



04

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE BETWEEN BORDERS

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Fieldwork



INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC RESEARCH ORGANIZATION
USAK Centre for Social Studies

USAK REPORT NO: 13-04

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May 2013

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The data regarding the camps and refugees in this report have been obtained entirely from institutions such as the Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), Turkish Red Crescent and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The fieldwork has been independently carried out by USAK. The results of the opinion polls and the interviews cannot be used without obtaining authorization.

This report has been translated to English by Leyla Taşdemir.

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USAK CENTER FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (SAM)

Turkey faces an increasing need for sociological studies to process the social transformations it has been experiencing in the last several decades. In order for Turkey to become a more influential actor in the international arena in the twenty-first century, it has to be able to better predict and accommodate social dynamics.

By conducting advanced political, economic, social, and cultural studies about Turkey, USAK's Center for Social Studies (SAM) aims to provide reliable and objective analyses to decision-makers and the general public. SAM proposes well-researched and practicable solutions to the problems Turkey faces. The Center's work is routinely recognized by policy-makers and the media. A number of projects have gained the support of UNICEF and TÜBİTAK (the state Turkish Scientific and Technological Research Council) for their use of advanced research techniques and reliable interpretations of findings.



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INTRODUCTION

The rage of the 26-year-old Tunisian man, Mohamed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire in front of the municipal building in broad daylight on 17 December 2010, soon spread among the youth and triggered the Arab Spring.

Before long, the voice of the Tunisian youth was heard and found supporters not only in its own country but also in neighboring countries with similar characteristics. The riots spread in waves.

The protests which began in Tunisia and later spread to Egypt, Libya, and other Arab countries were referred to as the “Arab Spring,” and the subsequent regime changes they caused in these countries were closely observed in the international community. This multivariable equation was viewed primarily as a political issue in the international arena. That is, until the riots in Syria transformed into clashes. The reverberations of the Arab Spring in Syria gradually manifested themselves as a huge humanitarian crisis due to the harsh crackdowns by the Assad regime.

Eventually, a group of 252 Syrians broke through the wire fence on the border of Hatay’s Yayladağı district on the evening of Friday, 29 April 2011, to enter Turkey and request asylum, putting the question “do we have a refugee crisis on our hands?” on Turkey’s agenda.

Turkey’s Syrian refugee issue, which began with 252 people in April 2011, has since acquired a new degree of magnitude with the more than 500,000 Syrians in Turkey today. The bigger picture including Syria’s neighbors is even more alarming: the number of Syrians who’ve fled their country due to the ongoing civil war in Syria since March 2011 is over one million. United Nations (UN) sources estimate that there are at least 4.6 million internally-displaced people within Syria, though according to some Syrian sources, the figure is closer to seven million. An estimated 7,000 people flee to neighboring countries daily. Moreover, the UN estimates that by the end of 2013, the number of Syrians in Turkey alone will reach one million.

This influx of refugees streaming across its 911-kilometer border with Syria, makes Turkey one of the countries affected the most by the Syrian civil war. Turkey’s statement that it stands “not on the side of the regime, but on the side of the people”, that it has

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Hosting a grand total of 500,000 –registered and unregistered– refugees, 192,000 of whom reside in camps, Turkey assumed a responsibility that far surpasses the international aspect of the crisis.
.....

reiterated since the first days of the clashes two years ago, was a guarantee of keeping alive for Syrians affected by the war who have been coming to Turkey in great numbers within the last 33 months.

Turkey has tried to manage the situation through the Prime Ministry’s Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) and the Turkish Red Crescent. 17 refugee camps were established in regions close to Turkey’s border gates with Turkey, namely, Hatay’s Reyhanlı, Yayladağı, and Altınözü districts.

Hosting a grand total of 500,000 –registered and unregistered– refugees, 192,000 of whom reside in camps, Turkey assumed a responsibility that far surpasses the international aspect of the crisis. The total number of Syrian refugees in Turkey today exceeds the population of 36 Turkish provinces.

In order to fully study the much-debated refugee crisis we conducted a field study in the refugee camps between 28 January and 2 February and again from 19 to 22 February of this year in the border cities of Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Kilis, and Hatay—all of which were flooded with Syrian refugees in the last 26 months.

The present report aims to offer a comprehensive and detailed picture of the refugee camps in Turkey. It is not only an interpretation of official camp data and figures, but also an extensive field-study based on the opinions of Syrian refugees living within and without the camps.

We conducted surveys with 400 refugees from four camps to offer a more comprehensive account of the camps. The surveys were conducted in person by interviewers addressing the interviewees in Arabic.

While preparing the survey form, we conducted semi-structured interviews with academics and experts and spoke to AFAD and Turkish Crescent officials, who helped us determine the main subjects to focus on and to how to expand the scope of questions evaluating the camps. The survey form was prepared from the findings from these interviews and the pilot study was conducted in Gaziantep.

The field study following the pilot study covers four refugee camps in four different cities. The study was carried out in Nizip Tent City, Öncüpınar Container City, Ceylanpınar Tent City, and Süleyman Şah Tent City between 28 January and 2 February, and 19 to 22 February, 2013.

After the surveys were completed the survey forms were translated into Turkish by expert translators and the answers to open-ended questions were regrouped. The quantitative findings of data analyses and the qualitative data from the expert interviews prior to the field study were then compared.

The field study was based on three main themes. The first was the profiles and demographic characteristics of Syrian refugees in Turkey. The data comprising the gender, age group, educational and vocational status of Syrian refugees in camps are analyzed in the first section. Their entry dates and cities of origin are also included in this section.

The other theme of the field study is Syrian refugees' evaluations and perceptions of the camps. A wide range of topics including their reasons of immigration, how they learned about the camps, how satisfied they are with each of the services offered at the camps and even the daily activities of camp life were discussed in this section. Questions as to what extent the Syrians were affected by the war in their country were also covered in this section.

The third and the last theme comprises the predictions of Syrians regarding the war. Answers to questions about the future of the war, when it might end, what kind of a regime they want, and their expectations from the international community are included in the last theme.

Although the scope of the study is very wide, our attempts to reach a sample size large enough to guarantee the reliability of the research were limited by security measures and the psychological conditions of the refugees. In addition to the surveys on refugees, focus group discussions with opinion leaders in the camps and semi-structured interviews with experts also helped broaden the scope of the study.

The field study was completed within a short span of time in order to lessen the chance of an event influencing the results. However, a few unforeseeable and impactful events did take place. The most important was the explosion at Hatay's Cilvegözü border gate on 11 February 2013. The security measures at the camps within Hatay province, which would constitute the second leg of the field study, became very strict thereafter. As a result, we were unable to enter these camps there to conduct surveys.

All of the official data in the report was obtained from AFAD, the Turkish Red Crescent and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It must be kept in mind, though, that the data changes constantly, as an average of 7,000 Syrians flee to neighboring countries every day, 1,500 of which come to Turkey. Even as this report was being prepared, four more refugee camps were being established in Turkey; two in Mardin and one in Kilis and Malatya each, suggesting that the flow of refugees will continue in the near future.

It is important to remember that the physical and social facilities offered by the Turkish camps are incomparably better than those of camps in other countries. While undergoing perhaps the most important humanitarian aid challenge in its history, Turkey was recognized and praised by all the relevant international figures and institutions. The coordination and logistical services provided at short notice by AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent in response to such a great influx of refugees prevented further suffering among the Syrian victims of the current war.

This report could not have been prepared without the support and help of the people listed below. Above all, we owe a special thanks to the Coordinator Governor Mr. **Veyysel Dalmaz**. He opened all possible doors for us to complete our study. **AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent staff** helped us to carry on this project both in camps and in provincial and district centers, as did the relevant local authorities. We would also like to thank **Prof. Ahmet İcduygu**, faculty member of Koç University's Department of In-

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to neighboring
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.....

ternational Relations and the director of MİREKOÇ, and **Assoc. Prof. Saime Özçürümez**, a faculty member of Bilkent University's Department of Political Science, for their insightful contributions to our study that helped broaden our vision.

1

SYRIAN REFUGEES

According to some experts, a mass movement of people should meet two criteria before it can be considered a “forced migration:” (1) at least 1% of the country’s total population must be under threat and (2) at least 100 thousand people must have left the place they live in either by force or due to circumstances.

The recent history of the Middle East is familiar with such tragedies. The people of Syria are now going through what the people of Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon have experienced before. In terms of the dimensions of the crisis, Syria’s population is 22.5 million, the number of Syrians who have had to leave their country is at least 1.5 million, and another 4.6 million are currently under threat.

Four of Syria’s neighbors, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, are trying to respond to large influxes of people. Lebanon first started to accept refugees in May 2011 with a group of approximately 700 people. Jordan has been hosting Syrian victims of war since February 2012 and Iraq since March. Baghdad, which is dealing with its own problems and tense relations with Iraq’s Kurdistan Regional Government, does not seem to be a very good destination for Syrian refugees. According to the latest figures of the UN, however, over 140,000 Syrians are being sheltered in Iraqi Kurdistan, which has managed to establish a relatively stable and prosperous state. The number of Syrians who have sought refuge in Iraq’s regions controlled by the central government is only around 10,000. On the other hand, Syrians are not very welcome in Lebanon because of Hezbollah, which openly supports the Syrian regime. Based on official records alone, a total of 1,400,000 people live in camps and urban/rural settlements in the aforementioned countries. The “protection” these countries provide, however, is highly debatable according to human rights and global protection standards. It is not difficult to guess how the camps for “unwanted” Syrian refugees function outside of Turkey with respect to international law and human rights.

There are no refugee camps established especially for Syrians in Lebanon or North Africa. A great majority of the people originally from the capital, Damascus, are staying in various rural and urban settlements in northern and eastern regions of Lebanon such as Tripoli and Baddawi. Assad is unhappy with the Syrians in Lebanon; on 15 March 2013 he even threatened to attack certain settlements in the country on the grounds that “they

Syrians need help

4
MILLION

IDPs

4.6
MILLION

Crossing borders daily

7
THOUSAND

Deaths

7
THOUSAND

Have to access to healthy food

3
MILLION

People need immediate food aid

70
THOUSAND

Children affected by war

2
MILLION




1.419.430 TOTAL

1.212.699 REGISTERED

206.731 WAITING FOR REGISTRATION

Demographic Analysis of the Refugees who fled the Syria

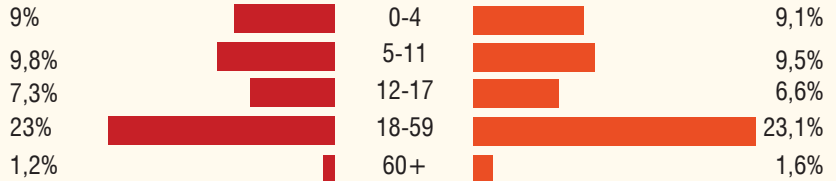
Demography

Male (50,1%) 

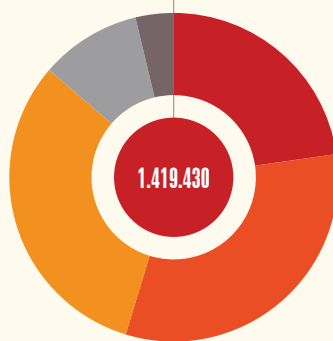
Age



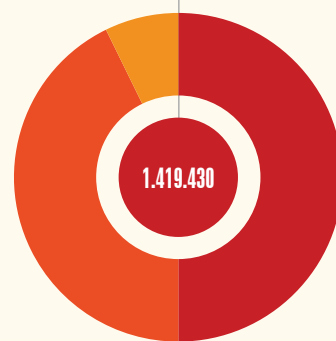
Female (49,9%)



- Turkey 316.464
- Lebanon 453.495
- Jordan 448.370
- Iraq 140.873
- Egypt 53.032



- Total 1.419.430
- Registered 1.212.699
- Waiting for Registration 206.731



Approximately 1,5 million people fled the Syria from beginning of the war

January 2012

April, 30 2013

8.000

1.419.430

Source: UNHCR, AFAD, SNHR

Total 316.464
 Registered 284.079
 Waiting for Registration 32.385
 Government Estimate 400.000

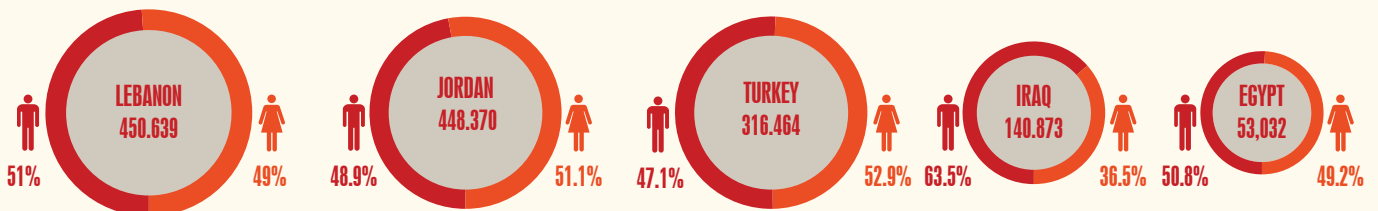


Total 453.495
 Registered 339.293
 Waiting for Registration 111.346
 Government Estimate 1.000.000
 Households 77.017
 Waiting for Registration 111.346
 Estimated number of Refugees according to Government: 1.000.000
 (There are no refugee camps established especially for Syrians in Lebanon. All of the Syrians are living different regions of the country)



Total 448.370
 Registered 393.370
 Waiting for Registration 55.000
 Government Estimate 470.000
 Number of Syrian refugees living different regions of the country

Total 140.873
 Registered 140.873
 Households 64.661
 Number of Syrian refugees living different regions of the country:



.....
**By March 2013,
almost all of the
registered refugees in
Turkey were lodged
at incomparably
higher quality
camps controlled
by the Prime
Ministry's Disaster
and Emergency
Management
Presidency (AFAD).**
.....

helped opponents of the regime.” Lebanese public opinion diverges on the Syrian war; Hezbollah and Lebanese Shiites support Assad, while the Sunnis, which constitute 30% of the country’s population, to stand by the opposition.

There are three camps in Jordan, one in Ramtha, Mafraq, and Za’atri each; and in four different regions in Iraq. Records are kept by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the aforementioned countries. Although there are attempts to mobilize international and local aid mechanisms for the Syrians settled in the ghettoized camps inhabited by Palestinians in Lebanon, it is difficult to say whether the refugees are receiving good, accommodation and other basic needs. The refugees live in such conditions that the only benefit they’ve gained is to have moved to a “safe haven”.

The refugees welcomed by Iraqi Kurdistan enjoy better conditions compared to those in Lebanon. The main motive behind immigration to this region is ethnic ties; most of the refugees in the Domiz camp of Iraqi Kurdistan’s Dohuk province are Syrian Kurds. According to the latest census of the UNHCR, there are 35,000 refugees staying in the camp, which is quite a high number considering the camp’s physical conditions.

The UN reports that thousands of families in the camp have had to share their tents with newcomers, and 3,500 families did not have a tent of their own. According to the press, tents and blankets are most needed at the Domiz camp. In addition, these tents were set up in places lacking infrastructure, which suggests that the Syrians had to suffer a lot for the past two winters and still are in these winter months. Poor hygiene at the Domiz and Al-Qaim refugee camps has caused increases in cases of epidemic illnesses, the most troublesome of which are Hepatitis A, diarrhea, and the Aleppo boil.

According to UN records, only 40% of the Syrians officially registered in the region (including Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan) live in camps, while the remaining 60% are trying to survive in rented apartments, in the homes of relatives, or in shelters housing 100 to 150 people. On the other hand, by March 2013, almost all of the registered refugees in Turkey were lodged at incomparably higher quality camps controlled by the Prime Ministry’s Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD).

A. Camps in Turkey

Turkey is one of the countries most affected by the Syrian civil war due to its 911-kilometer border with Syria. Turkey's statement that it will be standing "not beside the regime, but beside the people", reiterated since the first days of the clashes two years ago, was the first ray of hope for the Syrian victims of war who have been coming to Turkey in great numbers throughout the last 26 months.

Since the beginning, Turkey has been trying to manage the situation through AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent. So far, 17 camps have been established in the regions close to the Syrian border crossings, the first of these being in Hatay's Reyhanlı, Yayladağı, and Altınözü districts.

