

SYRIAN REFUGEE POLICY IN TURKEY, JORDAN, AND LEBANON:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Syrian Refugee Policy in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon: A Comparative Study

Millions of civilians have fled their country since the start of the conflict in Syria in 2011 and the majority of the externally displaced Syrians have sought refuge in neighboring countries. Many of these refugees, who often had to start their lives from the scratch in these host nations, continue to face to a wide range of issues. This thesis aims to investigate the various policies toward Syrian civilians in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, the three countries that are hosting the highest number of refugees. The research assesses the policy responses of these countries in regards to the basic needs and socioeconomic integration of the refugees, such as shelter, food, healthcare, employment, education and social integration. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the nations' policies and the willingness of the host governments to alleviate the crisis, the thesis gauges the current state of the refugees in each area through a set of indicators and attempts to determine whether contexts of reception in those areas are positive, neutral or negative. The roles the government, local community and international organizations play in assisting the Syrian refugees are scrutinized individually for all three countries. The thesis demonstrates that the policy responses of each country has a lot of room for improvement in order to ameliorate the conditions of the refugees, who are struggling to make ends meet.

ÖZET

Türkiye, Ürdün ve Lübnan'daki Suriyeli Mülteci Krizine Yönelik Politikaların

Karşılaştırmalı Analizi

Suriye'de iç savaşın başladığı 2011 yılından bu yana milyonlarca sivil ülkelerini terk etmek zorunda kaldı ve büyük çoğunluğu komşu ülkelere sığındı. Bu ülkelerde hayatlarına genelde sıfırdan başlamak zorunda kalan Suriyeli mültecilerin önemli bir kısmı hala birçok sorunla karşı karşıya. Bu tez en çok Suriyeli mülteciye ev sahipliği yapan üç ülke olan Türkiye, Ürdün ve Lübnan'ın mültecilere yönelik politikalarını inceliyor. Araştırma, temel ihtiyaçlar ve sosyoekonomik entegrasyon başlıkları altında her ülkenin barınma, gıda, sağlık, istihdam, eğitim ve sosyal entegrasyon gibi konulardaki politikalarını değerlendiriyor. Ülkelerin politikalarının etkinliklerini ve hükümetlerin krizin boyutunu azaltma konusundaki istekliliklerini ölçmek için tezde bir dizi indikatörler kullanılarak farklı alanlarda mültecileri karşılama durumları pozitif, nötr ya da negatif olarak üçe bölünüyor. Mültecilere yardım konusunda hükümetlerin, yerel halkın ve uluslararası örgütlerin oynadıkları roller ayrı ayrı irdeleniyor. Bu araştırma üç ülkenin de büyük geçim sıkıntısı çeken mültecilerin insani durumlarını iyileştirmek için kat etmesi gereken çok yol olduğunu ortaya koyuyor.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AFAD | Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey |
| ARDD | Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development |
| CLDH | The Lebanese Center for Human Rights |
| EC | European Commission |
| EU | European Union |
| EYDAS | Electronic Aid Distribution System of AFAD |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HRW | Human Rights Watch |
| MIPEX | Migrant Integration Policy Index |
| MOI | The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities of Lebanon |
| ORSAM | Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies |
| PKK | Kurdistan Workers' Party |
| TEPAV | Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey |
| TESEV | Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation |
| TUIK | Turkish Statistical Institute |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WFP | World Food Program |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

What's coined as the Syrian refugee crisis started with Arab Spring inspired pro-democracy protests in 2011 in Syria, which first turned into violent clashes between the government and protesters and then into an irrepressible multidimensional civil war. Today the country remains a battleground, hosting domestic and international fighters from a spectrum of ethnic and ideological backgrounds. According to UN's official statement on the number of registered refugees, the gruesome 7 years in the country have led over 5 million Syrians to flee their houses and lands to seek refuge in another country (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018). It is widely acknowledged that a significant number of the refugees are unregistered; hence the UN estimates might only be the visible part of the iceberg.

