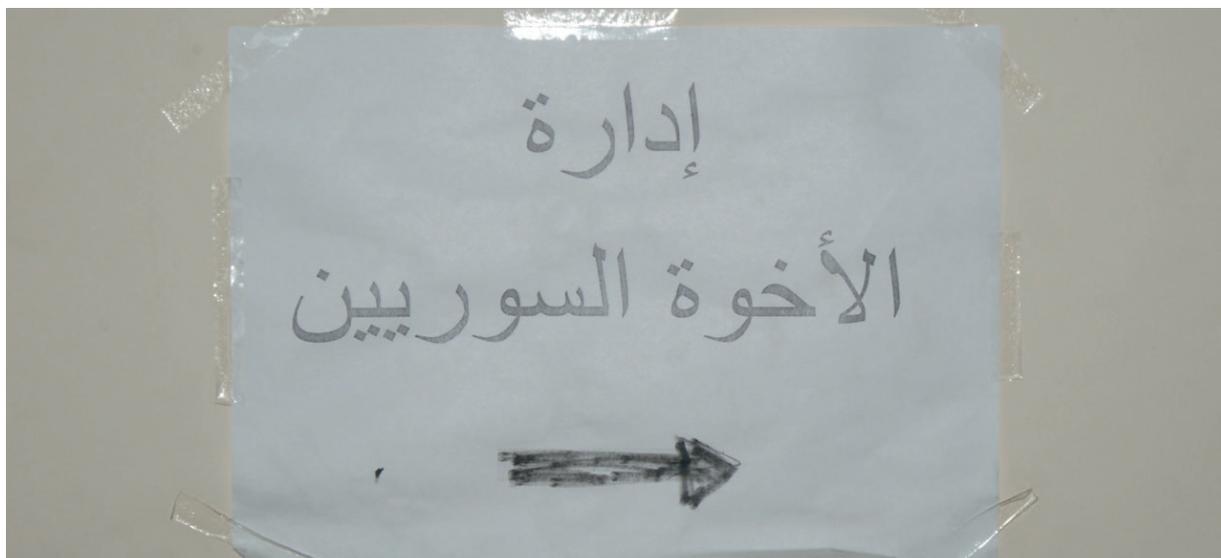
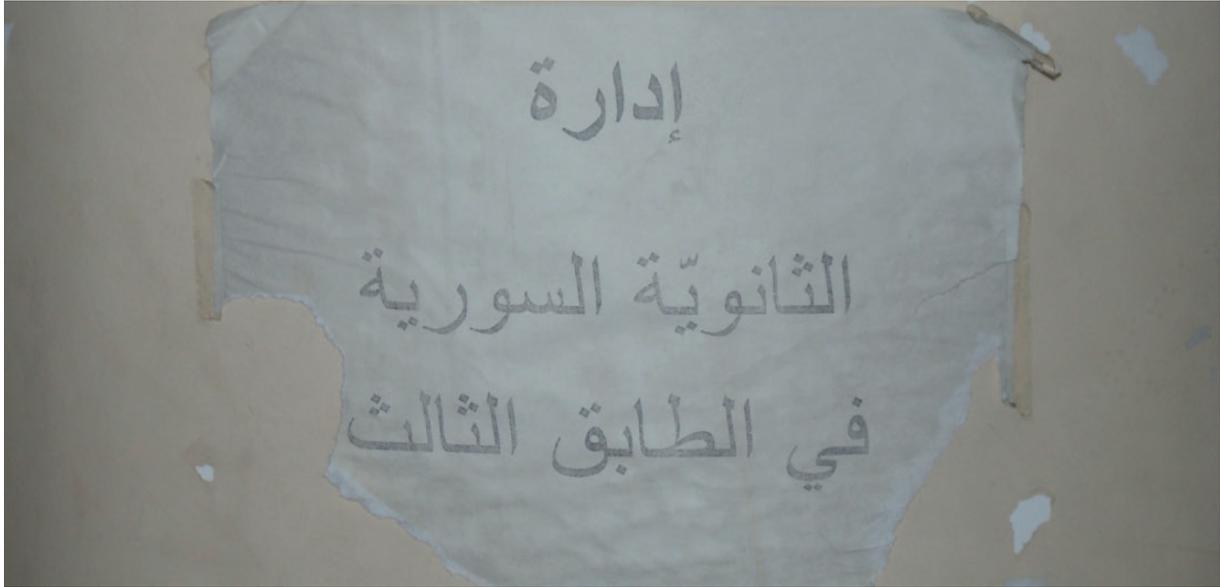


Figure 13. A signpost hanged by the administration on a school wall at a TEC



Similar signposts and announcements litter the schools that were visited as a part of the research; these have a negative impact on children's feeling of belonging. With minimal costs, a proper, accurate and efficient communication between school administration and students could be achieved.