Table 1. The Camps in Turkey

Province	Camp Location	Opening Date	Number of Tent	Camp Population
Hatay	Altınözü 1 Tent City	09.06.2011	259	1.512
	Altınözü 2 Tent City	10.06.2011	570	2.392
	Yayladağı 1 Tent City	30.04.2011	575	2.926
	Yayladağı 2 Tent City	12.07.2011	510	3.472
	Apaydın Tent City	09.10.2011	1525	4.506
	Reyhanlı Gathering Center*			
	Total		3493	14.808
Kilis	Öncüpınar Container City	17.03.2012	2.053	13.398
	Total		2.053	13.398
Şanlıurfa	Ceylanpınar Tent City	01.03.2012	4.573	43.464
	Akçakale Tent City	06.07.2012	5.129	34.704
	Harran Container City	13.01.2013	2.000	12.364
	Total		9.702 Tent and 2000 Container	90.532
Gaziantep	Islahiye Tent City	17.03.2012	1.710	8.530
	Karkamış Tent City	28.08.2012	1.632	8.195
	Nizip 1 Tent City	03.10.2012	1.858	9.976
	Nizip 2 Container City	11.02.2013	1.000	3.948
	Total		5.200 Tent and 1000 Container	30.649
Kahramanmaraş	Kahramanmaraş Tent City	01.09.2012	2.737	15.910
	Total		2.737	15.910
Osmaniye	Osmaniye Tent City	09.09.2012	2.012	7.716
	Total		2.012	7.716
Adıyaman	Adıyaman Tent City	22.09.2012	2.178	9.942
	Total		2.178	9.942
Adana	Sarıçam Tent City	28.01.2013	2.136	8.709
	Total		2.136	8.709
Mardin**	Midyat Tent City	Under Construction		
	Nusaybin Tent City	Under Construction		
Kilis**	Elbeyli Container City	Under Construction		
Malatya**	Malatya Container City	Under Construction		

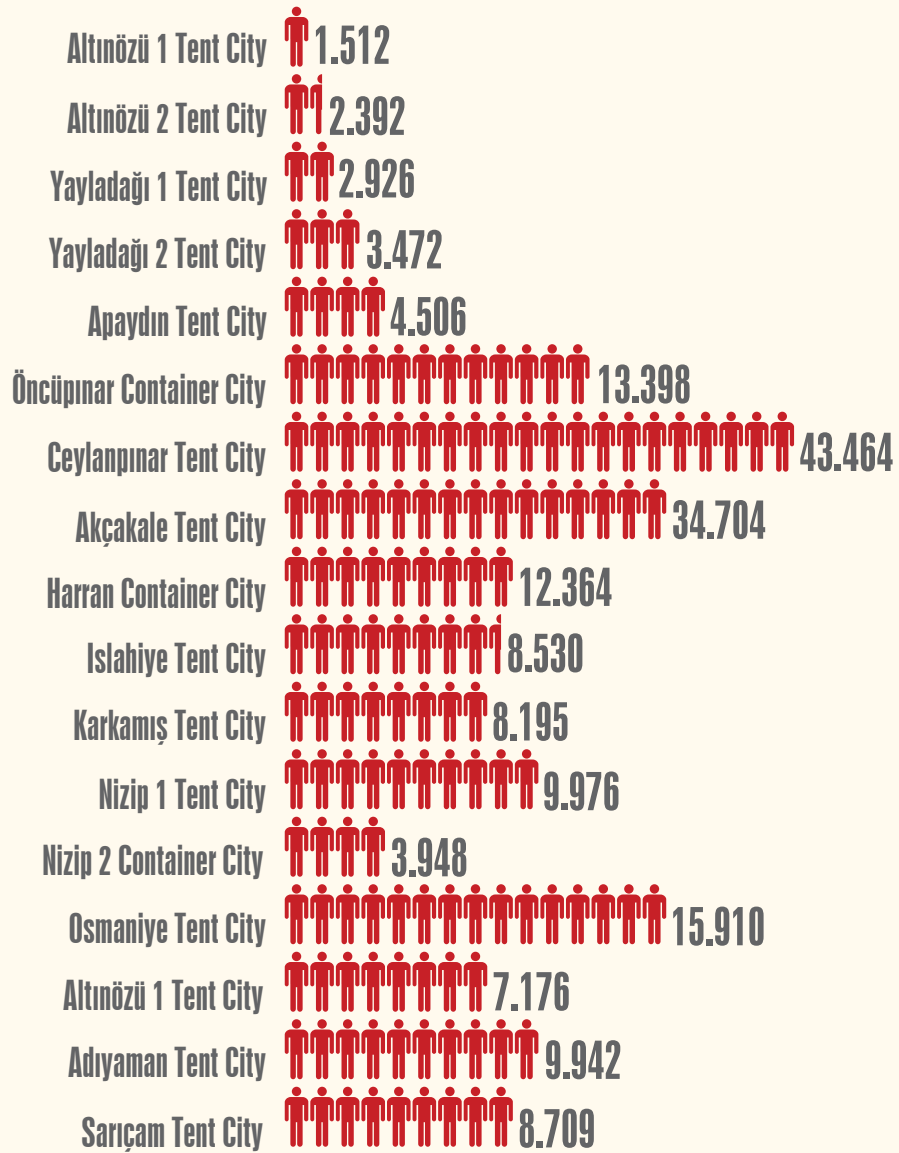
* It changes due to daily entrances.

** The camps under construction.

The first mass crossing of Syrians into the country was a group of 252 people on 29 April 2011. Afterwards, every attack within Syria increased the flow of refugees to both Turkey and other neighboring countries.

Based on AFAD's daily data regarding entries into Turkey, it is obvious that however large the camps near the Syrian border may be, they won't be enough in the face of the current inflow. Even more camps are being built in the aforementioned Turkish districts. In addition, there are ongoing aid campaigns to the de facto buffer zones between the two countries. 11,000 people live on the Syrian side of the Kilis Öncüpinar border gate, and more refugees are waiting to be let in at Hatay's Cilvegözü and Yayladağı, Gaziantep's Karkamış, and Şanlıurfa's Akçakale border gates.

Figure 1. List of Camps According to Population Density



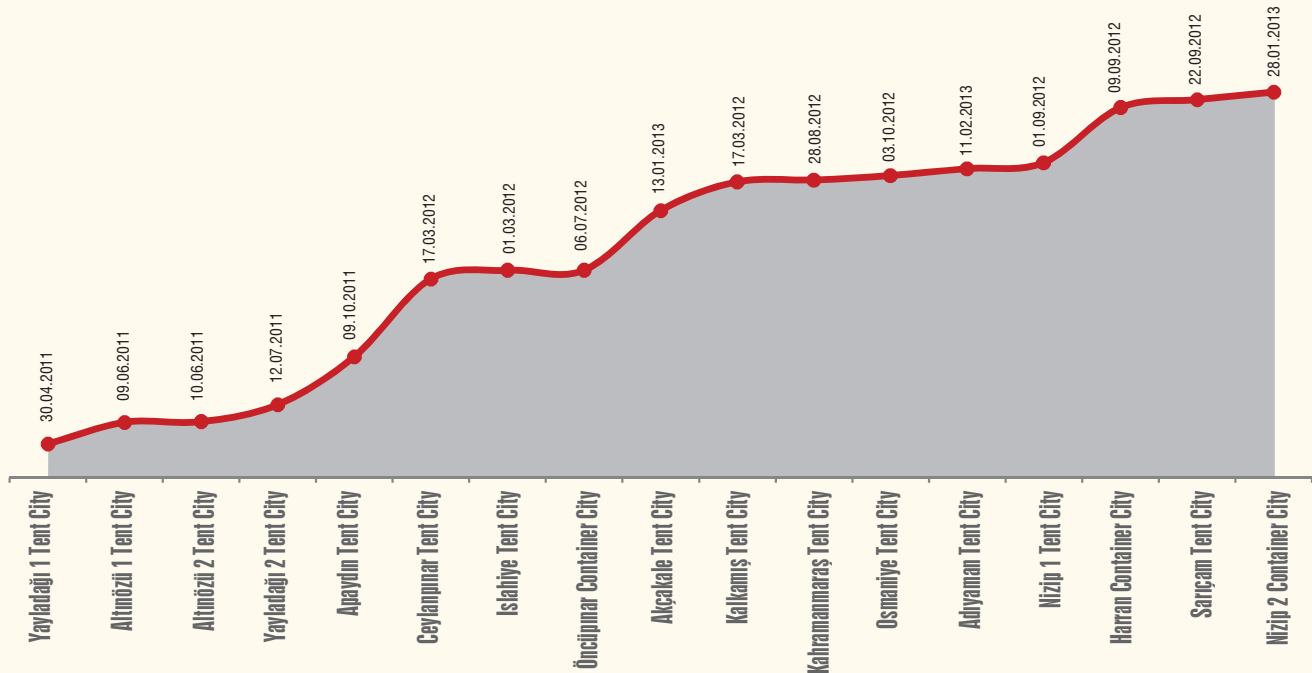
Turkey currently provides “temporary protection” to Syrians in 14 tent cities and three container cities. All of the present camps are controlled by AFAD, and there are a few UN observers at each camp. AFAD continues to serve in the region with staff deployed for 2-month periods, in addition to the Turkish Red Crescent which shares the AFAD officials’ burden in almost all of the camps.

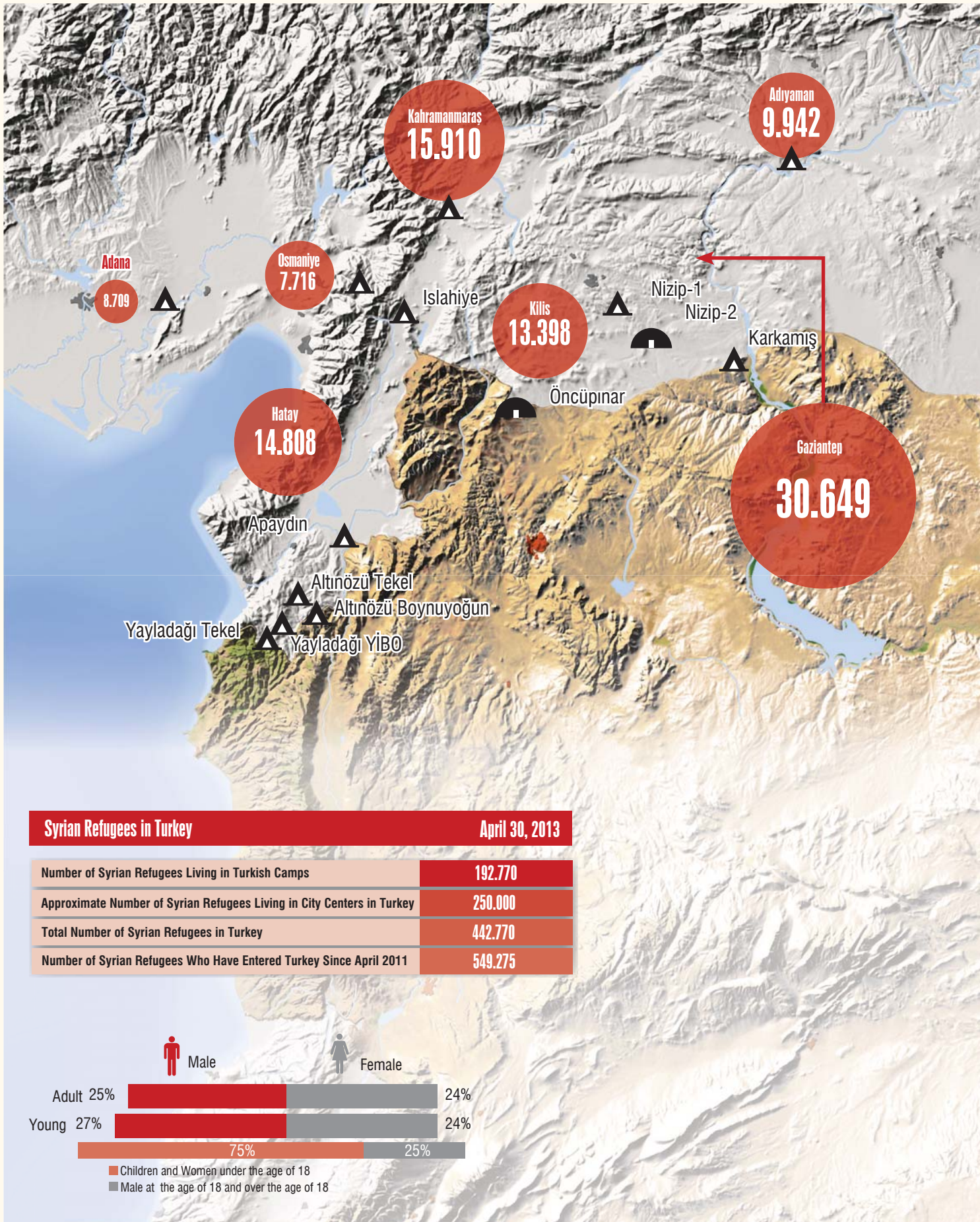
Local authorities such as governors, district governors, and district governors’ staff personally work in the camps. District governors have their second offices --after the one in the district center-- located inside the accommodation centers. The population of Süleymanşah Accommodation Center in the Akçakale district is 35.000, whereas the residential population of Akçakale itself is 27,000. The responsibility and workload of local authorities have thus been doubled. In some districts, the local governor’s personnel work in two shifts so as to serve the locals and to help the camps run smoothly at the same time.

The AFAD accommodation centers, though presently overloaded, are in extremely good conditions, both in terms of infrastructure and their ability to meet societal needs. It takes a team of 200 people about two weeks to set up the camps and they offer a large variety of facilities from kindergartens to high schools, grocery stores to tailoring and hairdressing classes. The herculean effort exerted by both the local authorities and local residents must be especially underlined. If things go smoothly despite a lack of coordination, obstacles, and political concerns from Ankara, it is thanks to the sincere efforts of the locals.

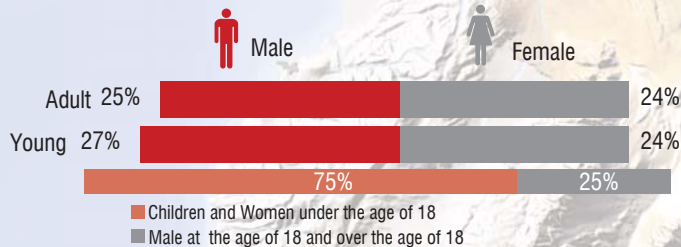
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The population of Süleymanşah Accommodation Center in the Akçakale district is 35.000, whereas the residential population of Akçakale itself is 27,000.

Figure 2. Opening Dates of the Camps





Syrian Refugees in Turkey		April 30, 2013
Number of Syrian Refugees Living in Turkish Camps		192.770
Approximate Number of Syrian Refugees Living in City Centers in Turkey		250.000
Total Number of Syrian Refugees in Turkey		442.770
Number of Syrian Refugees Who Have Entered Turkey Since April 2011		549.275



Source: AFAD

TURKEY



17 TENT CITIES
3 CONTAINER CITIES



852 MILLION TL
Spending of AFAD



1.5 BILLION TL
Spending by AFAD



8.235
Total Number of Polyclinics



20.978
Inpatients



12.253
Patients Had a Medical
Operation



3.166
Newborn Infants



28.213
Total Number of Students

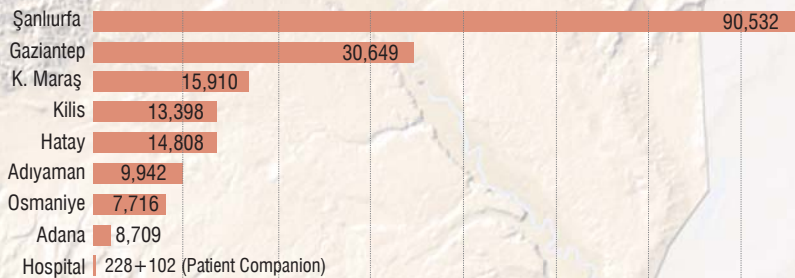


1.202
Total Number of Teachers

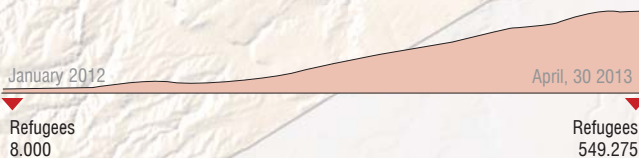
Şanlıurfa
90.532

Harran
Akçakale
Ceylanpınar

Distribution of Syrian Refugees in the Cities
Not Included Refugees Living Outside of Camps in Turkey



Trend of Entering the Country for Syrian Refugees Registered in Turkey



.....
"While my state tried
to kill me, Turkey
received me with
open arms. It should
have been just the
contrary..."
.....

B. The Role of Local Authorities

One must underscore that the AFAD staff and local authorities have been doing their jobs commendably and patiently despite the sometimes intolerable predicaments they face. The local governors, who are personally working in close contact with the Syrians, function more like diplomats than civil servants of the Ministry of Interior. The camps are frequently visited by the UN, international aid agencies and high-level representatives from foreign countries.

Each camp is like a small city and after meeting the first emergency needs, the authorities try to govern them like slowly normalizing cities. These, however, are settlements with problems and needs far beyond those of normal cities. Every camp is divided into districts and the Syrians support the Turkish staff by taking part in the camp's management through a team of representatives consisting of a district chief and two associates. These chiefs and associates are elected through a "democratic" campaign and election process, something suggested by the Turkish officers. There are even election banners in some camps. This example is very important as it is probably the first democratic experience in the history of the Syrian people.

In addition to these, there are people who work in public office during the day and undertake voluntary aid work for Syrians at night. The government employees in both the camps and local government offices no longer have a notion of normal work hours. There is a spontaneous but very serious public diplomacy campaign in the region. The positive attitude of the officials gives hope that the deeply-rooted, strong ties between the two peoples will be carried on into the future. The words of a Syrian interviewed at Nizip Camp summarize the view of the Syrian people of Turkey: "While my state tried to kill me, Turkey received me with open arms. It should have been just the contrary..."

C. War Psychology

As in every other war, women and children pay the heaviest price in the Syria Crisis. While there are two options for the men fighting in the fronts, either being taken prisoner or dying in a clash, the women and children bear a great psychological burden either way. Assad's forces use rape as a weapon against the opponents and the people who are not on their side, just like it was used in Bosnia before. This risk is always present for a woman whether she chooses to emigrate or to stay in her country. As of today, there are nearly 1,500 known cases of women who were raped and then took refuge in Jordan.¹ There is no such research on Syrian women in Turkey, but many similar cases are reported by the people in the region. One of the most dramatic examples of these disgusting attacks on women is the rape of a 65-year-old Syrian woman and her 13-year-old granddaughter when they were about to cross the border. The grandmother committed suicide as soon as she crossed over into Turkey; her 13-year-old orphaned granddaughter is trying to survive without the psychological support she needs.

1 "Female Syrian refugees in Jordan: We were forced to watch the rape of our daughters", 11.06.2012, <http://english.the-syrian.com/2012/06/11/female-syrian-refugees-in-jordan-we-were-forced-to-watch-the-rape-of-our-daughters/>, access date: 14.02.2012.

The psychological condition of the refugees at the camp is another issue. Just like in every other instance of mass migration, there are disturbances at these camps from time to time. In some of the camps, there have been Syrians who caused unrest or argued with the officials because they were unsatisfied with the services. An overall glance at the Syrians who stay in Turkey shows that this dissatisfaction is not the rule but the exception. The events covered by the media in Harran and Ceylanpınar suggest that both the refugees and the officials are having problems and that certain steps should be taken to prevent further disturbances.

On the other hand, bearing in mind that these people have fled war in their country and now share small tents or containers in crowded groups, experiencing psychological mood disorders or to exhibiting unstable behavior should be expected. A Saudi Arabian psychologist we interviewed at Nizip Camp explains:

“The people who come here are fleeing a war. They don’t have a home, they’re dealing with numerous problems. They’re psychologically weary. The atmosphere here is very different, people are trying to cope with many concerns arising from the war. Sleep disorders are especially widespread. Even if everything is physically normal, what would the behavior of a person who is sleep-deprived for a few days be like? Aggressive, unhappy, tense... Only the correct psychological support can help these people.”