There is no doubt that Syrian refugee crisis had the most remarkable socio-economic impacts on Syria's three neighbors: Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. According to the UN, of the over 5 million registered Syrian refugees, 3.6 million of them are in Turkey, around 1 million of them are in Lebanon and nearly 700,000 of them are in Jordan (UNHCR, 2018). The rest of them are in Iraq, Egypt and other countries. While Turkish authorities claim that with over 30 billion dollars spent on refugees, Turkey bears the heaviest burden of the crisis, it is important to note that Jordan and Lebanon host significantly more Syrian refugees per capita as each one of them has less than 10 million inhabitants.

In order to compare and contrast the policy responses in these three countries, this thesis will discuss the concept of "contexts of reception" coined in an article by

Portes and Böröcz (1989) in the theoretical framework section. The two scholars argue that there can be a negative, neutral or positive context of reception toward migrants in a host country. They further argue that the integration of migrants tend to be more successful in a host nation with positive context of reception. The scholars mostly focus on contexts of reception in employment opportunities yet this research will expand the scope of their work to examine a wide range of policy areas. The research will take a comparative approach to fundamental refugee issues under two categories for each country: basic needs and socio-economic integration. Issues such as shelter, food and health care will be scrutinized under basic needs, and subjects like employment, education and social integration will be examined under socio-economic integration.

The theoretical framework section will first illustrate the concept of context of reception thoroughly and then highlight its most important limitation, which is the lack of clear indicators to define what constitutes a negative, neutral or positive context of reception. This limitation will be addressed in the methodology section by looking at multiple blueprints for indicators. The texts of Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), the 1951 Refugee Convention in Geneva and the European Union's 2001 Directive on Temporary Protection will be examined to find indicators in each policy area and the indicators that will be applicable to this research will thus be extracted from these sources. The three sources will serve as a guideline even when their indicators are not applicable to a given policy area for the purpose of this research.

After defining the indicators for what makes a positive, neutral or negative context of reception in each policy area, the thesis will first shine a light on Turkey's responses as the nation that hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees as both a destination and transition country. Upon investigating the response of Turkish

authorities, the research will then attempt to discover how the two other nations handled the crisis. The roles of local communities, international organizations and civil society organizations will be examined for each country as well. By comparing the three countries' contexts of reception in a wide range of policy areas, the thesis will underscore the areas that a given host country needs to improve in order to ameliorate the humanitarian conditions of Syrian refugees. Ultimately, the thesis will attempt to answer the following research questions: What have Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon done to alleviate the crisis; and what is the current state of the Syrian refugees in these countries?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In evaluating and comparing the three countries' responses to the Syrian refugee crisis, this paper will comprehensively examine the theories in Alejandro Portes and József Böröcz's (1989) article, titled "Contemporary Immigration: Theoretical Perspectives on Its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation." In their article, Portes and Böröcz (1989) scrutinize the roots, process and stability of immigration by observing various examples of migration and discuss the validity of previously argued immigration theories and introduce new ideas (p. 607). Portes and Böröcz (1989) criticize conventional "push-pull" immigration theories, which view the migrant movement as a result of the origin country's economic weakness and underdevelopment (p. 607). The two academics argue that migration does not necessarily stem from people making the most rational decision for themselves by escaping tough conditions; instead, they claim that it has more to do with a combination of past interactions and economic and political power gap between the receiving and sending countries (Portes and Böröcz, 1989). While in Syrian refugees' case there is an undeniable need of the individuals to escape their immediate situation, the fact that they have mostly fled to only certain countries among those that are geographically close to Syria supports Portes and Böröcz's argument. The two scholars then look into conditions of exit in a country where citizens want to flee and specifically focus on refugees. In this section, they argue that when there is violence in a country—be it general or targeting a specific segment of the society—that prompts some citizens to escape, refugee policies in potential countries of destination play a crucial role in the size of refugee influx in destination countries. The article then examines

immigration based on class origins and specifically looks at three socioeconomic classes: rural and urban workers, professionals and entrepreneurs. Portes and Böröcz (1989) fundamentally argue that in all cases success of refugees depend on what they call “contexts of reception.”