5.1.3. Teachers and quality

Even though teachers are employed according to certain criteria since the very first wave of Syrians, some participants expressed that there are issues about qualifications of teachers. Especially Syrian Teachers Union has expressed that many people have become teachers through forged documents. Moreover, those who were not trained to be teachers had been employed as teachers during the very first years of the crisis. It is highly improbable for these people who lack the experience and knowledge to provide quality education. Today, teachers at TECs are selected more meticulously. At TECs visited by the researchers, it was seen that all of the teachers there were teachers in Syria as well. During interviews, children have stated that they have good relations with Syrian teachers and love them. Coordinators have also expressed that most of the Syrian teachers were enthusiastic and diligent; on the other hand, it was also asserted that some of them were not qualified enough.

Examining the relations between Turkish teachers and Syrian students at public schools paints a different picture. It was observed that often teachers were discomforted by the presence of Syrian students, approached Syrian students in a negative way and did not proactively attempt to incorporate these children into class activities. Meanwhile, in other examples, for instance at the high school in Istanbul, it was seen that there was a positive relation between Turkish teachers and Syrian students and that teachers appreciated success of Syrian children.

5.1.4. Curriculum and quality

Curriculum is also one of the most important components that determine the quality of Syrian children's education. It has been at the core of discussions since Syrians started to receive education in Turkey and seemingly it will continue to be in the future. While the initial curriculum affirmed al-Assad regime and had direct or indirect statements against Turkey, those statements were filtered and removed from textbooks. Education at TECs continue with a revised curriculum.

On the other hand, it was observed that Syrian children going to public schools together with Turkish students were unable to benefit from the curriculum because of the language barrier. In addition, Syrian children believe that the content of the curriculum and certain values do not correspond with their own social structures.

Another prominent issue about quality is the 15-hour Turkish language courses which naturally bring about a time limitation to the other courses. For instance, while any high school in Turkey has 6-hour mathematics course every week, only 2 hours are dedicated to mathematics at TECs. Similarly, while 4 hours are dedicated to foreign language in public high schools, only 1 or 2 hours are dedicated at TECs. During the focus group meetings with Syrian students, they have complained about the hours dedicated to courses like mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and English. They have also expressed that they were unable to learn these courses well because of limited class hours and that this affects their future goals negatively (TEC.Student.Focus3.İstanbul).

5.2. Issues experienced by students

5.2.1. Absenteeism-instability

Absenteeism is one of the most prominent factors that decrease the quality of education. The research indicates that there are serious issues about Syrian children's attendance. A certain portion of Syrian children continue to attend classes despite all hardships. Moreover, there are various initiatives that ensure Syrian children's attendance to school. For instance, conditional aid provided by UNICEF requires children's dismissal from YÖBİS in the case of continual absence. In application, however, the conditional aid is ended instead of dismissing children from the system. It could be asserted that conditional cash transfer will improve attendance as well as the schooling rate; because, conditional cash transfer is only paid when children continue to attend the school.

As part of the research, the reasons behind absenteeism were also examined. One of the most commonplace reasons is children trying to balance their time between income generating activities and education. Students registered to TECs outside camps are educated at double-shift schools on afternoons. It was observed that children especially in metropolises who are educated at TECs with the double-shift system work in the morning and go to school on the afternoon (TEC.Teacher.Focus1.İstanbul, NGO1.G.antep.). For instance, it was reported that some children sell napkins on the street, work as an apprentice at the tailor, barber, restaurant or store until 14:30, the time classes at TECs start (NGO1.G.antep.) Trying to contribute to his/her family by working while also receiving education is wearing for children. Dividing their lives between work and education, children's motivation for education may decline.

Another prominent reason for absenteeism is the movement of families within the same city or between different cities. When moved from one place to another, children may become disoriented, the distance between home and school may get longer or children's socio-psychological conditions may change. During an interview conducted in Konya, it was observed that 6 school-age children of a single family had never gone to school. When the reason was asked they replied that they used to live in Mersin, but moved to Konya 2 months ago. However, when they relocated, they were unable to register children to school because of issues regarding identity cards and residence documents; moreover, the children had already lost their motivation as they moved midterm (UnschooledBoy2.Konya.). Again, another child in Konya expressed that they came to Turkey as a family three years ago and had their identity cards issued. However, they returned to Syria and came back to Turkey after staying 2 years in Syria; she said that it was impossible to go to school while all of these were taking place (UnschooledGirl2.Konya). Families of both children have stated that they had issues while acquiring identity cards and being officially registered.