.....
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.....

D. Risks

1) Fire Risk

In addition to the psychological problems caused by the war, non-fire-resistant tents create anxiety in everyone from the refugees to the camp managers and high level AFAD officials. Since the beginning of the 2012-2013 winter, 16 people have died -- most of them children -- in fires caused by toppled electrical heaters. To prevent potential disasters, families are constantly warned not to leave their children unattended in tents and to be more careful while using the heaters. Most camps use fire-resistant tents produced by the Turkish Red Crescent to prevent losses arising from fires, but there are places where the traditional UN-type tents are used due to overpopulation in the camps. The officials are trying to exchange these tents for fire-resistant ones as soon as possible.

2) Risk of Provocation

The Syrians residing at the camps are mostly “ordinary” people who do not cause trouble. But officials must keep in mind that there might be people among them with different connections – such as supporters of Assad, or members of the *Shabiha*, PKK, or other intelligence organizations – and that even groups of 10-15 people can cause great provocations in such crowded environments.

Syrians who were already psychologically traumatized (or gradually became traumatized from living for so long in such an environment) could potentially be provoked simultaneously at multiple camps. When thousands of unemployed and possibly traumatized young men are put into the equation, the officials should be vigilant against easily-sparked unrest at the camps.

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The biggest problem is that the governors in the provinces and districts outside the region see the issue of Syrian refugees as an exclusively “local” problem and act with the uninformed opinion that the official measures being taken are sufficient. Without the efforts of local offices, the orders, instructions, and funding from the central government mean very little.
.....

3) Localization of the Issue

Another issue at the camps is the problem of accommodating ill Syrians (and their attending family members) who are sent to larger cities for treatment. The camp staff have to spend a great amount of time and energy to arrange accommodation for the accompanying family members of patients sent to metropolitan cities such as Istanbul and Ankara. Due to the lack of information and coordination officials in these cities can turn such simple issues into bureaucratic messes rather than just simply booking a place at a guest house. This is a common problem. In addition to managing the camps -- which requires a high level of patience and strength -- the precious time lost with telephone calls and contacts who create more problems drain the camp staff, physically and psychologically.

The biggest problem is that the governors in the provinces and districts outside the region see the issue of Syrian refugees as an exclusively “local” problem and act with the uninformed opinion that the official measures being taken are sufficient. Without the efforts of local offices, the orders, instructions, and funding from the central government mean very little.

4) Political Economy of War

The ongoing war in Syria and the refugee crisis has not only placed an economic and political burden on Turkey, it also created a very interesting war economy in the region. The expenses incurred by AFAD total approximately \$1 billion. The AFAD accommodation centers, which are settlements as large as a medium-size district, provide everything from infrastructure, food, heating, health, to cleaning services, and even leisure activities. The Syrians housed in container cities can shop with the TL 80 deposited in their Red Crescent Card by the World Food Program (WFP) every month and can cook their own food in the tents and containers. Before this system not realized, in the tent cities with a total population of 160,000, private catering contractors (chosen by tender) were providing three meals a day. Naturally, a lot of players are included in the process from the supply of goods to distribution. In many districts, catering companies and suppliers were in fierce competition to win camp tenders.

In addition, the locals speak of members of parliament who lobby to establish camps in the provinces they represent, even where they are not needed, on the grounds that these would “revive the economy.” If these efforts, based solely on economic motives, prove successful, it is not difficult to estimate the burden they would impose on local officials and residents. All of the provinces and districts where camps have been established have obviously undertaken serious social responsibilities.

Another aspect of the problem is the presence of illegal activities to earn money from victims of war. For example, there is a new illegal business called *tehrīb* which is basically Syria-bound human trafficking. Those who used to make a living by smuggling goods such as tea and sugar have taken up *tehrīb* since bilateral trade has come to a halt.

There is also illegal trafficking between camps. The Syrians who were in tent cities for a long time but now want to move to a container city with better facilities can pay 100 to 150 TL to be transported to a very distant camp. Police take action against owners of the vehicles they intercept but these steps do not seem to be enough to deter such attempts.

The real source of the problem is the lack of a central registration system to which local camp records should be integrated. Fingerprint records are kept at almost every camp, but because these are not kept in a central system, there are refugees who are simultaneously registered at different camps and thus receive multiple WFP aid and AFAD services. This problem causes difficulties for camp officials, creates security risks, and keeps out other refugees waiting to be accepted by falsely inflating the population of the camps.

E. Unregistered Refugees

Turkey has followed an “open door” policy since the beginning of the events and has therefore unconditionally accepted all victims of war from Syria. Moreover, in addition to those who enter through the border gates an approximately equal number of people have sought shelter in the country through unofficial or unlawful means. The number of refugees who made a one-way entrance into Turkey in the last 26 months has surpassed 500,000, and an estimated 200,000 Syrians used or had to use illegal ways to enter the country with the same motive.

The fact that Syrians in Turkey are not confined to the “registered” guests staying at accommodation centers must be underlined; the volume of the one-way human trafficking between the two countries can be observed in the number of those who settled in provinces and districts after entering the country through official and unofficial ways. According to unofficial data, it is estimated that approximately 100,000 unregistered Syrians live in the Şanlıurfa, Kilis, and Gaziantep provinces in total and another 80,000 are in Hatay-Reyhanlı, which means adding a whole new district’s worth of people. This naturally puts a considerable burden on these cities. The local people are doing their best to help the refugees. There are people who host the refugees in their homes free of charge, give them priority at the hospitals or personally take great pains to collect and distribute in-kind aid.

A coordination center was opened in Gaziantep on 25 January to record unregistered refugees and thus to provide regular aid. 1,870 refugee homes were found in a registry project by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies’ Provincial Directorate staff in Kilis. Thanks to the efforts of volunteers, thousands of people who stay in these houses, mostly women and children, receive both financial and psychological support. Several families sometimes share an apartment, and there are even very small enclosed areas where 80-90 people have to live together.

The houses have very limited means, making the winter an especially difficult time for the families concerned. The high number of children under the age of 10 makes matters even harder for their parents and the local volunteers. Diapers, baby food, and medical supplies top the emergency needs list. Although attempts are made to provide aid regularly, the provision of food and other necessities by the local aid organizations and

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.....

people are sporadic due to a lack of resources. Aid organizations complain that donors are tired and have gotten used to the situation. It has become very difficult to even keep a record of the ever increasing number of refugees, let alone meet their needs. A professional system of registration and aid provision must be implemented urgently. Otherwise, it will not be surprising to see Syrian children begging/forced to beg in city centers or refugees involved in crime such as theft.

2

INTERNATIONAL LAW ON REFUGEES AND THE TURKISH LEGISLATION

A. Refugees in International Law

The Second World War was a turning point in the introduction of international law on refugees. Two significant steps were taken to deal with this refugee problem which has gradually acquired an international character. First, the UN General Assembly decided in December 1949 to establish the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which would operate under its authority. In 1950 the UNHCR acquired official status and started its work. Second, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Legal Status of Refugees, a significant document comprising of the principles and definitions in this respect, was accepted. This document made the first mention of the principle of “non-refoulement” – a norm of international law, and binding for all states, regardless of whether or not they were a party to the convention – and the definition of “refugee” as an individual. The “time limitations” and the “geographical limitations” on where the convention would be implemented, be it in Europe or elsewhere, were annulled by the 1967 New York Protocol Relating to the Legal Status of Refugees.

A “mixed status” was created for refugees in the convention based on the rights given to citizens and foreigners in a country. For example, refugees are entitled to rights to obtain property, establish a business, and to work no less than foreigners² and they have the right to an education, to apply to court, to obtain legal and social aid, and the right to a livelihood no more than the country’s own citizens.³

B. Refugee Problem in Turkey

Considered mainly a “source” and “transit” country before 2000, Turkey began to emerge as a “target” country after the significant changes it has undergone since 2000. Turkey is at present a target country for refugees due both to its close proximity to continuously unstable regions that experience high levels of emigration and to its strong economy. In addition to the refugees from the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Somalia, which Turkey has been sheltering for many years, Turkey has started to provide shelter to Syrians fleeing the civil war. More waves of immigrants and refugees are possible in the future. In this respect, an overview of the legislation relating to immigrants and refugees and the institutional infrastructure of this legislation in Turkey should be offered in order to understand the status and rights of the refugees.

.....
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2 Article 13, article 18 and article 17.

3 Article 17, article 22 and article 23.

1) Turkey's Legislation on Refugees

Turkey ratified the Geneva Convention in 1961 and the 1967 Protocol a year after it was announced, but kept the “geographical limitations” while annulling the “time limitation.” The 1994 Regulation and the 2006 Implementation Order for the Convention formed the basic documents of legislation on immigration and refuge. Due to the “geographical limitations” in both documents, Turkey only accepts foreigners from Europe as *refugees* and gives *asylum-seeker* status to those who come from outside Europe and grants them temporary residence status until they are sent to another country through the UNHCR.

According to the National Action Plan in 2005, Turkey was expected to annul the geographical limitations and to pass a comprehensive law. The Law No.6458 on Foreigners and International Protection passed in April 2013 brings changes to the issues of immigration and refuge to meet this goal. For example, international protection statuses and the rights pertaining thereof are more explicitly defined. The law brings the statuses of *refugee*, *conditional refugee*, and *secondary protection* as the three forms of international protection statuses. But these statuses are granted on personal application. The law provides for treatment to alleviate the harm caused by torture, sexual assault, or exposure to other psychological or physical violence. There are also provisions for the care, protection, and needs of unaccompanied minors. “Confidentiality” is a key principle regarding the information and documents of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection status. The new law also establishes a General Directorate of Immigration Management which will implement policies and strategies regarding immigration.

The law introduces the concept of *temporary protection* in order to deal with mass inflows of people. Those who are forced to leave their country, are unable to return and have come to or crossed Turkish borders in great numbers to find urgent and temporary shelter are given *temporary protection*. Thus, in line with EU directives, a legal basis for *temporary protection* has been established. According to the law, an act passed by the Council of Ministers is to determine the details pertaining to such people being accepted to Turkey, their accommodation, their rights and responsibilities, the procedures when they leave Turkey, measures to be taken against mass migrations, cooperation and coordination between national and international organizations and institutions, and the duties and authorities of the organizations in the center and the provinces. This new legislation is expected to bring regulations in line with EU directives and the lawful rights granted to beneficiaries of *international protection status*.

a) Syrian “Guests”: Status and Rights

Turkey is faced with the phenomenon of mass immigration from Syria. The 1994 Regulation defines this as “mass asylum.” The new law puts forth *temporary protection* to such mass movements of people. Therefore, the Syrian citizens admitted to Turkey on account of its “open door” policy have been granted *temporary protection status*.⁴ They

⁴ Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Commission.

are thus legally not granted *refugee* or *asylum seeker* status but accommodated as “guests,” whose needs are met by the Turkish Republic.⁵

The rights of the beneficiaries of *temporary protection* will be clarified by the new legislation, but these rights are expected to approximate the minimum standards brought by the July 2001 Council Directive⁶ relating to *temporary protection* and the rights granted to the beneficiaries of *international protection status* in the new law. On the other hand, the provisions in the 1994 Regulation relating to *mass asylum* will be implemented as well.

According to the Directive, member countries have to provide a residence permit to beneficiaries of *temporary protection* during their stay. They are also requested to give beneficiaries the right to employment, the ability to establish businesses, and vocational training opportunities for no longer than their protection period. In accordance with the Directive, member countries are also required to provide these people with such basic needs as appropriate shelter, food, clothing, and healthcare, meet the special needs of children, disabled, tortured, or raped individuals, and provide education to those under 18.⁷

The 1994 Regulation states that people who cross the border in large groups shall be “under the protection and supervision of the state” during their stay. This protection and supervision includes accommodation, periodical medical exams as well as employment and education services.

At present, Turkey provides emergency needs such as food, healthcare, accommodation, education, and security services as well as social activities, entertainment, vocational training, religious services, interpreting, cleaning and other services to the Syrian citizens who have been granted *temporary protection* and are staying in the camps.⁸ The settlements also include schools, mosques, shops, police, healthcare centers, playgrounds, TVs, water tanks, purification center, washing machines, public phones, tailoring, Turkish classes, fixed and portable bathrooms, garbage collection, 15 cleaning personnel for every district, pest control, chairs, stools, brooms and garbage bags for every tent, wheelchairs for the elderly and disabled, tea and coffee vendors open around the clock, hairdresser’s, and transformer and generator units.⁹ These people are neither *refugees* nor *asylum-seekers*; they have *temporary protection* status and all of their needs are met by the state as per the relevant legislation. Due to their status, they do not have the right to obtain *refugee* status or to apply to a third country for asylum as the assumption is that the Syrian victims of war will return to their homes after the war ends.¹⁰

5 Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Investigation Commission, “Inspection Report on Tent Cities where Syrian Citizens Live” http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/belge/24_Donem_1_ve_2_Yasama_Yillari_Faaliyet_Raporu.pdf sf. 86-87.

6 Council Directive.

7 Council Directive, *ibid.*

8 Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Investigation Commission, *ibid.*

9 Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Investigation Commission, *ibid.*

10 Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Commission, *ibid.*

According to Law No. 4817 about work permits for foreigners, those who have been granted a six-month residence permit can apply for a work permit – provided that they meet the necessary employment conditions – regardless of their status in Turkey. Syrian citizens who entered Turkey through legal means and requested free residence are granted residence permits by the Ministry of Interior’s Memorandum No. 27, dated 14 May 2012, provided that they can prove they are able to make a living.¹¹ Recently, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security declared that the Syrians who received residence permits in line with the legislation are also being granted work permits coterminous with their residence permits.¹²

As for education rights, all children between the ages of 6 to 14 are constitutionally obligated to receive formal schooling. In addition, the Council of Higher Education, in its general assembly on 13 September 2012, established “guest student” status at seven universities in Turkey in order to accommodate Syrian citizens as well as Turkish citizens who were receiving a university education in Syria before the war broke out. In accordance with the Memorandum, students can enroll in universities as “special students” with personal statements and without having to submit any documents only for the 2012-13 term.

The 1994 Regulation also allows the shipment of food items, clothing, medication, items of religious education and entertainment –provided that they are duly inspected – from abroad or within the country to people who have entered the country through a mass migration. One of the most interesting forms of aid is the “Red Crescent Card”, initiated by the Turkish Red Crescent under the coordination of Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) within the framework of the UN World Food Program’s (WFP) “Electronic Food Card.”¹³ Every month the WFP deposits TL 80 and Turkey deposits TL 20 into the card accounts and beneficiaries may use it to meet their basic food needs.

Finally, we must add that these beneficiaries of *temporary protection* are entitled to apply to the European Court of Human Rights concerning human rights violations. According to the European Convention on Human Rights, refoulement of people who are qualified to be refugees, even though they are not recognized as such, constitutes a breach of the Convention’s “right to life and prohibition of torture and cruel treatment” provision. The ECtHR has ruled against Turkey in similar cases before.

2) Recommendations

When the new law becomes effective, a well-rounded *refugee, asylum-seeker, and temporary protection regime* is expected. The Board of Immigration Policies outlined by the law is an important development and will be responsible for preparing strategy documents

11 Written Question 7/10930, answered by Interior Minister İdris Naim Şahin, <http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/7/7-10930sgc.pdf> (22.04.2013).

12 Ministry of Labor and Social Security, “Granting Work Permit for citizens of the Syrian Arab Republic”, <http://www.csgb.gov.tr/csgbPortal/yabancilar.portal?page=duyurular> (22.04.2013).

13 Electronic Food Card Programme., <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp256685.pdf> (22.04.2013).

as well as program and implementation documents, determining methods and measures in the event of mass immigration, and implementing Turkey's immigration policies and strategies.

A legal framework will be built to determine long-term strategies and policies and to effectively cope with crisis-creating, sudden waves of immigration. In addition to passing laws and establishing official bodies, the official structure must also be flexible and agile enough to respond to problems effectively and accurately. Therefore, in order to minimize discrimination in application, the rights of beneficiaries of *temporary protection* status must be clarified first. Turkey's coping strategy with mass immigration from Syria and the continuously provided services are remarkable. The services provided to beneficiaries of *temporary protection* are well above the present standards—a positive development for Turkey.

On the other hand, there are also some problems. The first problem to be noted is the sustainability of these services. The fact that the rights of those under *temporary protection* are not at present clearly defined makes this problem even more challenging. Secondly, a possible social/demographic integration attempt along with rights and services can cause certain problems in the future since beneficiaries of protection are defined as “temporary” and “guests.”

Finally, even though these people are under *temporary protection*, allowing those qualified to work access to the employment market would benefit Turkey and enable those people to sustain a living.

3 FIELDWORK FINDINGS

Hundreds of thousands of victims of war have been trying to cope with very difficult conditions for over two years.

The Syrians who were able to reach the camps in Turkey are relatively more fortunate than their fellow citizens who went to Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon instead; it is a well-known fact that the camps in Turkey offer better physical and social facilities than in the above-mentioned countries.

Almost all of the registered refugees in Turkey are placed in camps called “AFAD Accommodation Center.” These camps provide a wide array of services from security to food, from psychological counseling to overcome war trauma to emergency medical services, even to the education of Syrian children. These services have both displayed Turkey’s sensitivity about humanitarian aid and drawn the attention and praise of the international community.

This section includes the results of the fieldwork conducted to evaluate Syrians’ perceptions of the war and of Turkey. The report offers original data about the camps in Turkey, the war, and Syria’s future, and thus presents a sociological photograph of what is happening in the region.