Contexts of reception can be described as the situation confronting immigrants arriving in a new host country, as in the standpoint and actions of migrant-receiving government or that of local society and job-givers (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 618). The two academics argue that there is an inextricable link between the success potentials of immigrants and preexisting conditions in a destination country: “Newcomers face these realities as a *fait accompli* which alters their aspirations and plans and can channel individuals of similar backgrounds into widely different directions” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 618). Although they recognize that there exists a multiplicity of possible contexts of reception, Portes and Böröcz (1989) narrow down the concept to three categories: handicapped, neutral and advantaged (p. 618).

Negative reception, or handicapped reception as coined by Portes and Böröcz, characterizes “low receptivity” by host government and society that instead of embracing refugees attempt to hinder the inflow. In a host country where there is low or handicapped reception, “immigrants are negatively typified by employers, either as unsuitable labor or as suitable only for menial jobs, a condition compounded by generalized prejudice among the native population” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 618). A government that continually blocks the entry of and deports immigrants while neglecting the basic needs of those living in the country, combined with native citizens that socially and/or economically discriminate against refugees for various reasons could constitute an example of a host country with negative reception. Low receptivity may indeed lead

to deceleration in immigrant inflow but it does not mean that immigrants will stop coming. Portes and Böröcz (1989) demonstrate that the existence of economic opportunities owing to previously established network of migrants will be an enough incentive for more refugees to flee to a host country with negative reception (p. 619). Although most immigrants live under poverty-stricken conditions and lack the capital and support to economically sustain themselves, some of them may be able to achieve to attain their economic independence through entrepreneurship. In sum, in host countries with negative reception, “patterns of settlement are precarious at best and opportunities for economic mobility remain permanently blocked” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 619).

Second category of reception, namely the neutral context of reception, characterizes a country where the government is indifferent to immigrants’ needs but does not attempt to hinder immigrant inflow or take hostile actions against them. Native population may not be discriminative, as there may not be a negative perception about the traits of immigrants (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 619), but is not necessarily welcoming and supportive. In neutral contexts, immigrants can unreservedly vie with the citizens of a host country on the merits of their personal accomplishments and academic and professional backgrounds (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 619). Portes and Böröcz (1989) acknowledge that perfect neutral contexts in which immigration is neither actively invigorated nor prohibited rarely exist, but there are some examples such as white immigrants with some professional skills, who do not live in places where the ethnic composition is dominated by a single group in the United States (p. 619).

Lastly, the two scholars present positive context of reception, in which immigrants arrive in a host country where a favorable public opinion toward them is coupled with a government that actively supports immigrants, assists them with their

basic needs and creates a framework to help their integration to labor market. In an ideally positive context of reception, immigrants tend to “have exceptionally good opportunities to capitalize on their background skills and experience so that their returns may even exceed those received by the native born” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 619). Once the immigrants that arrive earlier to a country with positive context of reception become economically independent, the immigrants that arrive later tend to have the means to utilize the pre-established networks of the earlier immigrants. “Established immigrant professionals may, for example, ‘show the ropes’ to those coming after them, while immigrant entrepreneurs may provide recent arrivals with a period of business apprenticeship” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 619). It is important to emphasize the role a native born society plays in a positive context of reception. Unlike a negative context, issues like racism, discrimination or discontent at perceived loss of employment opportunities do not take place in host country with a positive context of reception. The lack of barriers to socioeconomic life thus allows immigrants and refugees to amalgamate with the native population.