There might be various reasons behind absenteeism. Having a family member that needs care, children having physical or psychological disabilities, experiencing unfortunate events at school or while going to school, the distance between home and school being long, having unfavorable weather conditions (for those who walk) and the fact that schools in Syria are closed during Ramadan are some of these reasons. It was expressed that there was an increase in absenteeism at certain public schools, especially at 1st, 5th and 9th grades, and that it was because of demotivation caused by being unable to follow courses due to lack of Turkish language skills(TEC.Coordinator1.G.ante). Allegations that Syrian children, especially 5th and 9th graders, face hardships after transitioning from Arabic-medium TECs to public schools where all courses are in Turkish are also voiced by the General Director of Syrian Teachers Union (NGO1.G.ante)

5.2.2. Lack of motivation and aimlessness

It was observed that Syrian children and family members were not completely aware of the benefits of receiving education in Turkey. Despite war continues to rage in their country, they have not lost their hope to return to their country one day. Their ties to Syria are still very much alive because of property they left in the country. This emotional and humane commitment observed in adults naturally prevents them imagining a future in Turkey. Combined with traumas they have suffered and hardships of making it in Turkey, this situation causes many Syrian children to lose motivation. In fact, it was observed that some children left school, despite not working anymore, just because they did not feel like going. For instance, during an interview in Istanbul, a woman said that her child did not want to wake up early and go to school and even if he did want to go to school, he was afraid of being mall-treated by schoolmates (Parents.of.Unschooled3.Istanbul). The research revealed that some children did not want to go to school merely because of being afraid of harassment and fights at school or on the way to school. This lack of motivation proves to be an obstruction to schooling to an extent; however, it has an impact on schooled children as well. Schooled children are unable to benefit from education largely because of the lack of motivation and aimlessness.

Even though some students suffer from a severe lack of motivation which causes them to leave school, it was observed that certain groups of students have very high motivation. Meetings with Syrian teachers and coordinators revealed that Syrian students' motivation for learning are fairly high. In fact, during a

meeting with Syrian students in Istanbul, it was observed that each student of the focus group wanted to study at the most respectable universities in the UK, Germany, Canada and the US and to return to their country afterwards in order to help the reconstruction efforts (TEC.Student.Focus3.İstanbul). Interviews with Turkish and Syrian teachers have also confirmed this motivation of students (TEC.Teacher.Focus4.İstanbul, TEC.Teacher.Focus4.İstanbul). Another common trait of children with high motivation is that they are the children of well-educated families and that their parents had respectable jobs like medical doctor, administrator or judge. It was detected that these students with high motivations were successful in both TECs and public schools.

5.2.3. Academic unsuccessfulness

Interviews with teachers and school administrators revealed that Syrian students' general success level is below average. Indeed, language (Turkish) is the foremost factor in this situation. It was expressed that there are Syrian students who completed their high school education and were placed to good departments at universities; however, it was added that their numbers are few. The following assertion about Syrian students' academic success was frequently voiced during focus group meetings with teachers: "If Syrian students' issues with the language are resolved, there will be significant improvement in their academic success." Indeed, Turkmen students from Syria are relatively successful than other Syrian children. Meanwhile, a significant amount of time is required to solve Syrian Arabs' issues with language (Turkish). In this respect, it could be foreseen that these children will stay below the average success level of schools. It was expressed that these students performed better in courses that require memorization (the Holy Quran, fiqh, hadith and al-sira) and that does not require robust knowledge of Turkish like mathematics and English.

The supposition that Syrians exposed to Turkish will learn the language faster is not very accurate for children who are at intermediary grades and comparatively elder. Indeed, some teachers complained that there were Syrian children that did not learn Turkish despite being among Turkish students for two years.

Despite all, there are successful students among Syrians. Even though their numbers are relatively few, these students become an inspiration for teachers and students. For instance, during a focus group meeting with Turkish teachers working at a public school in Konya, success story of one Syrian child was highlighted. It was emphasized that this particular student contributed to breaking prejudices about Syrians among teachers and students down. Furthermore, it was expressed that Syrian children are among the most successful students at this school in Istanbul.

5.3. In-school and in-classroom applications and quality

5.3.1. Counsel and guidance

It was revealed that Syrian students are in great need of counsel and guidance especially at public schools. Presence of large number of Syrian teachers at TECs is a comfort for Syrian children. Children who have issues regarding school or family can easily explain their problems to Syrian teachers they trust in; in turn, the teacher shares the information with the administrator or resolves issues by using his/her own social

network. However, Syrian students at public schools do not have this opportunity. In this respect, great responsibility falls on counseling services. School counselors should also actively observe children and interfere to resolve issues when required, instead of just aiding students in applications. Observations and interviews conducted during the research uncovered that most of the counselors at public schools were indifferent. In fact, it was observed that counselors at certain public schools were unaware even of how many Syrian children were at the school. When a counselor was asked whether he has met with any Syrian children, he replied "I have never met with even one Syrian student until this day." This is just one example of how the counselors in general are indifferent. However, in reality, they should be engaged in these issues as much as teachers and school administrators. Their active observations on students, tests and evaluations to identify issues may help to resolve many issues faced by Syrian students along with removing certain obstructions. Counselors, especially those at public schools, not knowing Arabic is an important factor; however, they could resolve issues by reaching to Syrian teachers, voluntary translators and students with good Turkish language skills. During the field work of the research, new counselors were being appointed to TECs in 23 cities per PICTES protocols. Time will tell how these "Provisionally Contracted Counselors" will perform in improving the communications between the administration and Syrian students and that whether they will be able to advance Syrian students' integration process. Syrian teachers attribute great importance to these counselors and psychological counselors (TEC.Teacher.Focus4.İstanbul).