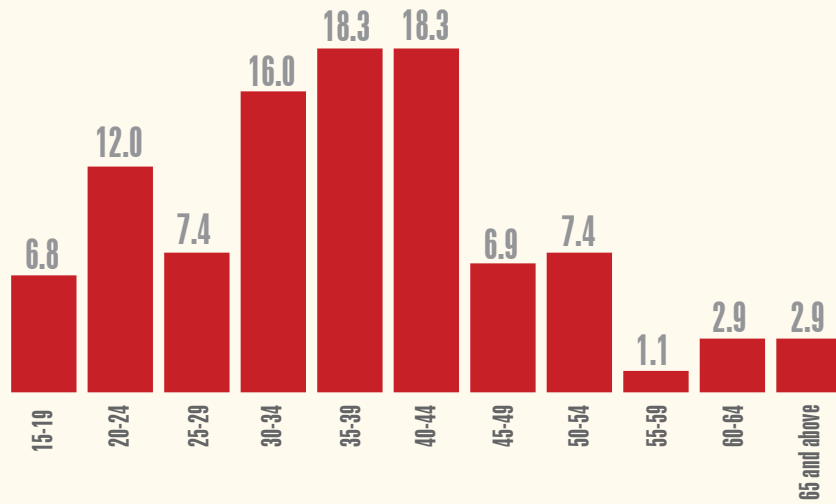
The survey results first describe the subjects’ age, gender, level of education, occupation and financial status and then offer demographic analyses of the camps they reside in, their entrance date, and the cities they came from. The following sections are comprised of data regarding how the Syrians learned about the camps in Turkey, how they decided to flee their country, and with whom they have sought asylum.

In order to evaluate the refugees’ level of satisfaction with the camps, from the survey investigates “what they are most satisfied with” to “what they feel is lacking.” Questions about what they expect regarding the future of the war and of Syria, as well as what they requested from Turkey and the international community were also directed towards the refugees.

The study aims to present an outlook on the civil war, international actors, and Turkey from the perspective of the Syrian victims of war, whose numbers are increasing daily. Questions were asked to camp residents whilst also bearing in mind the negative psychological toll that an augmented and uncertain refugeehood has taken on these people; and the answers were analyzed in the light of in-depth interviews. We hope that this work contributes to a better understanding of the Syrian Crisis, which has put both the countries in the region and the global public through a tough humanitarian test.

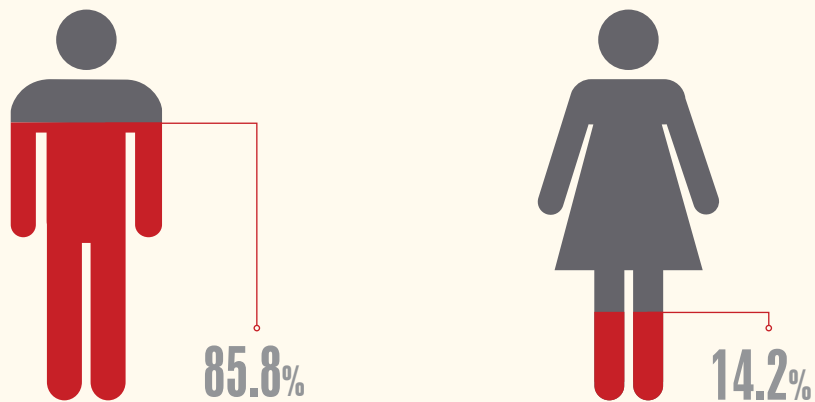
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Graph 01. AGE DISTRIBUTION



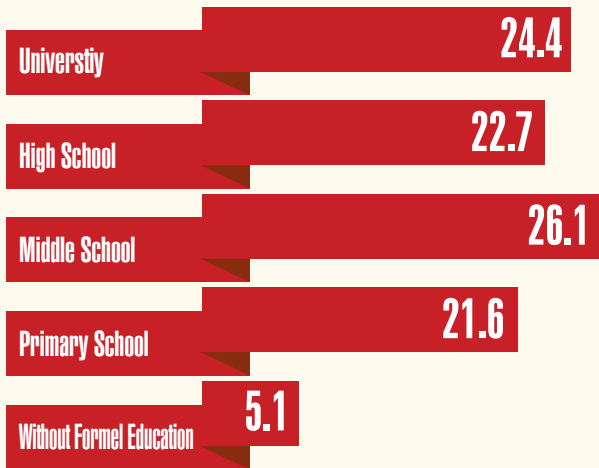
The median age of the participants is 36.2. Of those who participated in the survey, 6.8% are aged 15 to 19, whereas the percentage of those aged 65 and above is 2.9%. The population of participants aged 35-44 represent 36.6% of the sample.

Graph 02. GENDER DISTRIBUTION



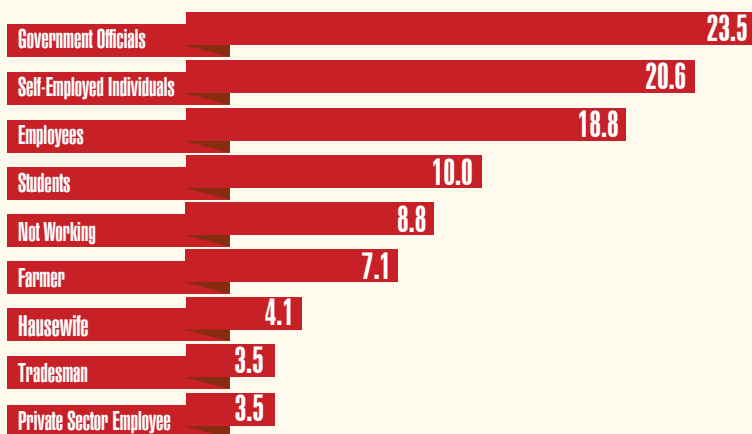
Women constitute 14.2% and men 85.8% of survey participants. Women hesitate to participate in such surveys due to both Syrian culture society and the psychological tension created by the war.

Graph 03. LEVEL OF EDUCATION



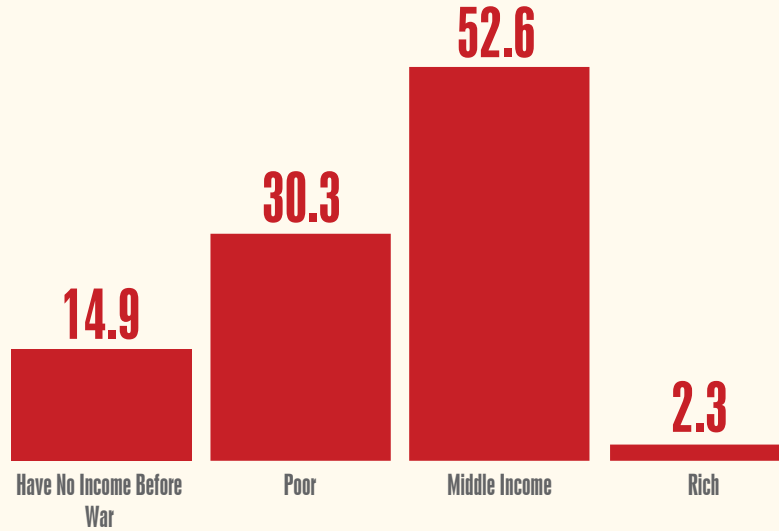
An analysis of the Syrian refugees' education levels reveals a relatively even distribution at each level. The rate of primary school graduates is 21.6%, that of middle school is around 26.1%, and high school and university are 22.7% and 24.4%, respectively. Those without any formal education comprise 5.1% of the participants.

Graph 04. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS



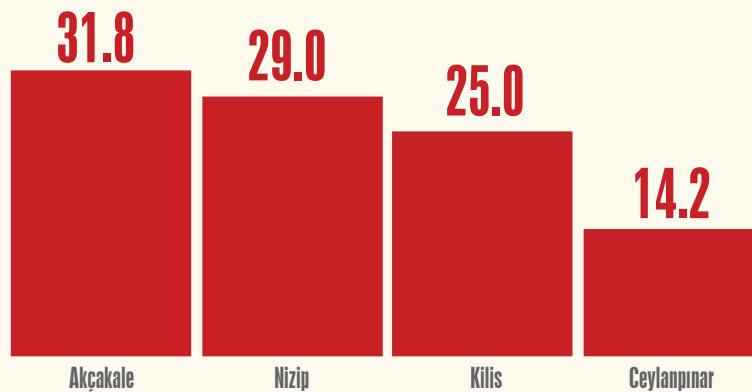
When we look at the occupational distribution of Syrian refugees, we observe that the largest proportion (23.5%) were employed as government officers. This number is followed by self-employed individuals (20.6%) and then by employees (18.8%), and students (10%).

Graph 05. ECONOMIC STATUS BEFORE IMMIGRATION



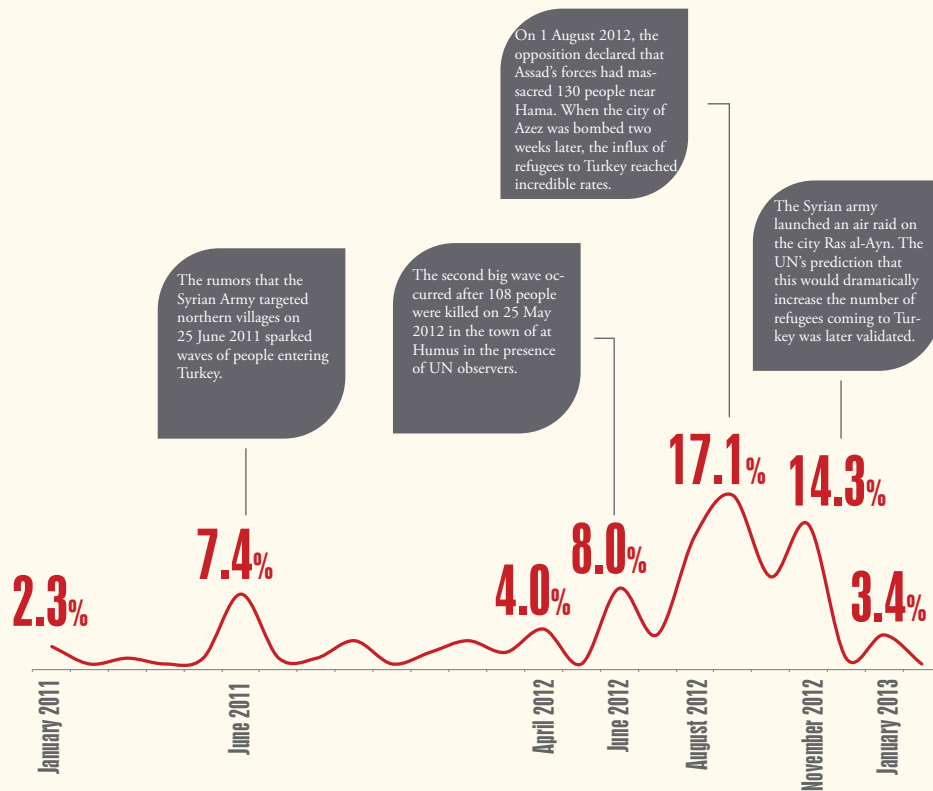
When the refugees were inquired about their economic status, 14.9% replied that they did not have any income before the war, 30.3% replied that they were poor, 52.6% replied that they were of middle income, and 2.3% replied that they were rich. As the results suggest, those who emigrated due their dissatisfaction with the regime were usually members of the middle class. The low percentage of those who defined themselves as rich can be explained as follows: (1) either the affluent groups close to the regime did not flee the country, or (2) the rich Syrians who took refuge in Turkey preferred to rent apartments in such cities as Şanlıurfa, Hatay, or Gaziantep rather than stay staying at camps. In fact, some of the participants reported that their financially well-off relatives settled in İstanbul.

Graph 06. PARTICIPANTS' DISTRIBUTION AMONG CAMPS



The survey was conducted in the four provinces close to the Syrian border hosting the highest number of refugees. The number of registered refugees in Turkey was 192,770 as of May. The number of refugees in Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Kilis, and Hatay where the survey was conducted is 149,387. This figure constitutes 78% of the total number of refugees. The rates of participation in the survey are 31.8% in the camp at Akçakale, 29% in Nizip, 25% in Kilis, and 14.2% in Ceylanpınar.

Graph 07. ENTRANCE DATE



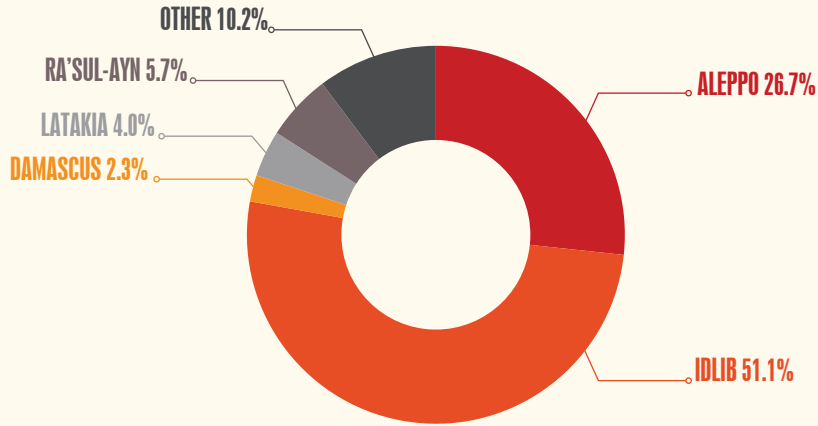
The magnitude of the chaos in Syrian side directly influences the movement at the border. The first group of Syrian refugees consisting of 252 people entered Turkey in April 2011 from Hatay's Yayladağı border gate. The number of entrees increased after Ankara declared its "open door" policy. At certain periods of time, the flow at the border gates is directly proportional to the heat of the war and losses on the other side of the border. The clashes at the town of Jisr ash-Shughur in Idlib in June 2011 triggered the first big wave of immigrants. After 120 police officers were killed in the town on 10 June, Assad's forces surrounded the city with 15,000 soldiers and took control within two days. Four days later, the towns of Abu Kamal, Han Seyhun, and Ma'arat el-Numan along the Iraqi border were besieged, and the residents of those towns took refuge in Turkey. The rumors that the Syrian Army targeted northern villages on 25 June 2011 sparked waves of people entering Turkey.

The second big wave occurred after 108 people were killed on 25 May 2012 in the town of at Humus in the presence of UN observers. After the incident, UN Special Envoy Kofi Annan went to Damascus in order to support the Peace Plan. This development, however, did not soothe the panic of the locals.

On 1 August 2012, the opposition declared that Assad's forces had massacred 130 people near Hama. Following the incident, Annan announced his resignation from the post of Special Envoy, as if to demonstrate the impossibility of peace. This undoubtedly increased people's fears and anxieties. When the city of Azez was bombed two weeks later, the influx of refugees to Turkey reached incredible rates.

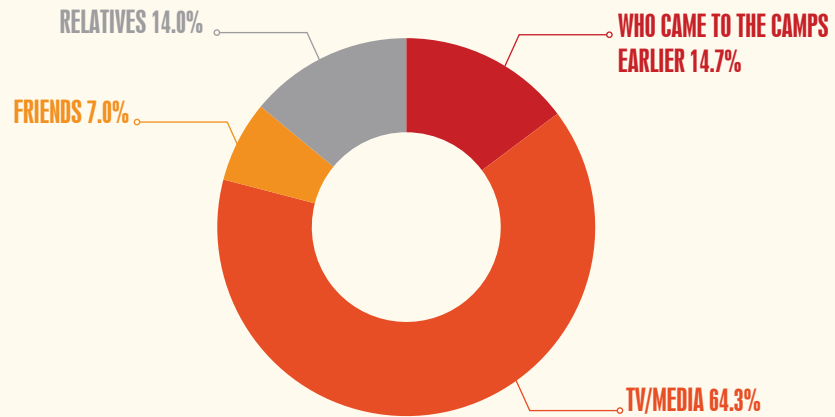
November 2012 was a busy period as well. The Syrian army launched an air raid on the city Ras al-Ayn. A mortar shell hit Şanlıurfa's Ceylanpınar district in Turkey during the raid. The UN's prediction that this would dramatically increase the number of refugees coming to Turkey was later validated.

Graph 08. THE CITIES THEY CAME FROM (SOURCE CITIES)



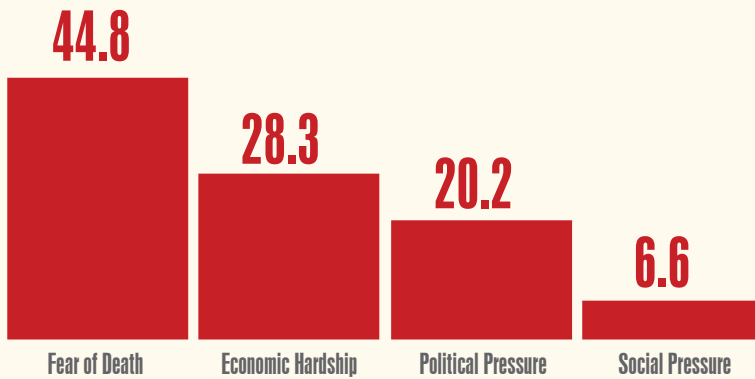
Of the refugees who participated in the survey, 51.1% had come from Idlib, 26.7% from Aleppo, 5.7% from Ras'al-Ayn, 4% from Latakia, and 2.3% from Damascus. The percentage of those who came from other cities such as Rakka, Deir ez-Zor, Hama, and Homs is 10.2%. These results demonstrate that the people who took refuge in Turkey did not only come from the regions close to the border but from all over the country, from along the line of clashes to Damascus in Southern Syria.

Graph 09. HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE CAMPS IN TURKEY?



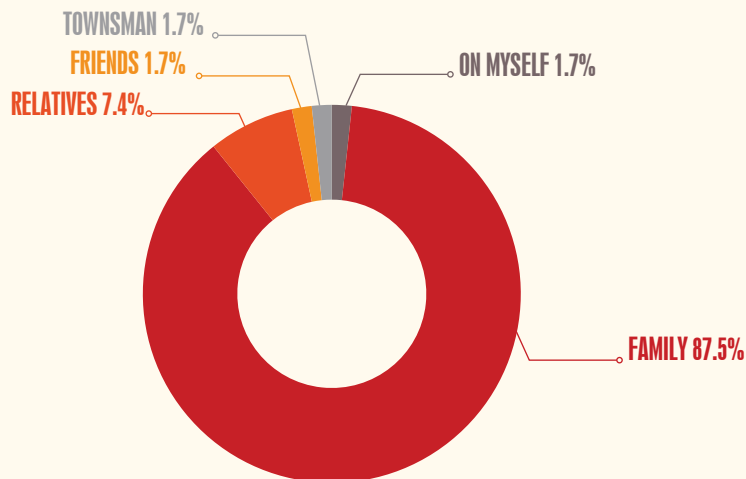
64.3% of the Syrians who fled clash zones and took refuge in Turkey learned about the camps through the media. One of the most important factors contributing to the great number of people who learned through the media was the international Al Jazeera TV channel, which was closely followed by Syrian opponents as well. The other ways through which they learned about the camps following "the media" were those "who came to the camps earlier" with a rate of 14.7%, and "friends" with 7% respectively.