Portes and Böröcz (1989) then examine different settlement patterns by going back to three class origins and combining them with three contexts of reception. In an attempt to simplify the range of possible outcomes, they “illustrate some of the principal modes of incorporation characterizing individual immigrants or even entire collectivities at present” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 621). Starting with handicapped context of reception, Portes and Böröcz (1989) provide potential outcomes of incorporation for manual labor, professional-technical and entrepreneurial classes.

In a negative context of reception, manual labor class is stuck at secondary market incorporation, as “manual labor migrants arriving in contexts in which their kind

are unwelcomed or discriminated against tend to be channeled toward the lower tier of the receiving labor market” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 621). Their ability to achieve their economic freedom or change their socio-economic class is largely incapacitated due to discrimination based on their racial, ethnic or gender differences; and hence, a lot of them are forced to work unregistered for a much lower wage than native unskilled or semiskilled workers. Conditions do not tend to be very different for skilled professional or entrepreneurs. As Portes and Böröcz (1989) demonstrate, “highly skilled immigrants can also find themselves in handicapped contexts, as when they surreptitiously, are denied political asylum, or are subject to heavy discrimination because of racial characteristics” (p. 622). In fact, in a negative context of reception, some of these high-skilled workers may not be able to get their professional licenses accredited by the host government. A lack of framework, or the will of the host government to create one to integrate these professionals to labor market, leads them to risk deportation by operating illegally in a limited scope within their ethnic community or other minority communities (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 622). Lastly, business oriented immigrants that bring their wealth to a country with negative context of reception also get affected by similar conditions. Their role may be reduced to “ghetto merchants” and “middleman minorities,” as the host society tend to take “a dim view of the arrival and activities of these immigrants” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 622).

In a neutral context of reception, manual labors’ incorporation is labeled as “mixed labor market participation” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 620). These immigrants face a situation in which their ability to successfully adapt depends on a combination of their “individual merits and skills” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 622). While some of those who lack professional experience and skills may be pushed to the lowest end of

labor market, more skillful ones may be able to experience “upward mobility to small entrepreneurship” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 620). The same applies to professional immigrants coming to a country with neutral context of reception; their likelihood of succeeding will also depend on the scope of their skillset and eagerness to penetrate into the labor market. Although skilled immigrants may enter a country with neutral context of reception “at the bottom of their respective career ladders, opportunities for upward mobility are not limited or blocked as in handicapped contexts” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 623). Lastly, entrepreneurs who are faced with no major obstacles under neutral contexts can successfully establish and flourish their businesses, joining the herd of mainstream small businesses (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 620).

Finally, in a positive context of reception, all three classes tend to thrive thanks to a combination of government assistance, societal support and pre-established immigrant networks. Portes and Böröcz (1989) admit that it is very rare for manual labor class to “meet privileged contexts of reception,” and “those who do tend to be a part of officially sanctioned refugee or other advantaged flows which also contain large proportions of upper class immigrants” (p. 623). Nevertheless, in a positive context of reception, some immigrants “are able to implement a set of business activities which can pull less privileged members of the community into desirable positions within the ethnic economy” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 624). Thus, working class immigrants arriving to an advantaged context have the opportunity of upward mobility to small entrepreneurship. For professional immigrants, opportunities for success are much wider than manual labor immigrants in a host country with positive context of reception. Professional or high-skilled “immigrants arriving into these situations also find that they can not only compete freely, but that strength of ethnic networks can catapult them, in a

relatively short time, into position of civic and political leadership” (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 624). The same notion also applies to entrepreneurial group, which thrives in a positive context, taking advantage of subsidies and pre-existing immigration networks. Portes and Böröcz (1989) argue that entrepreneurs in an advantaged reception could even pave the way for the formation of “enclave economies” (p. 620), in which immigrants manage and undertake large-scale production of various goods and services. In a positive context of reception, migrant businessmen joining forces with skilled migrant professionals can lead to the emergence of a thriving immigrant economy (Portes & Böröcz, 1989, p. 624). In sum, workers, professionals and entrepreneurs all prosper in an advantaged context of reception, aided by governmental and societal backing combined with interconnected immigrant networks, according to Portes and Böröcz’s model.