Figure 14. Caption: "Counseling"



5.3.2. In-class environments

There are two main options for Syrian children's access to education in Turkey: The public schools and TECs. TECs have the Syrian children only. Syrian children studying at public schools outside camps are educated together with Turkish students, while their numbers are less than Turkish students in most cases. Thus, Syrian students' placement within the classroom is an important detail. In order to prevent them from forming isolated subgroups within the classroom, they should be placed dispersedly. It was observed that teachers and school administrators in general were aware of this detail. However, at certain schools, it was perceived that Syrians were placed in a way that allows the formation of subgroups. This kind of situations have a negative impact on the quality of education as it prevents interactions between Turkish and Syrian children, which as a result has negative impacts on the integration of Syrian students.

One of the factors that have effect on the quality of education in in-class applications is the number of students per classroom. The average number of students per classroom in Turkey is higher than the OECD average (OECD, 2016). That being the case, it might seem meaningless to correlate Syrian children's education and number of students per classroom; however, considering that language (not knowing Turkish) is one of the greatest obstructions to Syrians' access to education and to the quality of this education, classroom size becomes prominent. Effectiveness of language learning does not ensure only the quality of education; it is also crucial for integrating with the society. It was observed that there were more than 30 students in language learning classrooms; this means almost there are almost 30 students per Turkish language lecturer. In such a crowded classroom, children are sure to have challenges in learning Turkish.

During the focus group meetings with Turkish teachers at public schools, it was expressed that Syrian students have issues in participating and doing homework. With the exception of a few successful student, it was stated that they were mostly passive in classes and that they never do homework, despite attending school regularly. Moreover, teachers highlighted that there are many Syrian students who are late to class. This is related with Syrian children having loose ties to school and education; Turkish teachers' and students' negative attitude towards Syrian students are one of the causes of this situation. For this reason, there are many tasks that should be completed for Syrian students' adaptation to the school and classroom.

According to the data acquired from the research, issues about focus, different age groups being in the same classroom and coeducation are some of the other factors that have adverse effects on the quality of education for Syrian students.

5.4. Issues about work ethics

Even though there are positive assessments on Syrian teachers at some schools regarding their work ethics, vocational knowledge and in-class discipline, it was expressed there are also issues. For instance, assessments about teachers were positive at TECs visited in Istanbul, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa. On the other hand, a TEC coordinator in Kahramanmaraş has said the following about Syrian teachers: "They lack in-class discipline. Only 3 or 4 out of 25 teachers are qualified. The rest, they don't resemble

what a teacher is” (TEC.Coordinator1.K.maraş.). This kind of criticism towards Syrian teachers were also voiced by others in various cities. Another TEC coordinator compared Turkish and Syrian teachers: “Turkish teachers conduct 6 hours of class and monitor the halls. Syrian teachers, on the other hand, complain for having 4 hours of class; they don’t do what is required of them” (TEC.Coordinator1.Konya.). While some TEC coordinators believe this is about work ethics and culture in Syria, others believe it may be because of traumas and lack of motivation.

Meanwhile, Syrian teachers have complained about work conditions, expressing that they do not have summer vacations in the same length as Turkish teachers have (Parent.of.Unschooled.Ankara). Similarly, Syrian teachers at certain TECs asserted that Turkish language lecturers are mostly unwilling and are distant to Syrian students. Syrian teachers expressed that monitoring and evaluation was required for Turkish teachers.

Considering the data, it could be said that there is a concealed tension between Syrian teachers and Turkish administrators and teachers at some of the TECs. Even though there is a lack of data to generalize this as a rule, it is obvious that this will affect the quality of education. Socio-cultural activities that aim to bond Turkish administrators and teachers will be beneficial. Bonding between teachers will contribute to the quality of education along with midterm and long-term integration process.

1st grade is the least wanted grade among form teachers. As the classroom consists of new students, more energy and effort is needed in adapting children to school and workload is heavier, form teachers are usually less enthusiastic about teaching 1st graders. When Syrian students are in question, unwillingness becomes more apparent. Per MoNE’s decision, Syrian children beginning the 1st grade were registered to public schools; it was expressed that this situation disgruntled form teachers appointed to 1st graders and that it affected the quality of education (TEC.Coordinator1.G.antep).