Graph 10. WHAT IS YOUR MAIN REASON FOR IMMIGRATION?



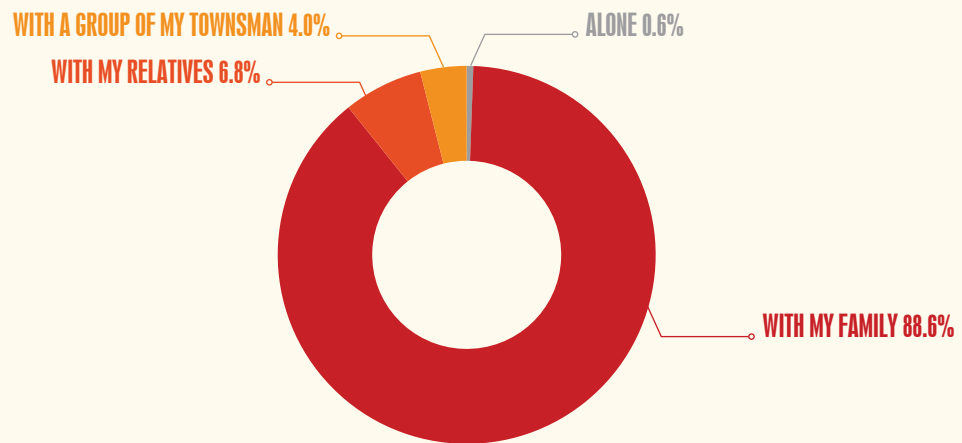
44.8% of refugees immigrated out of fear for their lives, 28.3% due to economic hardship, 20.2% due political pressure, and 6.6% due to social pressure. Approximately 70% of responders cited fear for their lives, political, and social pressure as the reasons for emigrating. The number of those who immigrated due to economic hardship is remarkable as well.

Graph 11. HOW DID YOU MAKE THE DECISION TO IMMIGRATE?



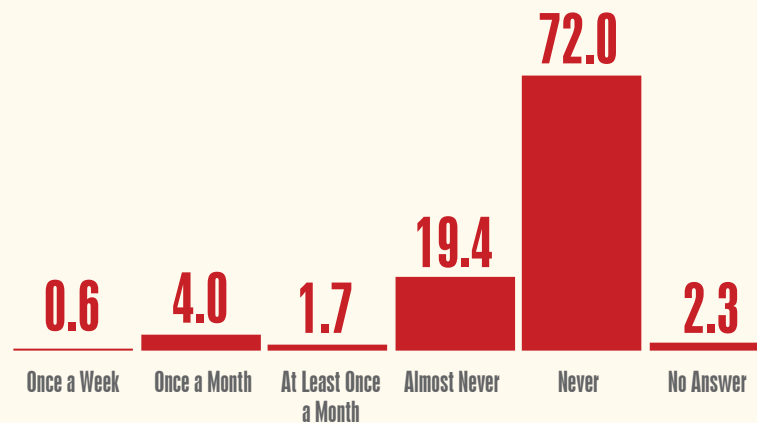
Leaving their country to immigrate to camps in another country is a crucial decision for Syrian refugees. 87.5% of the refugees in Turkey took this decision with their families. The rate of those who took the decision to flee the country with other relatives is 7.4%. Those who decided alone constitute only 1.7%.

Graph 12. WITH WHOM DID YOU IMMIGRATE?



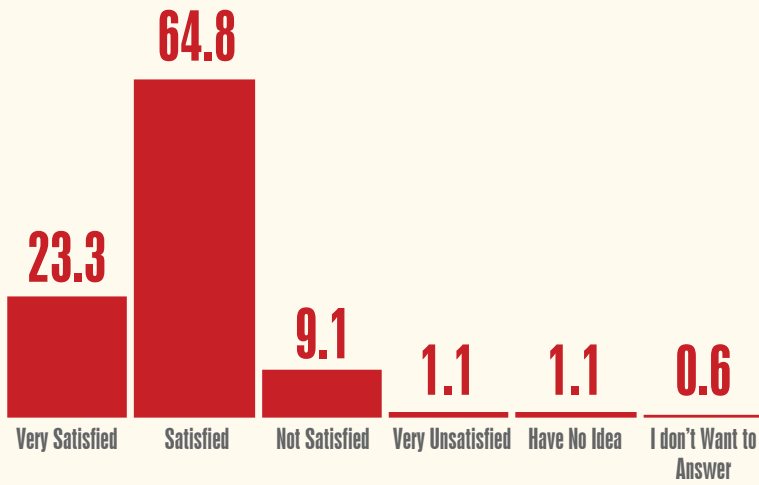
The overwhelming majority of Syrians (88.6%) fled the country with their families. The rate of those who fled the country with close relatives is 6.8%, and the rate of those who fled with a group of people from the same city is 4%. Those who have taken this journey alone constitute a negligible percentage.

Graph 13. HOW OFTEN DO YOU GO BACK TO SYRIA?



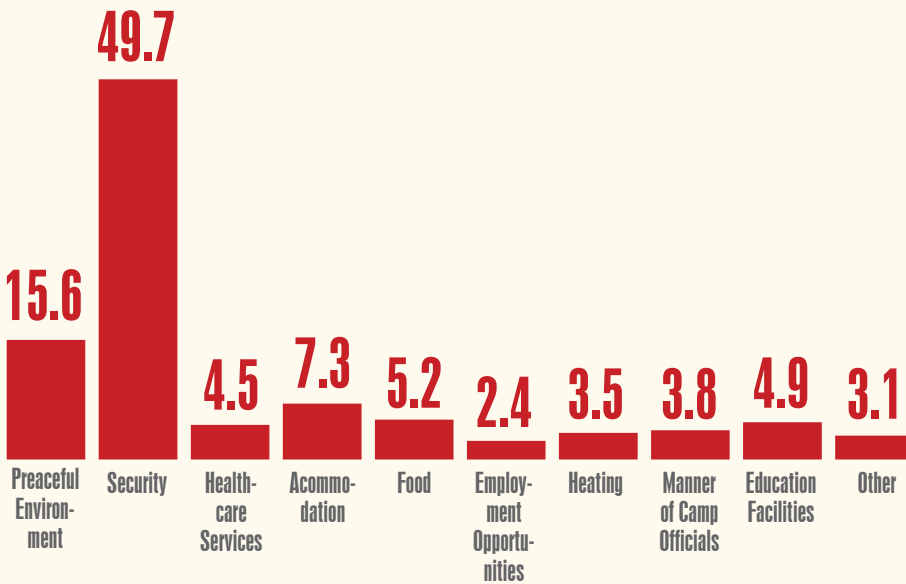
72% of the refugees who fled the clashes in Syria and took shelter in Turkey never went back to Syria since they arrived at the camps. A total of 91.4% do not keep an active link with Syria by traveling back and forth. Bearing in mind that 48% of the camps' residents are men, the claims that most of these people travel between Syria and Turkey to fight in the war do not reflect the truth.

Graph 14. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICES AT YOUR CAMP?



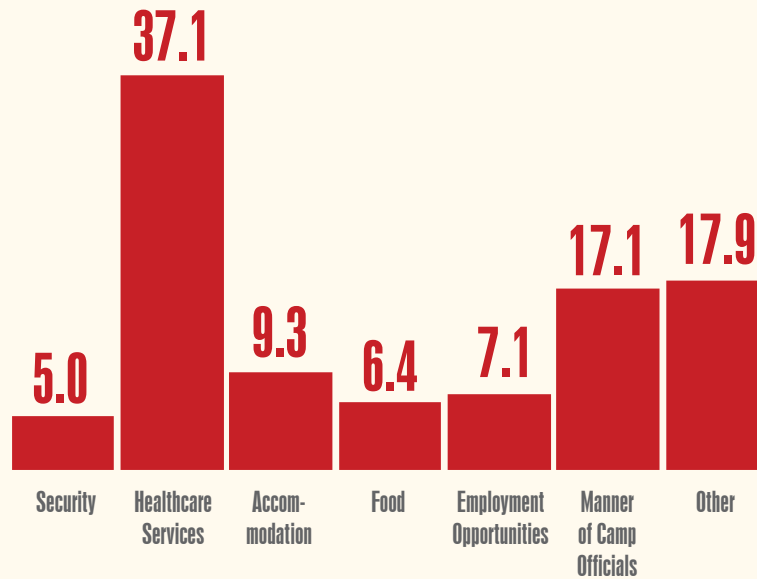
The Syrian refugees at the camps are generally satisfied with the services at the camps. The percentage of those who say they are “very satisfied” or “satisfied” amount to 88.1% in total. On the other hand, those who say they are “not satisfied” constitute 9.1%, and those who say they are “very unsatisfied” constitute only 1.1%.

Graph 15. WHAT IS THE FACILITY THAT YOU ARE MOST SATISFIED WITH AT THE CAMP?



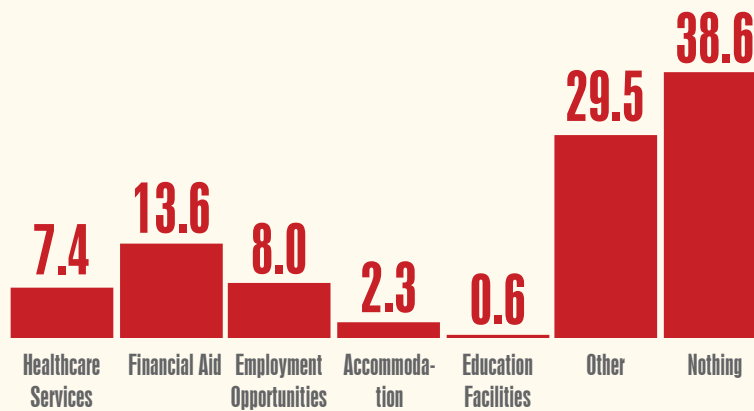
When it comes to evaluating which camp facilities the Syrian refugees were most satisfied with, security garnered a rate of 49.7% – making it the most frequent answer. The percentage of those who chose the peaceful environment of the camps is 15.6%. Those who were most satisfied with the accommodation comprised 7.3%. Food was the favorite for 5.2% of respondents, and the camps’ education facilities for 4.9%.

Graph 16. WHAT IS THE FACILITY THAT YOU ARE MOST UNSATISFIED WITH AT THE CAMP?



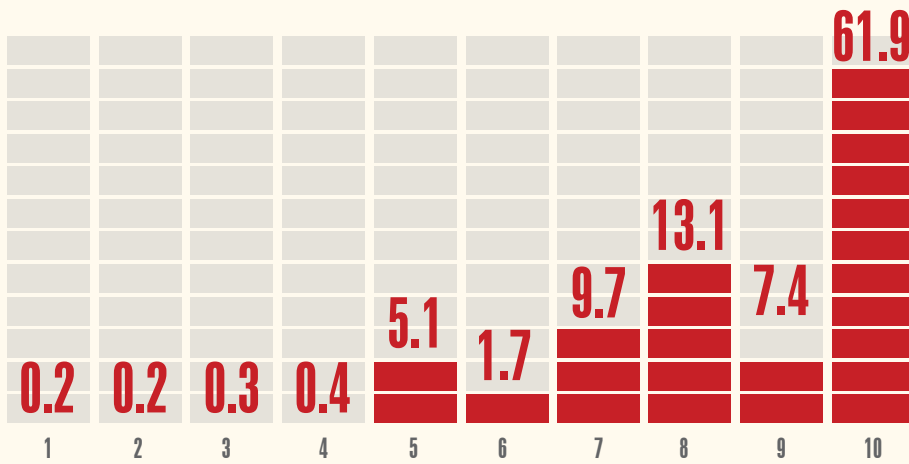
Healthcare services constitute the facility that the refugees are most dissatisfied with at the camp. 37.1% of the refugees said they were not satisfied with healthcare services whereas 17.1% said they were not satisfied with the behavior of the workers.

Graph 17. WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS LACKING AT THE CAMP?



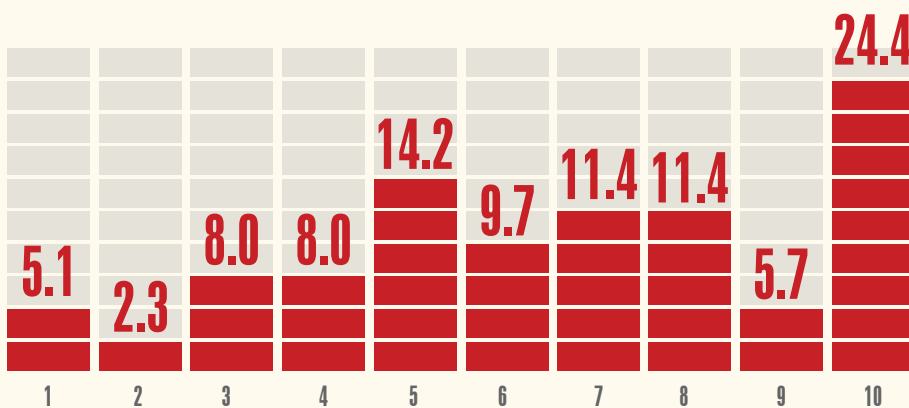
When asked what is lacking in the camps, Syrian refugees indicated at the lack of financial aid. The lack of employment opportunities comes in second with a rate of 8%. The refugees stated that their most basic needs are met at the camps but as the situation in Syria continues, their need for extra goods and services grows.

Graph 18. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE SECURITY AT THE CAMPS?



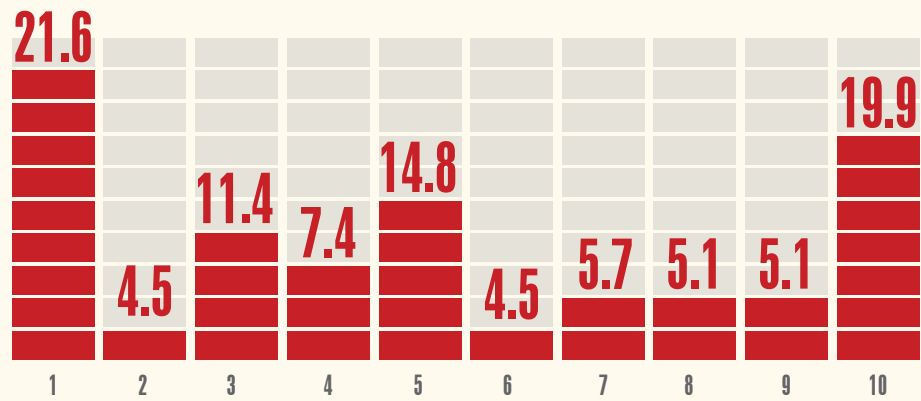
The refugees were asked to rate certain services from 1-10 (one being the lowest) as part of an evaluation of the services offered at the camps. The security of the camps received a score of 8.97. This score shows that the refugees are highly satisfied with the camps' security services.

Graph 19. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE HELP PROVIDED BY THE OFFICIALS AT THE CAMP?



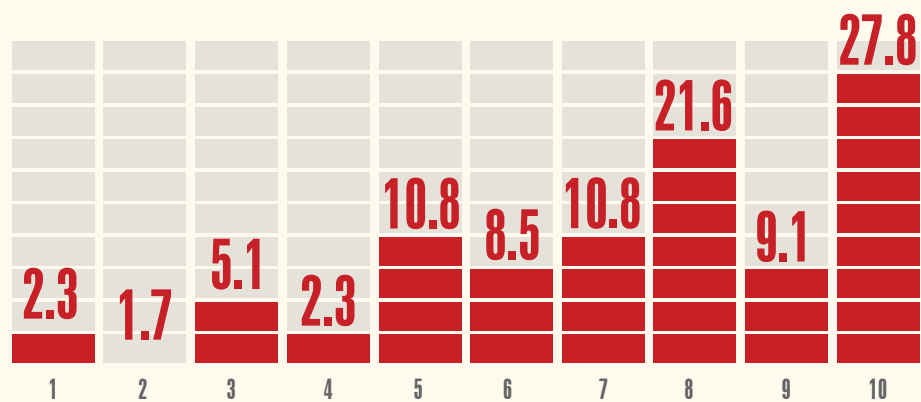
The help provided by officers at the camps reached an average score of 6.6 in a scale of 1 to 10. The officers stated that in addition to basic needs, the refugees made some requests that would exceed the limits of their capacities/capabilities, and that the services provided were of as high quality as possible under the present conditions.

Graph 20. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE HEALTHCARE SERVICES AT THE CAMPS?



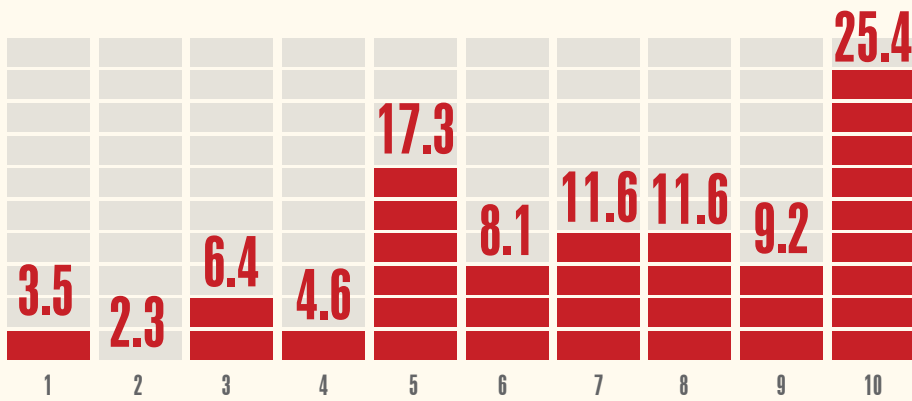
Healthcare made the top of the list of services that the Syrian refugees at the camps were most dissatisfied with. The rate of those who had negative feelings about the healthcare services they received is quite high when compared to the scores of other services. The percentage of those who gave healthcare services the lowest score is 21.6, whereas the percentage of those who gave it the highest score is 19.9. The mean score given to healthcare services is 5.21.