Waldinger and Catron (2016) have criticized the modes of incorporation model, arguing that, “the core hypothesis has never been appropriately tested.” The two scholars claim that when more immigrants that arrive in an advantaged context are contrasted against less advantaged ones, the outcomes are not consistent (Waldinger & Catron, 2016, p. 25). It is possible that Portes and Böröcz’s model may not always yield the same results, as some disadvantaged immigrant groups may still be able to prosper under negative contexts. Nevertheless, many scholars of immigration studies have utilized concepts of modes of incorporation and contexts of reception as appear in Portes and Böröcz’s article and applied them to various real life examples of refugee crises. For instance, Stepick and Dutton (2009) argue that Haitians fleeing to the United States have been consistently confronting negative contexts of reception at all levels, be it workers, professionals or entrepreneurs. Haitians seeking asylum or refugee status are almost

always refused regardless of their background; those others trying to come to the U.S are interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard off the shores of Haiti; and Haitians who make it to the U.S. without proper documents are imprisoned by the government, according to Stepick and Dutton (2009). Conversely, in another paper published in 2012, Jaworsky, Levitt, Cadge, Hejtmanek and Curran argue that some cities in the United States epitomize positive context of reception for immigrants to a great extent. For example, Portland, Maine has accepted many African refugees since 1960s, most of whom are of manual labor class, fleeing undemocratic regimes, civil wars, famines and droughts (Jaworsky et al., 2012, section 5.3, para. 2). Portland has been very supportive of these refugees, Jaworsky et al. (2012) assert: “a clear message of welcome, coupled with many leaders’ strong humanitarian impulse, helped create a positive context of reception, allowing newcomers to feel safe and secure” (Section 5.3, para. 3).

This thesis, too, will utilize the three contexts of reception coined by Portes and Böröcz to assess the treatment of Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. The research will attempt to examine whether contexts of reception are positive, neutral or negative for Syrian refugees of working, professional and entrepreneurial classes in three of the countries. Portes and Böröcz’s (1989) work focuses on immigrants in general. The two scholars mention refugees in their 1989 article as well, yet their ‘modes of incorporation’ model is applicable to both refugees and immigrants, who may choose to leave their countries for economic reasons rather than political reasons or civil war. Refugees fleeing a civil war, as in the case of Syrian crisis, have different immediate needs than an immigrant who left her or his homeland in pursuit of a better life. In most cases, they will need a governmental or a non-governmental organization network that can assist them with fulfilling their immediate basic needs such as housing, food and

healthcare and help them with their socioeconomic needs such as education and employment. A host country may have a positive concept of reception in terms of basic needs but a negative concept of reception in terms of the socioeconomic needs of refugees, which points at a limitation in Portes and Böröcz's (1989) article. Therefore, this thesis will expand the scope of Portes and Böröcz's (1989) models of incorporation, to individually assess various contexts of reception at housing, food, healthcare, education, employment and social integration.

All three countries have different economic capabilities and social contexts, thus, contexts of reception in different areas for each country are expected to vary based on economic strength and cultural composition. Turkey has a population of 80.8 million (Turkish Statistical Institute [TUIK], 2018) as of 2017 and a GDP of 1.89 trillion dollars on purchasing power parity basis as of 2016 (World Bank). Meanwhile, Jordan has a population of 9.46 million (World Bank, 2016) and a GDP of only 79.3 billion dollars on purchasing power parity basis as of 2016 (World Bank). Lastly, Lebanon has a population of 6 million (World Bank) and a GDP on purchasing power parity basis that is very similar to Jordan, with 79.7 billion dollars as of 2016 (World Bank). As seen in the comparison, Turkey has a significantly higher GDP per capita than both Lebanon and Jordan, with Jordan being slightly poorer than Lebanon. Furthermore, thanks to a much a larger government budget than the other two countries, Turkey claims to have spent 30 billion dollars on Syrian refugees in 7 years (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2017), by far the highest cost declared by all three refugee-receiving countries. Due to its relative economic strength and its self-declaration of a large sum spent for refugees, the thesis will first test the hypothesis that Turkey should have offered a positive context of reception for the basic needs of Syrian refugees, while Jordan and