5.5. Lack of parental support

Education is not a process that begins and ends at school. Extra-school environments, especially family, complement and reinforce education. It is known that a mother’s level of education is a prominent factor in a child’s academic success. Syrian students are mostly deprived of these extra-school complementary and reinforcing factors; this affects their academic success negatively. A female parent in Istanbul expressed the following: “We came here [Turkey] and watched TV series [to learn Turkish]. Yet, we don’t know the alphabet and how to write in Turkish. Because of this, we’re unable to aid our child” (Parents.of.Unschooled3.Istanbul). The focus group meetings with Syrian children revealed that they rarely receive complementary support from their parents (TEC.Student.Focus1.Istanbul). On the other hand, during the focus group meetings held with Syrian teachers, it was expressed that children who have lost their parents are in a direr situation.

5.6. Issues about monitoring and evaluation

It was observed that there are deficiencies in terms of monitoring and evaluating the quality of education Syrian children receive. This is due to the already pressing issues in schooling, access, physical and technical infrastructure, curriculum and staff. Despite all, it was seen that plans are prepared for

monitoring and evaluation activities along with appointing officials at an institutional level. MoNE, naturally, is the most prominent actor in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Founded as a component to MoNE's General Directorate for Life Long Learning, Immigration and Emergency Education Department's (IEED) is tasked with "monitoring and evaluation" right after the duties of developing policies and implementation of these policies (GADEDB [IEED], 2017). As GADEDB [IEED] was recently founded, it is unable to produce significant results in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation activities of previous years were published as reports relying at macro-level data (number of teachers, resources, number of TECs and public schools). Therefore, it could be asserted that assessment and evaluation about the quality of education relying on standard indicators is yet to be conducted. It is seen that regular assessment and evaluations relying on standard indicators are planned as part of PICTES. As this is a recent plan, time will tell what activities will be realized and what kind of data it will produce about the quality of education.

5.7. Policy considerations about the quality of education provided for Syrian children

- A decision that allows Syrian teachers to attend Turkish courses at their schools would be beneficial.
- Regulations and approaches are needed to facilitate Syrian teachers' appointment to public schools with an appropriate status. Initiatives in this matter will serve as proactive measures against issues that may arise with the closure of TECs. For instance, with this application, Syrian teachers' employment at public schools will be realized, miscommunication between the school administration and Syrian students and parents will be prevented and Syrian students' adaptation to public schools will be facilitated.
- There are demands to inspect Syrian teachers' diplomas in detail. A political and administrative decision is expected to be taken in this matter.
- During the field research, it was observed that scales developed and applied by MoNE personnel about Syrians' education were unscientific, consisting of carelessly prepared optical forms. Administrative decision is needed for the scientific standardization of data acquisition utilities and indicators that are required for the assessment of quality.
- Administrative decision is needed for the registration of and access to data about quality acquired through systematic assessments.



CHAPTER 6

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

This research was conducted to identify issues and provide recommendations about Syrian children's education through the data acquired from MoNE and the field work. Education of over 3 million Syrians in Turkey is a crucial subject. Education of especially children between ages 5-17 will determine the course and content of all discussions that are to be held in the near future in Turkey. Issues about Syrians' social, cultural and economic adaptation to Turkey are not independent from education.

Various sociological functions are attributed to education in the modern world. Education provides the opportunity to change class and status, improve adaptation skills, find employment and acquire vocational aptitude. In terms of society, education allows individuals and masses to gather around a social consensus, reduces social conflict or facilitates the resolution, foresees the division of labor and spreads ethical values. For this reason, it could be asserted that uneducated children will be in a fairly disadvantageous position. Moreover, this situation implies serious risks to the society. When refugee children are in question, these societal risks may be exacerbated. For instance, uneducated Syrian children may face the risk of being abused as cheap labor. On the other hand, refugee children may face risks like early marriage, becoming members of radical ideological groups and social adaptation issues.

Many countermeasures are being taken about Syrians' education in Turkey by various partners. Undoubtedly, public institutions have the most pressure in terms of Syrians' education. After the Syrian experience, mass immigrations that take place in a short period of time were defined as "disaster" by the Republic of Turkey. In this respect, with the Syrians' mass immigration to Turkey, disaster and emergency applications were implemented and the Prime Ministry tasked DEMC. DEMC produced quick resolutions about emergency needs like shelter, healthcare and food. Education, on the other hand, later become a part of policies seeking a permanent resolution. With the supposition that war in Syria would end soon and the refugees would return to their country in a short time, regarding Syrian children's education, small-scale resolutions were implemented by the utilization of local resources. From 2014 onward, MoNE started to seek a more permanent resolution for Syrian children's education, as the hope for the conflict's end disappeared. Previously makeshift educational applications were systematized; beside physical facilities like schools, classrooms, laboratories and equipment, human resources like teachers, administrators and counselors were mobilized for the education of Syrians.