Graph 21. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES AT THE CAMPS?



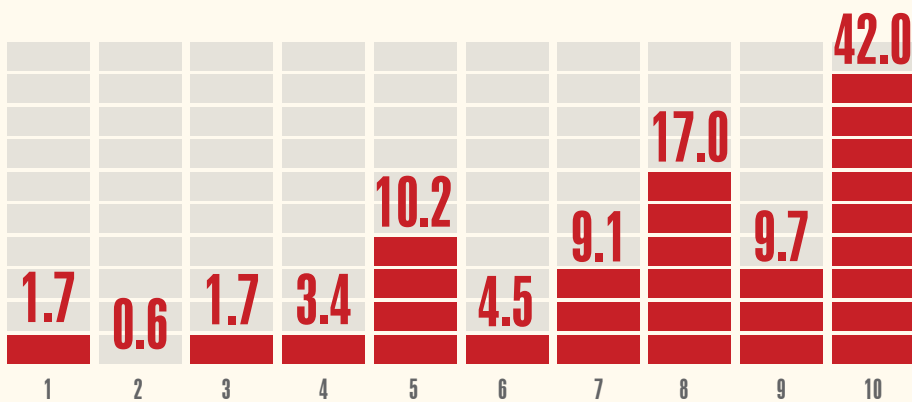
The refugees' evaluation of the accommodation facilities at the camps is quite positive. The common theme in all of the interviews is the happiness they express with the warm housing especially during the winter. The high scores given to accommodation facilities can be interpreted as a sign of satisfaction. The accommodation facilities have achieved a mean score of 7.44.

Graph 22. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOOD SERVICES AT THE CAMPS?



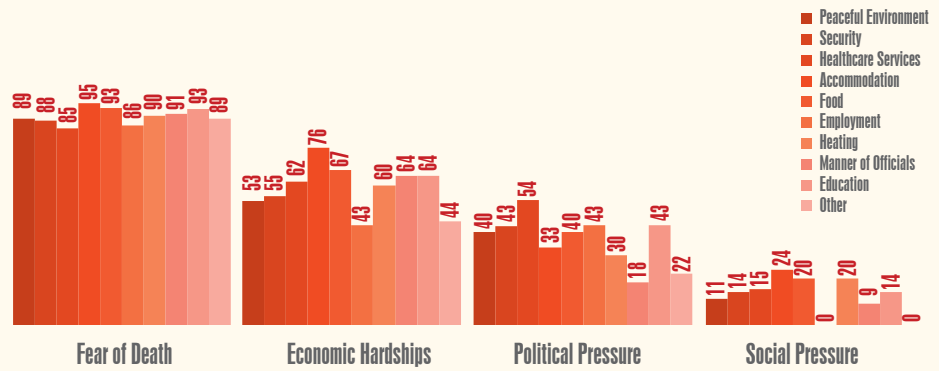
The mean score given to food services at the camps is 6.92.

Graph 23. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LOCAL PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOU?



The refugees who are in contact with the local people living in the cities and towns close to AFAD camps have a very positive view of the locals' attitude towards them. The mean score given to the local people's attitude towards them is 8.07.

Graph 24. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN REASON FOR FLEEING THE COUNTRY AND SATISFACTION



There is a meaningful correlation between the refugees' level of satisfaction and their reasons for immigration. While the level of satisfaction of those who immigrated due to fear for their lives is quite high, the level of satisfaction of those who immigrated due to economic hardships, political pressure, and social pressure is lower. We may expect this level to get even lower the longer they stay at the camps.

Graph 25. CAN YOU MEET WITH YOUR RELATIVES AT OTHER CAMPS?



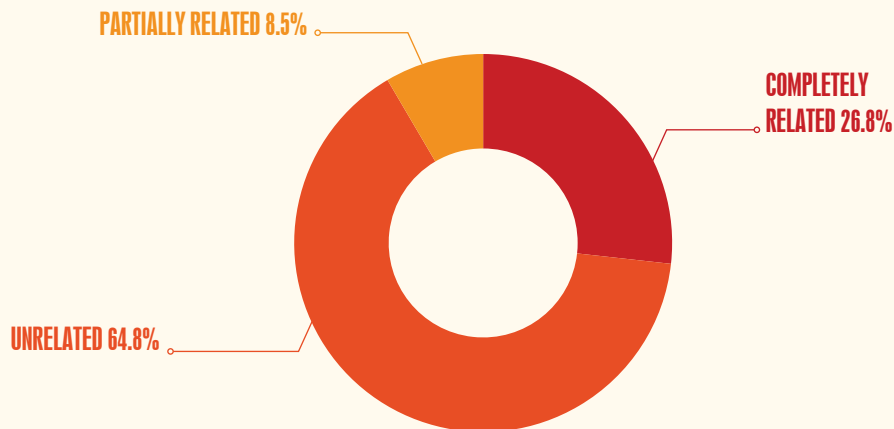
One of the most important hardships the refugees have to deal with is the distance between them and their relatives and neighbors because they left their countries at different times. 42% of the refugees in Turkey stated that they were able to see their relatives at other camps. A very high 58%, on the other hand, said that they did not have the opportunity.

Graph 26. DO YOU HAVE DUTIES IN THE CAMP?



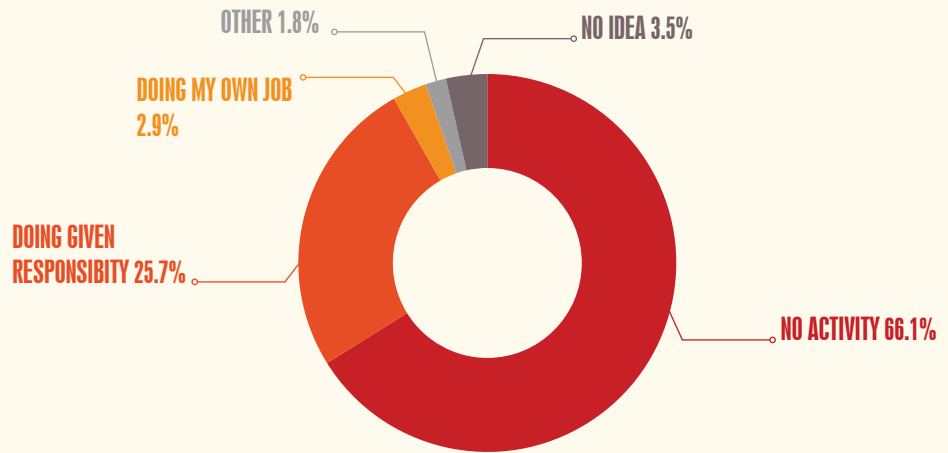
The rate of those who have a responsibility to help with camp services is 27.6%. It is important for refugees who are traumatized by the war and refugeehood or who might possibly be traumatized due to long-term unemployment or loss of social status to at least play a role in running of the camps so that they can return to a normal life. However, 72.4% of the refugees at the camps express that they are completely “redundant” with no responsibilities and no opportunities for “self-realization.” Most of the refugees complain of not having work permits. Providing temporary permits to qualified refugees, especially in medical services only given to Syrian refugees, would benefit both those who provide these services and those who receive them, as well as partially relieving the Turkish staff working at the camps of their workload.

Graph 27. IS YOUR POST AT THE CAMP RELATED TO YOUR PROFESSION?



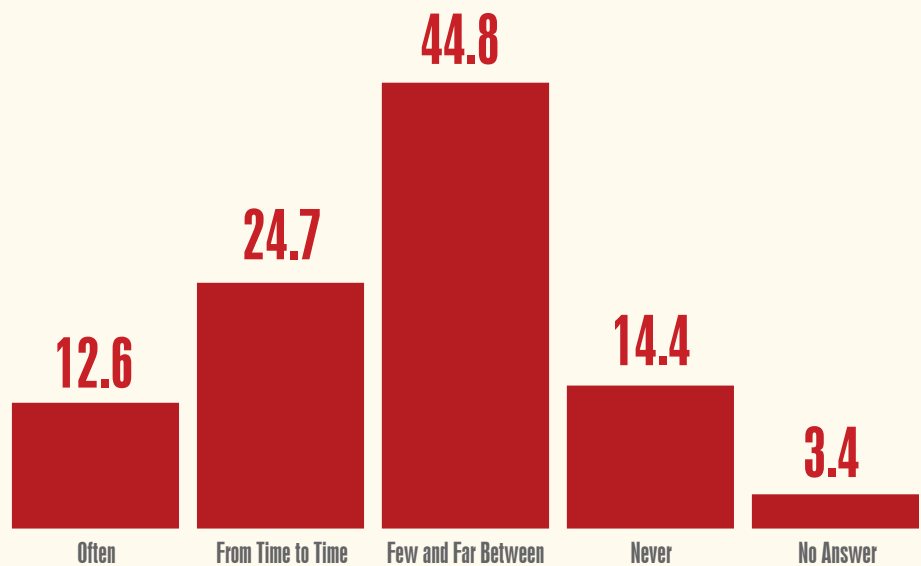
The refugees who work at the camps state that they both make a difference in their lives and are of benefit to the other people at the camps. It is crucial for the refugees to work at the camps they live in for them to overcome the psychology of war. 35.3% of the 27.6% who work at the camps stated that their post is partially or completely related to their former professions. The percentage of those who stated that their post is unrelated to their profession is 64.8%.

Graph 28. WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT DAILY ACTIVITY AT THE CAMP?



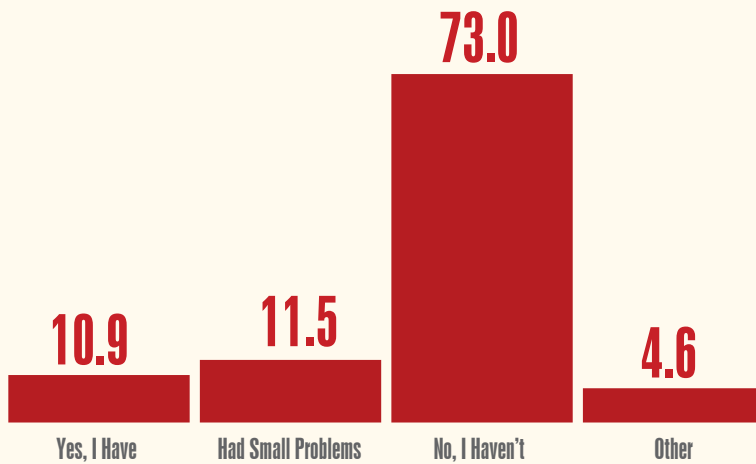
Of the refugees who stay at the camps in Turkey, 66.1% stated that they have no daily activity, whereas 25.7% said they only do whatever responsibility is given to them.

Graph 29. HOW OFTEN DO YOU LEAVE THE CAMP?



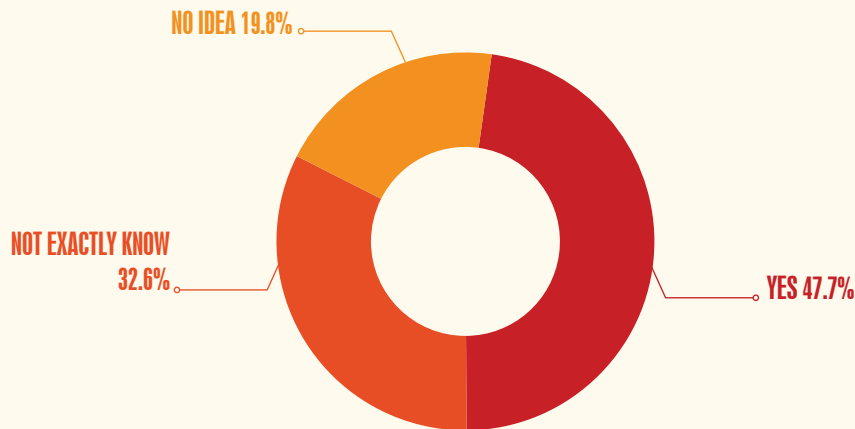
44.8% of the refugees at the camps stated that they rarely go out of the camp, whereas 24.7% said they sometimes go out. The rate of those who stated that they never leave the camp is 14.4%. Based on our observations during the interviews, refugees do not need to leave the camps because all of their basic needs are already met.

Graph 30. HAVE YOU HAD ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE OTHER SYRIANS STAYING AT THE CAMP?



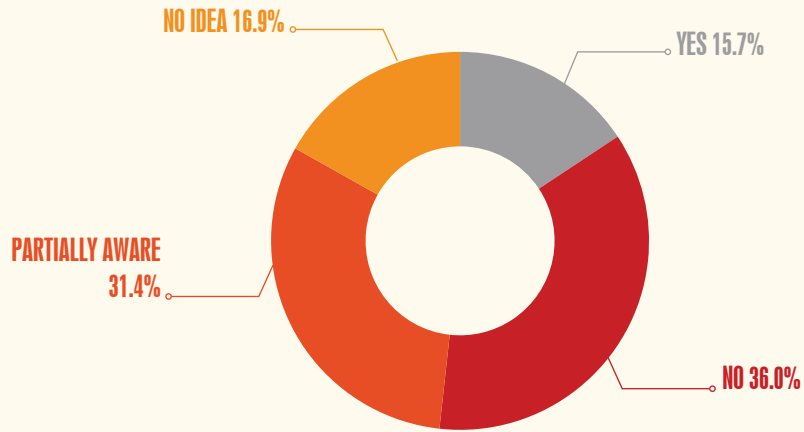
Syria's diverse ethnic and sectarian structure could possibly lead to problems when the refugees who fled the clashes in different cities now have to stay at the same camps. The Syrian refugees were thus asked whether they experienced any problems with the other Syrians at the camps or not. A significant 73% said that they had not had any problems with their fellow Syrians, whereas 11.5% said they had had small problems. The percentage of those who reported having serious problems is 10.9%.

Graph 31. DO YOU KNOW YOUR LEGAL STATUS IN TURKEY?



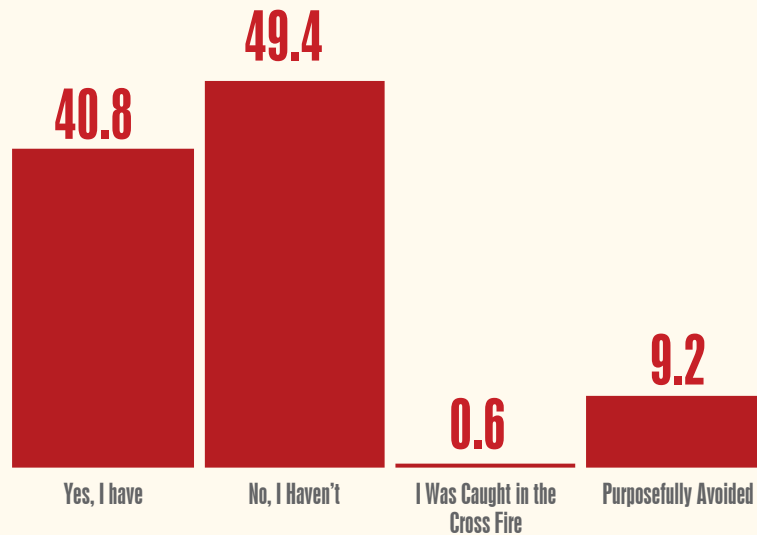
47.7% of the refugees stated that they know their legal status in Turkey. The rate of those who stated that they do not exactly know their legal status is 32.6%. 19.8% did not respond.

Graph 32. ARE YOU AWARE OF THE RIGHTS YOUR GUEST STATUS GRANTS YOU?



Of those who know their legal status in Turkey, 15.7% are aware of the rights this status grants them and 31.4% are partially aware. 36% stated that they were not aware of their rights.

Graph 33. HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE CLASHES IN YOUR COUNTRY?



One can observe that a significant number of Syrians who took shelter in Turkey had participated in the clashes in their country – 40.8%. Those who stated that they had not participated comprised 49.4%. The remaining 9.2% stated that they purposefully avoided the clashes.

Graph 34. HAVE YOU LOST A RELATIVE IN THE WAR?



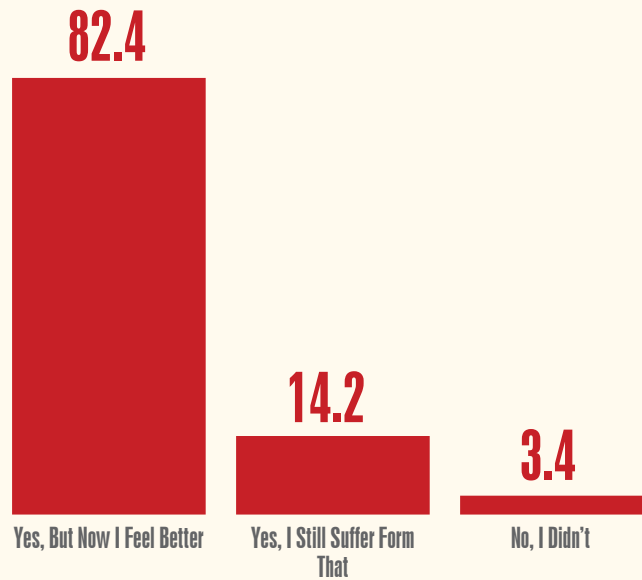
At 95.1% the percentage of refugees in Turkey who had lost a relative in the clashes in Syria was very high. The rate of those who did not lose any relatives in the war is only 4.9%.

Graph 35. WHO DID YOU LOSE IN THE WAR?



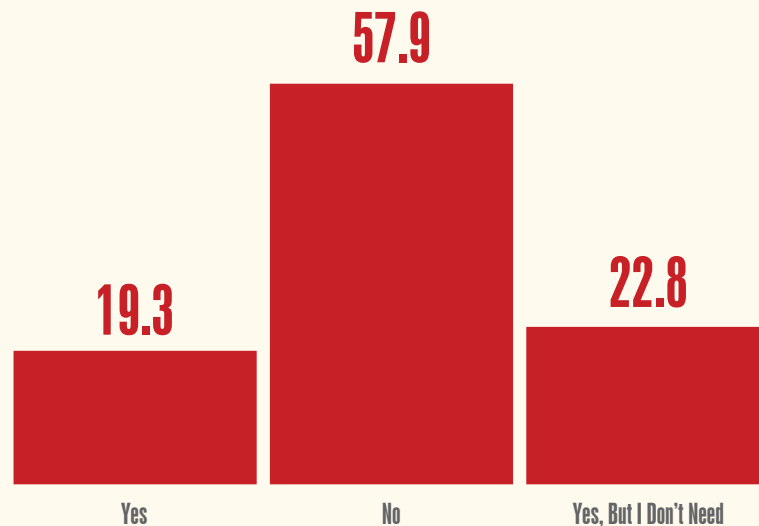
Of the 95.1% who lost someone in the war, 26% lost a member of their immediate family, 40.3% lost a close relative, and 33.7% lost a friend.

Graph 36. HAVE YOU SUFFERED FROM ANY MENTAL DISORDER OR FEAR DUE TO THE WAR?



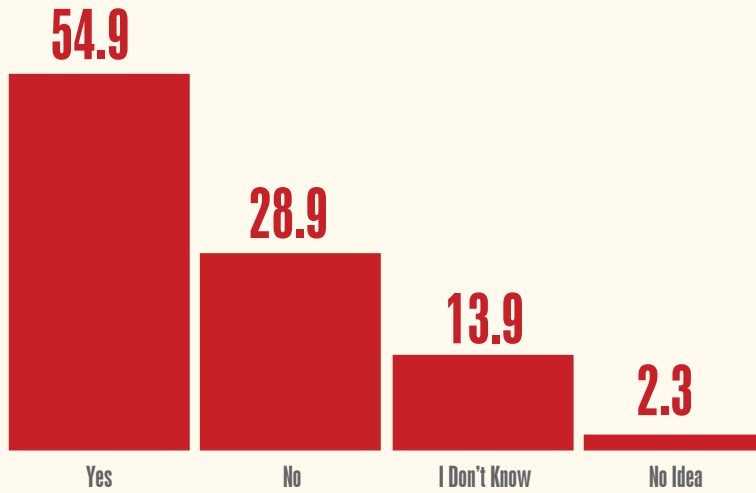
A great majority stated that they suffered from a psychological illness/disorder or strong fear due to the civil war in Syria. 82.4% of the refugees in the camps in Turkey stated that they suffered from a very strong fear due to the clashes but are fine now. The rate of those who say that they still have not overcome the psychological trauma is 14.2%. The rate of those who state that they did not suffer from any psychological illness or serious fear is only 3.4%.

Graph 37. ARE YOU RECEIVING PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AT THE CAMP?



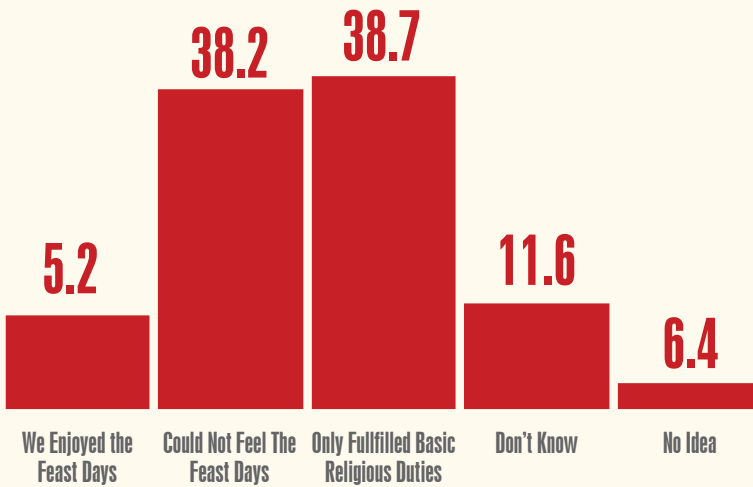
19.3% of the refugees in Turkey have received psychological support to overcome the trauma. 22.8% stated that they were offered psychological support but did not need it. The percentage of refugees who reported not receiving psychological support was 57.9%.

Graph 38. ARE THERE ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AT THE CAMP?



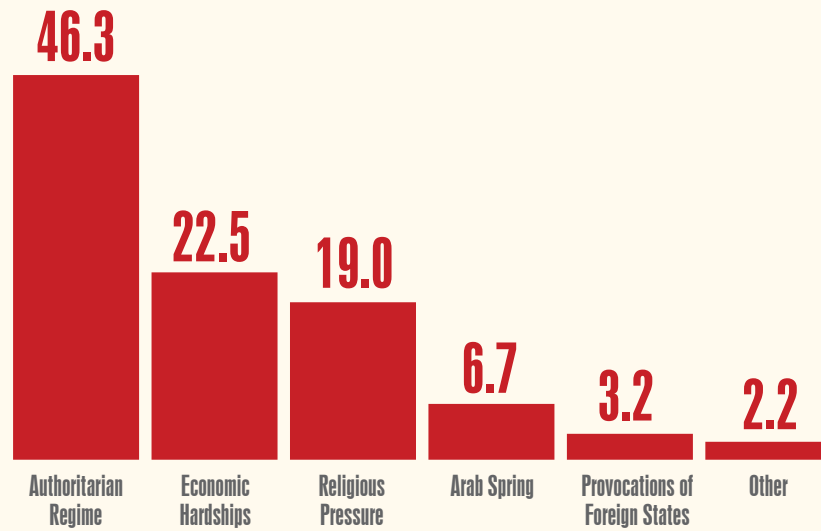
Children are undoubtedly influenced the most by war. One of the most important services that the children at the camps need is psychological support to overcome war trauma and to deal with their present conditions. The parents stated that 54.9% of the children at the camps received psychological rehabilitation services.

Graph 39. WHAT DO YOU DO ON HOLIDAYS?



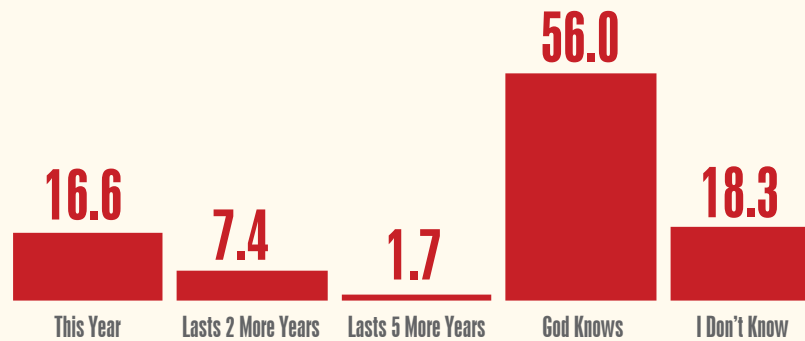
38.2% of the refugees at the camps in Turkey stated that they could not feel the spirit of the holidays, whereas 38.7% stated that they only fulfilled their basic religious duties. The answers to this question, which was asked to evaluate the psychological atmosphere and level of normalization at the camps, are worth consideration. Based on the evaluations of physical conditions, we may see a normalized everyday life but a deeper look into the psychology of the refugees suggests that normalization will not be an easy process.

Graph 40. WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE MAIN REASON BEHIND THE UPRISING IN SYRIA?



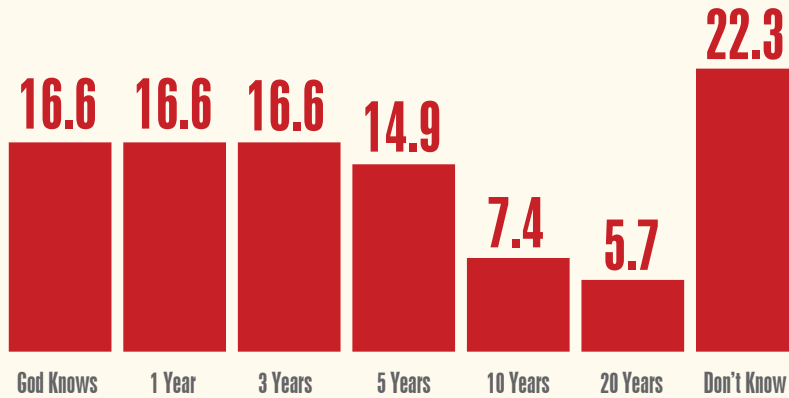
46.3% of the refugees see the pressure of an authoritarian regime as the main reason which caused the uprising in Syria, whereas 22.5% point out economic problems and 19% religious pressure as the main reason. Only 6.7% saw the “Arab Spring” among the reasons which caused the uprising.

Graph 41. WHEN DO YOU THINK THE WAR WILL END?



The refugees in Turkey feel uncertain about the future of the war. The percentage of those who believe the war will end in the distant future or reply “God knows” amounts to 56%. 16.6% imagine that the war will be over before the end of this year.

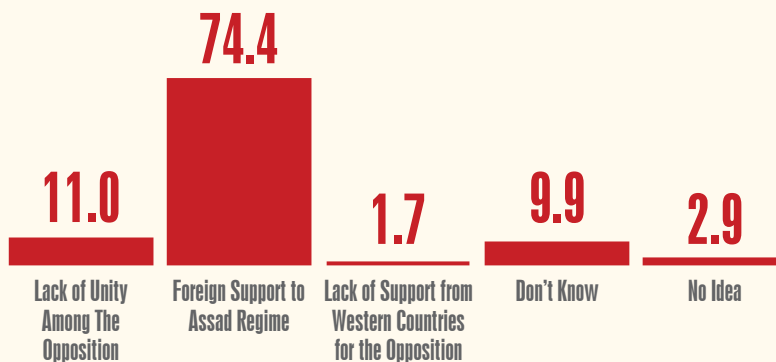
Graph 42. HOW MANY YEARS DO YOU THINK IT WILL TAKE FOR YOUR COUNTRY TO RESTABILIZE?



22.3% replied that they did not have any idea how long it would take for their country to re-stabilize after the war, 16.6% answered “God knows”, 16.6% estimated that it would take one year, 16.6% estimated that it would take three years, and 14.9% predicted it would take five years.

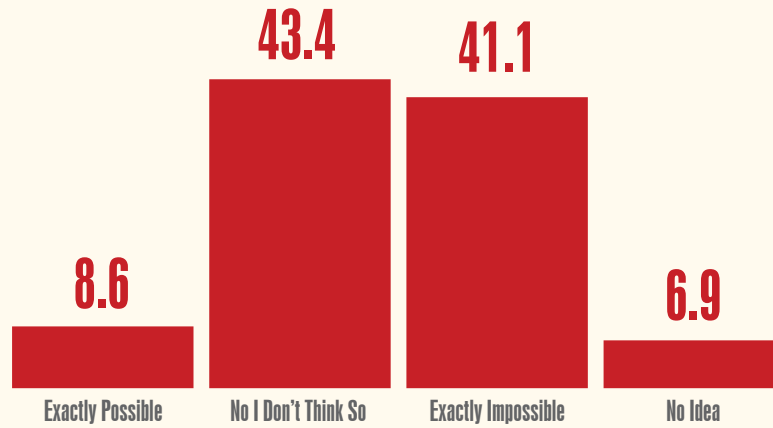
An evaluation of the results presents the following picture: Even though the refugees are overall hopeless about the end of the war, they are very eager and enthusiastic about rebuilding their country once it is over. This enthusiasm was clearly visible in the in-depth interviews conducted with the refugees.

Graph 43. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE REASON WHY THE REGIME HAS NOT FALLEN YET?



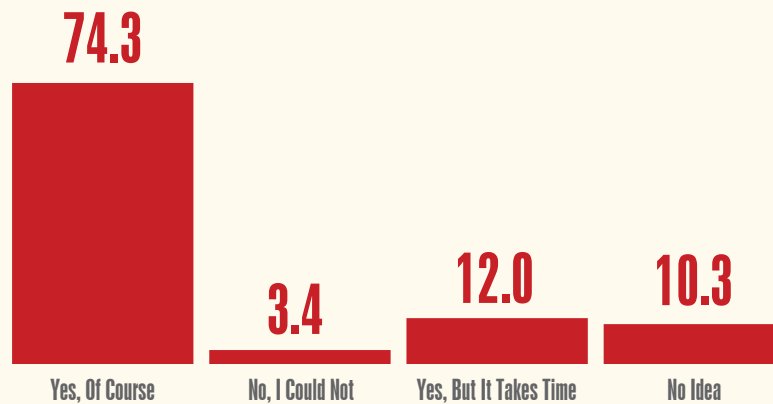
74.4% of the Syrian refugees think that the reason why the Assad regime has not yet fallen is the “foreign support” that it receives. On the other hand, 11% see “the lack of unity among the opposition” as the main obstacle to the fall of the government.

Graph 44. IF ASSAD LEFT HIS OFFICE OR WAS TOPPLED BY OPPONENTS, WOULD IT LEAD TO A SECTARIAN WAR?



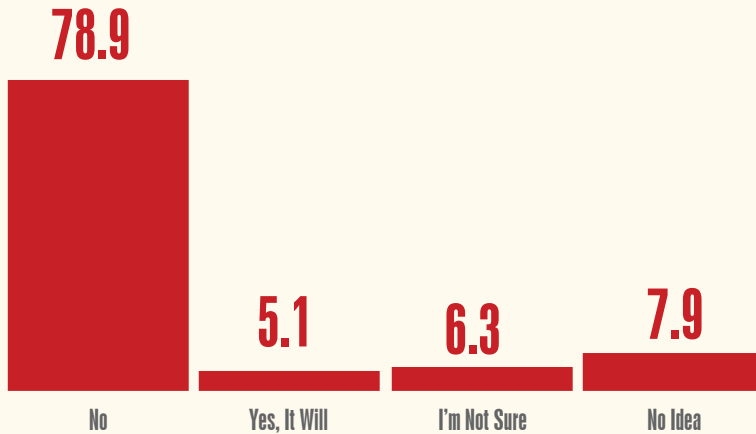
The period after Assad constitutes a crucial area of debate in Syrian issue. The subjects who took part in our research did not agree with the estimations of post-Assad scenarios that see Syria disintegrating into sectarian war. The rate of those who do not think that a sectarian war is unlikely in post-Assad Syria is 84.5%. Those who think that a sectarian war is likely constitute only 8.6%.

Graph 45. CAN YOU LIVE WITH OTHER MINORITIES IN NEW SYRIA?



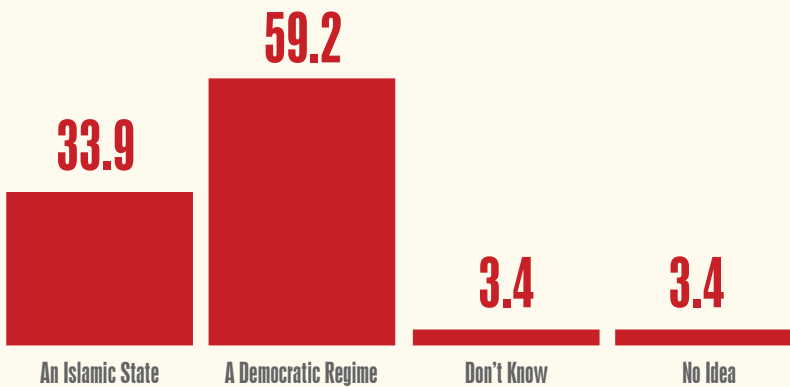
One of the most significant characteristics of war-torn Syria is undoubtedly its complex ethnic and sectarian structure. Whether this complexity will constitute a problem in post-war Syria is widely debated. The refugees, however, are very positive in their answers to this question. A very high 74.3% replied that they could “live with other minorities” after the war. Only 3.4% replied “no, I could not.”

Graph 46. WILL SYRIA DISINTEGRATE AFTER THE WAR?



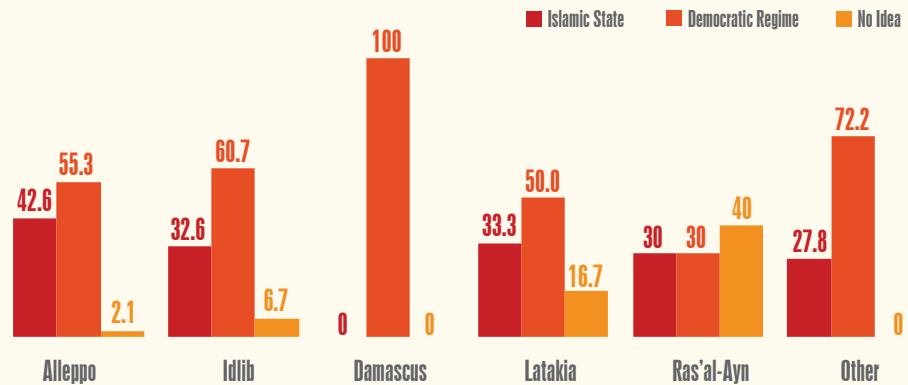
The percentage of those who stated that Syria certainly will not disintegrate after the war is 78.9%. 5.1% think that it will. The interviews conducted at the camps revealed a very strong public belief in peace and coexistence in the post-Assad period. Refugees frequently said that foreign powers want Syria to disintegrate but that the Syrians will not allow it. The idea that “Turkey at first will not allow disintegration scenarios” is also remarkable. In the eyes of the refugees, Turkey is the greatest guarantor of Syria’s territorial integrity.

Graph 47. WHAT KIND OF A REGIME SHOULD NEW SYRIA HAVE?



59.2% of the refugees in Turkey wanted a democratic regime in post-war Syria. 33.9%, on the other hand, prefer an Islamic state.