In addition to public institutions, resources provided by NGOs and international actors also contribute to this cause. For instance, NGOs like TDF and Bülbülzade Foundation contributed to improving the curriculum employed at TECs. Yunus Emre Institute helped in the preparation and publication of textbooks. Similarly, global NGOs like HRF and local NGOs like Elbir Association (Konya) were helpful in the provision of school supplies and clothing to the Syrian children. In terms of schooling, institutions like Tzu Chi Foundation (Istanbul), IOM, ASAM, Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF continue to play an important role. UNICEF also contributes to many aspects of Syrian children's education, such as paying

the salaries of teachers, Turkish language lecturers and counselor at TECs. Even though they are not mentioned in the research because of being out of sample, the immense efforts of many other NGOs and volunteers could not be disregarded.

Despite all the support and efforts, Syrian children's education is far from ideal. In fact, there are many issues about their education. This research identifies issues regarding Syrian children's education and provides recommendations. The issues identified in this report are divided into three categories: Management, access and quality.

It is MoNE's duty and responsibility to establish and manage a system for Syrian children's education. Between 2012 and 2014, MoNE's approach was to manage the situation with temporary resolutions. During that period of time, MoNE had relinquished the issue to NGOs instead of taking the initiative. However, as it was realized that the war in Syria would not end in the short-term contrary to the expectations, MoNE actively engaged the issue and started to manage each and every aspect of Syrian children's education. There are many issues caused by the established system and administrative capacities. These issues are elaborated below and recommendations to them are provided. To summarize, the main issues about the management of Syrian children's education are related to the problems of accreditation and diploma, difficulties stemming from bureaucracy, administrative resistance, local limitations to resources and facilities, challenges of budget and finance and the shortcomings in monitoring and evaluation.

All Syrian children have the right to access education in Turkey. This right is defined and protected by national and international regulations. For this reason, there is diversity in terms of access to education. For most of the Syrian children, there are two options for education: public schools and TECs. There are obstructions to Syrian children's access to education, such as economic issues, language barrier, early marriage, a negative approach by the Syrians to coeducation, transportation between home and school, disorientation, uncertainties about future and social/legal status, limited options in transitioning to high school due to placement system and the inadequacy of physical facilities (classroom and laboratory etc.) in the school buildings. Issues Syrian children face in terms of access and recommendations to these issues are elaborated below. In addition, unschooled Syrian children are divided into three typologies in this report. Type-1 unschooled is used for children that are relatively easier to be schooled. Children who are unschooled because of relatively simpler reasons are included to this typology. Type-2 unschooled is used for children that are unable to go to school because of more challenging and permanent reasons and require planning for their continued attendance at the school. Type-3 unschooled indicates the children that are hardest to get to the school. Children that are physically or mentally disabled, have significant familial issues and that are in an impoverished condition are included in this type.

Syrian children's access to school does not ensure that their issues regarding education will be completely resolved. After getting the access, issues regarding the quality of education get at the stake. There are analyses about the quality of Syrian children's education. Main elements of quality of education are teachers, planning, resources, school administration, in-class applications, curriculum, student readiness, extra-school environments and monitoring and evaluation activities. In this respect, issues and suggestion about Syrian children's quality of education are elaborated below. On the other hand, it is

possible to make the following statements about education in general: There are discrepancies between the central administration (MoNE) and local administrations in terms of vision (including ideology), which cause issues in mobilizing resources and facilities to implement educational applicants. All of this, in turn, affects the quality of education negatively. Moreover, Syrian students' issues about motivation, language and adaptation become an obstacle for them, preventing them from fully benefiting from the education they receive.

6.2. Recommendations

Recommendations regarding management

- Considering Syrian children's schooling is a basic human right and that the deprivation of this right might lead to marginalization, ghettoization and radicalization, along with the fact that a quality education will resolve the aforementioned issues while also allowing children to build a better future for themselves and their country, MoNE should work on creating awareness about Syrian children's education, especially to those who are tasked with Syrian children's education. In addition, the ministry should cooperate with NGOs to break families' prejudices about Syrian children.
- Civil servants and citizens must be reminded that humanitarian and political approaches are different and that education is a part of the humanitarian approach.
- All kind of school tools, fixtures and equipments should be available for the Syrians at the schools that are used as TECs.
- Physical capacities of public schools that Syrians will be directed in the case of closures of TECs must be assessed carefully. When a TEC is being closed, students' resident addresses should be examined and the physical capacities of the nearest public school should be assessed in terms of adequacy. After the assessment, a specific schedule about each TEC's closure should be prepared. Otherwise, many schooled Syrian children might be left out of the education system.
- Plans should be prepared for Syrian teachers' future in the case TECs are closed down; measures should be taken to not leave these teachers out of the education system. These teachers may teach Arabic courses at imam hatip schools, while also playing an important role in the integration of Syrian children.
- Syrian population is largely unaware of the differences between TECs and public schools. Differences should be told to Syrians and advantages of being a public school graduate should be emphasized. This will relieve the concerns of Syrians during the closure of TECs.
- Syrian teachers, students and parents along with Turkish administrators, teachers, students and parents should be informed about the closure of TECs.
- Syrian teachers should be regularly consulted during the closure process of TECs and their opinions and recommendations should be regarded.