Graph 48. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOURCE CITY AND PREFERRED REGIME



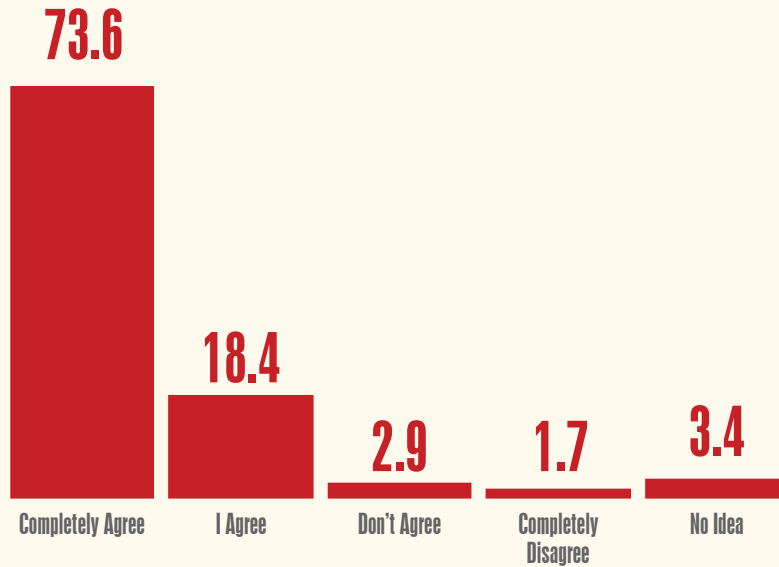
There is a meaningful correlation between the city the refugees came from and the regime they desired for post-war Syria. Refugees from the town Ras'al-Ayn preferred an Islamic state and democratic regime in equal proportions, whereas a majority of refugees from the cosmopolitan cities such as Aleppo, Idlib, and Latakia demanded a democratic regime. All of the refugees from the capital Damascus wanted a democratic regime. The cosmopolitan structure and ethnic diversity of the above-mentioned cities put the request for democracy into perspective considerably. An equal percentage of preference for democracy and Islamic state among Ras'al-Ayn citizens and a predominant demand for democracy by those from Damascus and Aleppo are meaningful in this respect.

Graph 49. DO YOU PLAN TO RETURN TO YOUR COUNTRY WHEN THE TURMOIL IN SYRIA IS OVER?



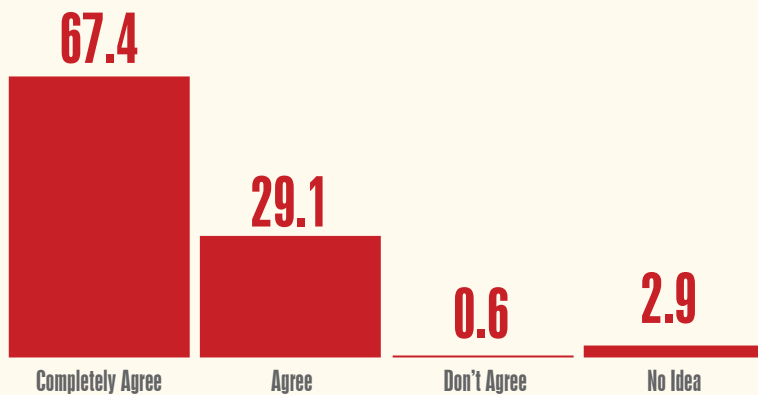
A significant majority of the refugees in Turkey plan to return to Syria in the future: 84% stated that they will definitely return to Syria after the war is over. Only 12% of the refugees stated that they will stay in Turkey if they are allowed to.

Graph 50. WE DO NOT HAVE PHYSICAL SECURITY IN SYRIA



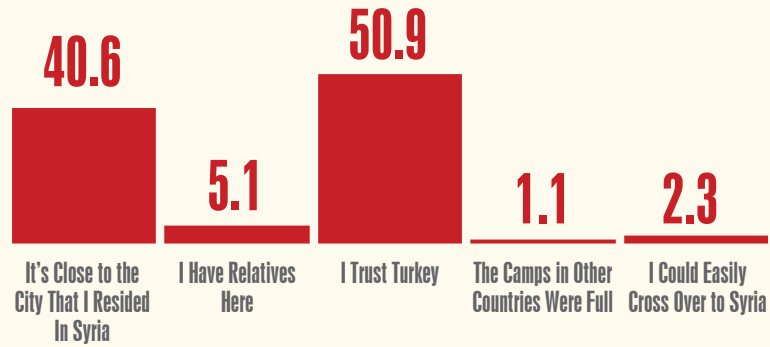
The opinions of the refugees in Turkey regarding physical security in Syria are noteworthy. 73.6% “agree completely” that they do not have physical security in Syria, while another 18.4% simply “agree” with the statement. The results are even more revealing when one bears in mind the satisfaction with the security services at the camps.

Graph 51. WE ARE SAFE IN THE CAMPS



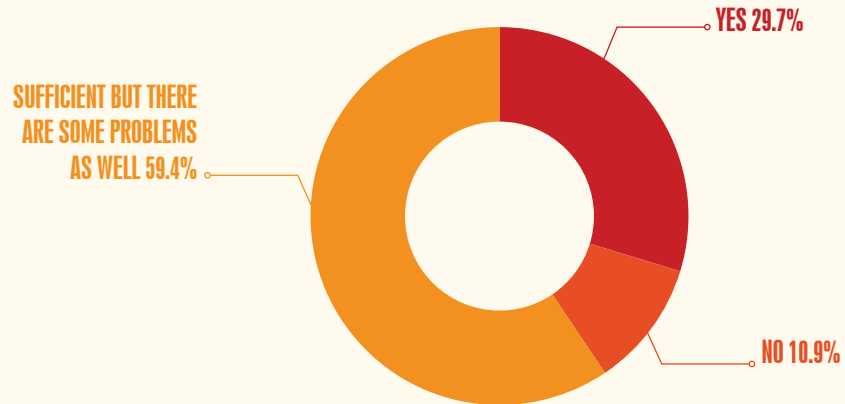
The refugees, who generally believe that they do not have physical security Syria, stated that they were safe in the camps. 96.6% of the refugees agree with the statement.

Graph 52. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TURKEY?



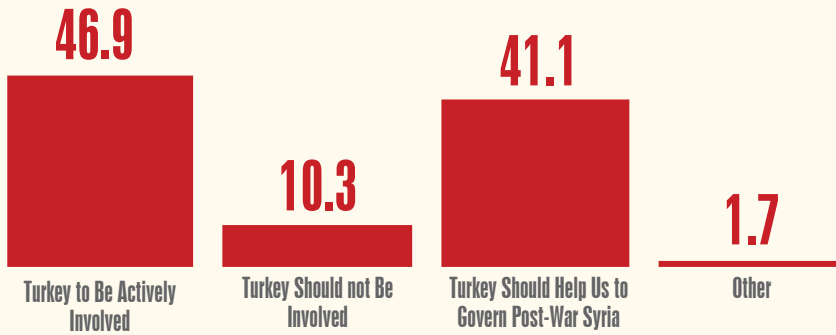
While 50.9% of the refugees stated that they chose the camps in Turkey because they trusted Turkey, 40.6% stated that they chose Turkey because of its proximity to where they lived. 5.1% chose Turkey because they had relatives at the camps here, 2.3% because they could easily cross over to Syria, and 1.1% because the camps in other countries were full.

Graph 53. IS THE AID PROVIDED BY TURKEY SUFFICIENT?



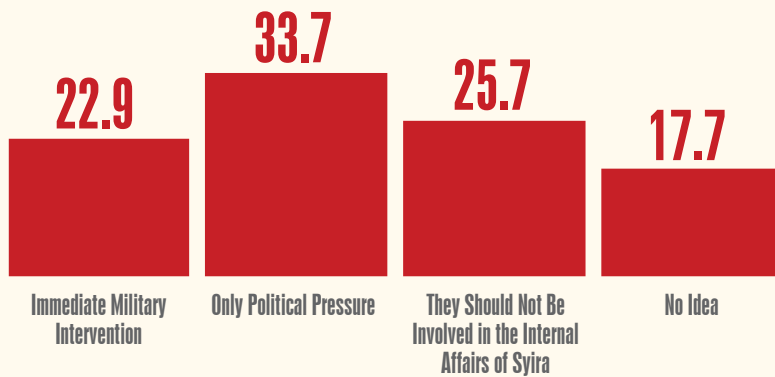
While 29.7% of the refugees found the aid provided by Turkey sufficient, 59.4% thought that although it is sufficient, there are some problems as well. 10.9% did not think that the aid was sufficient.

Graph 54. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM TURKEY NOW AND AFTER THE WAR?



While 46.9% of the refugees want Turkey to be actively involved in the Syrian issue now and in the future, 41.1% expect Turkey to guide (help to govern post-war Syria) them. The rate of those who stated that Turkey should not be involved in the internal affairs of Syria after the war is 10.9%.

Graph 55. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NOW AND AFTER THE WAR?



While 22.9% of the refugees thought that the international community should immediately launch a military intervention in Syria, 33.7% thought that political pressure alone would be enough. 25.7% stated that the international community should not be involved in the internal affairs of Syria.

4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Syrian refugee issue, which we have attempted to present in a comprehensive approach, will continue to be a source of great humanitarian and political concern since there is no foreseeable end to the conflict. The attacks on Cilvegözü border gate on 11 February and Akcakale border gate on 2 May -- which resulted in casualties, the fires at the camps, and other unpleasant incidents arising from discontent undoubtedly give us hints about what should and should not be done in the future. Based on our observations, we think that the recognition of the following truths and implementation of the following recommendations would benefit both the refugees and the institutions managing the refugee crisis in Turkey, as well as Turkey as the facilitator of the process:

- Every camp is like a small city, it is not possible to respond to the large inflows of refugees without **the outstanding effort and sacrifice of local actors**. (The local authorities of Ceylanpınar, which has a resident population of 44,726, now have to share their resources to manage a camp with a population of 44,557 –as of May 2013).

One must also take into account that these people are seriously overworked and their workload is multiplied as the process is prolonged. Even though local authorities and residents strive to manage the flood of refugees, these efforts are no longer sufficient to respond to the **rapidly increasing number** (almost 1,000-1,500 entrances daily) of Syrians. When the **exhaustion of institutional and individual actors** that provide aid is added into the equation, it is clear that the Syrian refugee issue is edging towards unsustainability.

- The incorrect notion, harbored by the people and institutions outside the region, that **“the problem is being dealt with locally”** makes matters a lot more complicated for these provinces.
- The psychological distress of the refugees due to war is at peak level. After first overcoming the trauma of leaving Syria, the refugees begin to normalize over a period of three to five months in Turkey. However, there are a great number of refugees traumatized/potentially traumatized within the camps due to such reasons as unemployment and loss of social status. Provocations could turn these people into threats. Their initial satisfaction with feeling safe turns into dissatisfaction and complaints as they stay longer in camps. This makes managing the camps even more difficult. Deaths resulting from **fires** in the winter and **epidemics** in the summer are the two most important threats which require preventive measures, as every incident involv-

ing death at these camps could potentially trigger unrest among these increasingly dissatisfied masses.

- On the other hand, the fact that a central registration system still has not been established is a crucial security gap in terms of monitoring the refugees. This also presents an opportunity for those who illegally traffic refugees between camps.
- There is a significant security weakness on the borders which allows widespread **smuggling** of goods and people. It is called as **“tehrīb” in Arabic**. The authority gap on the Syrian side also puts border security at risk. Some border gates are only guarded by police and/or gendarmerie forces, which are units of internal security, which present vulnerability in the event of an attack or provocation. There isn't efficient security management at the border. In addition, humanitarian aid from Turkey cannot be efficiently distributed because of the chaos on the Syrian side.

The most important problem awaiting Turkey in the near future are the **“unregistered” refugees** who passed the border through legal or illegal means and are now trying to survive in cities. By consulting local sources, USAK estimates that the number of unregistered refugees is now over **350,000, including 30,000, 30,000 and another 80,000 unregistered refugees in Kilis, Antep and Reyhanlı**, respectively. Among these unregistered refugees, there are some who sleep in streets and parks, some who have taken to begging, and some who are trying to survive by sharing an apartment with 70 to 80 other people. There are **100 to 120 unregistered families** coming to Kilis on a weekly basis. These families consist of an average of 6 people, mostly women and children. They need to be identified and provided with financial and psychological support urgently. Otherwise, as the process gets prolonged, a political crisis becomes imminent.

- The **abundance of intelligence agents** from different countries active in the region have also hinted at the magnitude of potential provocations and crises. Potential crises in the camps or city centers carry the risk of triggering great turmoil as a result of manipulation and propaganda.

THEREFORE

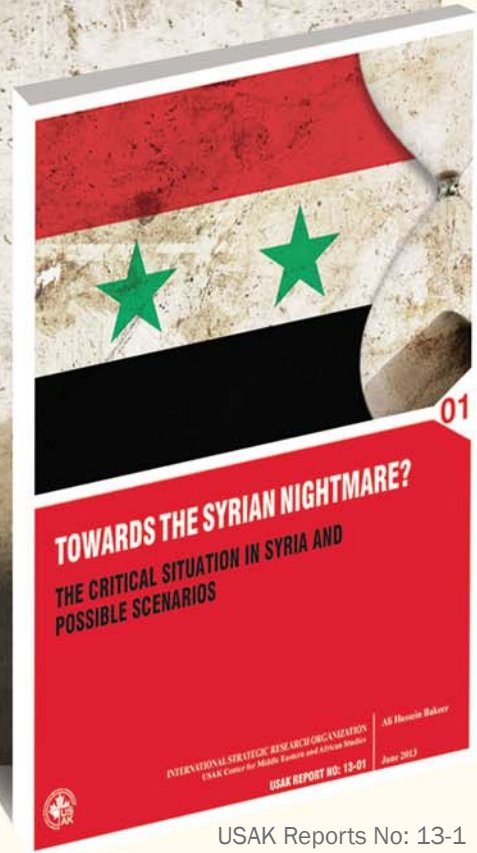
- Multidimensional strategies should be developed for Syrians who are expected to stay in Turkey. The above-mentioned risks should be taken into account. Efforts should be made to attract the attention of international community to the refugees. The fact that the problem cannot be solved solely by the efforts of countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan should be emphasized.
- The present accommodation centers should be opened up to international aid because the number of registered Syrian refugees rose from 252 to 200,000 in 26 months and, according to UN estimates, will reach one million by the end of 2013. Taking into account the long-term psychological and physical weariness of providers and receivers of camp services, social-psychological supports should be increased. Maximum care should be taken since the attitude of the officials acting as a bridge between the two peoples will be projected onto the entire nation.

- The conditions harboring a newly emerging “discriminatory” discourse spreading among the local people and camp workers against Syrian refugees should be minimized. In this respect, it is vital for the camp staff to receive regular psychological support and time off periodically.
- The unregistered Syrians in city and district centers as well as border villages should be registered.
- The burden of the locals striving to meet the basic needs of unregistered refugees such as shelter, healthcare, and food should be shared. Locals should be enlisted in identifying and recording unregistered refugees.
- The NGOs which take/wish to take aid and offer/wish to offer voluntary services to the region should be coordinated.
- Although they are considered temporary, special care should be taken to cater to groups with specific needs – especially the needs of children – as long as they stay here. Education, healthcare, and psychological support are of great significance. The detection of unregistered children who are at high risk of being involved in begging or theft should be urgently completed.
- The legal status granted to Syrian refugees is formed around the notion of “guest”. However, bearing in mind the length of the asylum period and the uncertainty of a solution, this status ought to be extended so as to enable these people to obtain temporary work permits in order to provide for themselves. Syrians who are professionals in fields desperately needed by refugees both at the camps and city centers such as doctors, healthcare workers, teachers, or psychologists should be employed in respective camps and registration centers.
- The refugees who are traumatized by the war and immigration and who could possibly be traumatized at the camp due to long-term unemployment and loss of social status should at least play a part in the day-to-day administration of the camps in order to return to a normal life. 72.4% of refugees at the camps do not do any work or daily business, are completely “idle” and do not have an opportunity for “self-realization.” Most of the refugees complain that they do not have a work permit. Granting temporary work permits to professionals to work especially in medical services catering only to Syrian refugees would benefit both the providers and receivers of these services, as well as easing the workload of the Turkish camp staff.
- Some measures should be taken against the possibility of unregistered refugees turning into potential threats in the middle and long-term due to a lack of financial aid, and these people should be provided with financial and psychological support. Otherwise, if they get involved in criminal acts or effect social discord, the values of brotherhood/kinship between the two peoples could be eroded.
- The increased demand for housing by the Syrians in cities has created astronomically high rents, which affects not only the Syrian refugees but also locals. Preventive measures should be taken in this respect.

- Some measures should be taken to prevent the abuse of both registered and unregistered Syrians in Turkey, who are highly vulnerable to economic exploitation.
- Leading figures respected by Syrians both in and outside camps should be enlisted in communication campaigns aimed at peace and post-war rebuilding. This would motivate the people who expect support from Turkey in the post-war period.
- Limitations on movement or obstacles in visiting family members residing at other camps should be removed as much as possible. The refugees should not feel that they are being imprisoned in the camps.
- The physical differences between facilities within the camps should be eliminated. The differences between containers and tents could lead to a sense of inequality and cause friction among refugees or between refugees and camp staff. Efforts should be made to maintain the level of satisfaction with the camps which is currently around 90%. Unpleasant incidents, fights, fires, and accidents involving death could potentially erode this satisfaction.
- Although 80% are expected to return to Syria, some preparations should be made to deal with the refugees who might remain in Turkey.
- Social dynamics at the camps, in border cities, and in Syria should be closely observed and policies should be built on this context.

TOWARDS THE SYRIAN NIGHTMARE?

THE CRITICAL SITUATION IN SYRIA AND POSSIBLE SCENARIOS



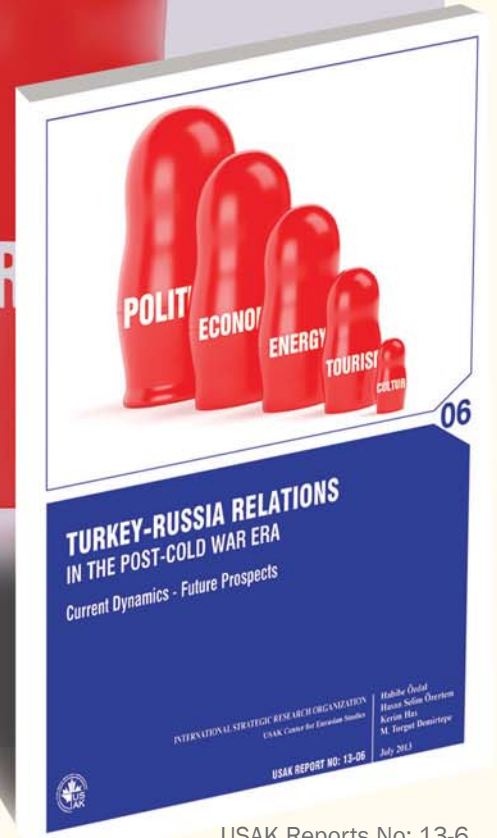
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