- Currently used by TECs, considering that these buildings could be used for education purposes in the future, resources should be dedicated to the maintenance of these buildings.
- Turkey is dedicating significant resources to school Syrian children; however, these resources are inadequate. For this reason, international community should take on more responsibility in the education of Syrian children and transfer more resources to Turkey. Especially the budget that is transferred from EU funds should be employed as soon as possible for the construction of new school buildings and classrooms. Financial support to the construction of classrooms and school buildings, transportation, education materials and staff will improve the schooling rate of Syrian children, while allowing them to receive quality education.
- In order to reduce the burden of the public sector and speed the activities, national and international NGOs should be accredited, allowing them to cooperate more efficiently with MoNE.

Recommendations regarding access

- Three unschooled typologies were identified in the research. Children of these typologies must be approached with appropriate methods and tools according to the issues they face. For instance, it is not economically rational to spend the scarce resources directly for the children that could be schooled merely by psychological support and encouragements. Such material resources as MoNEy and aids should be dedicated to children who cannot go to school because of economic or work-related issues. Appendix I elaborates on attributes of these typologies, what should be done to school them and by whom it should be done.
- Disorientation is a hidden element that usually accompanies other obstructions. There are children who want to go to school instead of work, but lack the knowledge where to start; these children may be integrated to the education system rather easily when guided correctly.
- Schools for girls should be opened to increase the schooling rate of Syrian girls.
- Considering that certain children are left unschooled because of inadequate physical facilities in schools, the number of school buildings and classrooms should be increased quickly.
- Highly successful Syrian children should be enabled to go to Science, Anatolian or Social Sciences High Schools that focus on sciences and mathematics.
- Work needs to be done in terms of disabled students' access to education. Because of war and extraordinary conditions, the number of disabled people among Syrians is rather high. Physical and architectural resolutions that are required for these children's access to school should be emphasized.
- During most of the interviews conducted with children who are unschooled or have left school, it was revealed that none of the state officials or NGO personnel had hitherto contacted them. It is especially easy to reach children who were dismissed from school due to absenteeism (in terms of finding their residence and such). These children should be identified and their families should be visited to persuade them to go back to school.
- Syrians continue to establish social networks among themselves, maintaining their norms and

values. So, there are certain notables among the community. In order to improve schooling rates, public institutions and NGOs should cooperate with the said Syrian notables along with mukhtars.

- As Syrian teachers and students lack the knowledge about educational prospects, they should be informed in this matter.
- For schooling campaigns and in order to break prejudices against Syrians, local media should be employed as much efficiently as the national media.
- Alternative resolutions must be produced to school children who were unable to go to school for years and left behind their peers. . Institutions that are to provide evening school education to children of similar age groups could be opened.
- A kind of preparatory school should be opened for Syrian students with low Turkish language skills. This application is already done by certain school administrators because of practical reasons. Teachers, students, parents and administrators from various schools have expressed that 15-hour weekly Turkish language lessons at TECs are inadequate for academic success. On the other hand, increasing the weekly class hours of Turkish is unrealistic. The situation is not much different at public schools. Syrian students studying at public schools try to learn Turkish and follow the curriculum simultaneously. Teachers' positive discriminations aiming to compensate this situation harm the in-class peace. As a solution to all these problems, Syrian children should first go through intensive Turkish courses at an institution similar to Center for Teaching Turkish Language CTTL) and then they should be transferred to public schools. These courses could be realized at Public Education Centers or even at schools, if sufficient number of students is present.

Recommendations regarding quality

- Academic success is closely related with integration to the school environment and the school buildings and environments are not the mere places where this takes place. Extra-school social environments are also important for integration. Bringing Turkish and Syrian families together and bonding them will help Syrian children integrate into the school.
- Joint socio-cultural activities at public schools are important for forcing Turkish and Syrian students into positive interaction. On the other hand, even though cultural trips and activities only for Syrian students have benefits, it has negative effects on integration. The field research revealed that non-competitive trips and activities with the participation of both Turkish and Syrian students are effective in nurturing friendship and solidarity.
- The bonding cultural and social activities should be extended to include Syrian and Turkish teachers, as it will increase the quality of education.
- Syrian children with superior intelligence should be identified and should be provided with the opportunities for an appropriate education. Also, NGOs working in this field should be supported.
- Needs of TECs in terms of textbooks and curriculum should be met (at least until the TECs are closed down). Delaying the fulfillment of these needs just because TECs are to be closed down will have adverse effects.

- It is foreseen that issues regarding curriculum will be a main subject of debate especially with the closure of TECs. In this respect, proactive measures should be taken and plans should be made to ensure that the curriculum includes both national/local and global values.
- Socio-cultural projects that could improve Syrian students' motivation for education should be supported. Moreover, Syrian students should be informed about the realistic future prospects the education they receive provides.
- It is expressed that there are ongoing issues about the proficiency and diplomas of Syrian teachers. To resolve this matter, well-educated Syrians should be consulted. Syrians who are experienced in education asserted that they are ready to volunteer in this matter.
- It was observed that Syrian teachers lack information about Turkish education system. Syrian teachers should be informed efficiently about the Turkish education system, as they serve also as consultants to Syrian students. Informing Syrian teachers means informing Syrian students indirectly; Syrian students will be able to consult to their teachers without a language barrier. This will, in turn, improve the motivations of students and the quality of education.
- Syrian teachers should be provided with in-service training that will allow them to improve and update their vocational knowledge.
- Regular and systematic assessments relying on objective and standard indicators that will allow the evaluation of quality should be defined. Furthermore, the data acquired from assessments should be opened to access.
- The research revealed that most of the Syrian parents were unable to help their children in education because of not knowing the Turkish alphabet (reading and writing). This situation has adverse effects on children's success and integration. For this reason, the number of literacy and Turkish language courses towards adults should be increased.
- Full day education is crucial for the quality of the education received by Syrian children. In this respect, classes at TECs should begin at an earlier hour and TECs should be supported with physical and infrastructural facilities. This requires new classrooms and school buildings.
- As 15 hours of class is dedicated weekly to Turkish language learning, there is limited time left for mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign language courses. To ensure that Syrian students are not at a disadvantage during their Turkish language learning process, make-up hours and courses should be scheduled especially in summer to compensate their losses in essential courses.
- Considering that many Syrian children have psycho-social issues because of war and immigration, active counseling services should be provided to these children.
- In order to improve the quality of counseling services, a special monitoring and evaluation must be conducted specifically in this field.

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Appendix I

Table 1. Categorization of unschooled Syrian children according to their reasons for not receiving education and strategic recommendations to school these children.

		Unschooled Syrian Children			
		Definition	Main Obstructions	Recommendations	Actors
Type-1 Unschooled	Children who do not go to school because of issues that could easily be resolved with minimal resources in the short-term.	-Disorientation	-Individual monitoring and case-by-case strategies	- MoNE	
		-Non-clinical psychological issues (lack of motivation, uneasiness, fear of rejection and insecurity around physical environments of the school)	-Orientation	-Ministry of Family and Social Policies	
		-Logistic deficiencies (school supplies, clothing and transportation)	-Distribution of media providing guidance (short and effective movies, texts)	-Turkish Red Crescent	
Type-2 Unschooled	Children who do not go to school because of reasons that could be resolved by financial and human resources, planning, monitoring and evaluation and institutional interventions.	-Registration being rejected by the school administration (for not having foreign ID car, inadequate physical facilities of the school)	-Facilitating bureaucratic procedure and regulations	-DEMC	
		-Substitutable job obligation (when the wage is compensated with financial aid, these children may return to school)	-Building new classrooms, improving school's physical capacity	-Academic institutions	
		-Frequent relocation	-Bureaucratic supervision and inspections on registration rejections	-National and international NGOs	
Type-3 Unschooled	Children obstructed by permanent issues like time, health and composition of family, and economic that require alternative education methods.	-Cultural factors (neglect of school and education, being against coeducation)	-Efficient and credible field researches	-General Directorate of Immigration Management	
		-Clinical psychological reason	-Providing guidance after relocation, facilitating bureaucratic procedures	- Ministry of Family and Social Policies	
		-Serious physical health issues	-Individual monitoring and case-by-case strategies	- MoNE	
Type-3 Unschooled	Children obstructed by permanent issues like time, health and composition of family, and economic that require alternative education methods.	-Falling behind peers because of losing time	-Improving open and remote education options	-Ministry of Health	
		-Lack of parents	-Facilitating education for the disabled	-NGOs	
		-Non-substitutable job obligation (mostly boys)		-Aid organizations	
Type-3 Unschooled	Children obstructed by permanent issues like time, health and composition of family, and economic that require alternative education methods.	-Having children because of an early marriage (girls)			

“ The inclusion of Syrian children into the education system is an important matter. There are many risks associated with being uneducated. First of all, the uneducated ones lose their hopes and are forced to work at low-paying jobs as they lack the necessary knowledge and skills. What follows is the risk of marginalization, ghettoization and radicalization. Access to quality education will help Syrians overcome psycho-social issues caused by war, violence and relocation and will contribute to the normalization of the individuals and the society. ”




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