Lebanon's contexts of reception in terms of basic needs are expected to be neutral to negative, given the sizes and limited economic capabilities of the two countries. The second hypothesis will be based on cultural and language differences. Jordan, Lebanon and Syria are all Arab nations; and Arabic is the first language in all three of these countries. With an ancestral background that goes back to Central Asia instead of the Middle East, Turkish people have a different ethnic and cultural background. Although many languages are spoken in the country, Turkish is the only official language and the most commonly spoken language in the country, followed by various dialects of Kurdish. Therefore, given the cultural differences and language barriers, Turkey should have a neutral or negative context of reception in terms of socioeconomic integration, while the context of reception in socioeconomic integration is expected to be positive in Jordan and Lebanon, given the ethnic, linguistic and cultural similarities.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Hypotheses will be tested with primary sources such as direct interviews with individuals who have experienced, observed or been affected by the refugee crisis, newspaper articles that directly report from the place on the day of an incident, government publications, laws, surveys, fieldwork and reports published by the United Nations Refugee Agency and various NGOs working in the field. The research will be further supported by secondary sources such as academic papers, magazine and newspaper articles that analyze events and cite sources after the day of an incident.

The fighting in Syria continues along with the refugee crisis as of early 2018. As various factions attack each other to control more territories, more civilian Syrians are forced to flee their homeland. As the crisis constantly and dynamically evolves, it can be difficult to find reliable sources on the subject. That is why utmost attention will be paid to find sources that are seemingly independent and objective in reporting about the crisis. These sources will be supported by refugee and local testimonials, surveys and NGO reports and will further be contrasted to government data, laws and proclamations of any sort, defending state actions. It might be hard to assess what kind of context of reception a country has in a certain area, which points at a major limitation in the article of Portes and Böröcz: the lack of clear indicators that help determining the differences between a positive, negative or a neutral context of reception. In order to pin it down more accurately, Portes and Böröcz's model will be further supported by a set of indicators.

Migrant Integration Policy Index, or MIPEX, has 167 indicators within various policy areas in looking at how immigrants integrate to a society, measuring policies in 38 countries including Turkey (MIPEX, 2015). In order to evaluate how the legislation and policies toward migrants in a host country compare with highest standards, MIPEX has consulted with scholars and conducted further research in their academic fields, according to information on its website (2015). The indicators designated by MIPEX, thus, can serve as guidance in assessing various contexts of reception in different policy areas for the Syrian refugees. As MIPEX specifically focuses on migrants and not immigrants, the policy areas it dissects do not include some of the areas that will be evaluated in this thesis, such as access to food. Nevertheless, MIPEX's wide scope of indicators in many policy areas will help identifying whether a context of reception in a given area is positive, negative or neutral, as the index itself is rated on a three option scale.

MIPEX's housing indicator for migrants who have residence permits will be useful for this thesis. Although Syrian refugees in the three countries do not hold residence permits, the indicator may still be applicable to determine the countries' context of reception. The indicator looks at three options: migrants have equal access to housing with nationals, priority given to nationals in access to housing, or limiting conditions apply to migrants. The access to housing indicator will be further discussed after comparison with the Geneva Convention clause on shelter.

MIPEX has various indicators for access to health care services for all migrants. The first indicator in healthcare services is health entitlements, which assesses whether the inclusion of migrants in conditions of healthcare are unconditional, with some conditions or with no inclusion, as in whether the migrants have to pay the full costs in

person or through a commercial insurance policy (MIPEx, 2015). Another indicator is coverage for legal migrants. MIPEx divides up this indicator into three options to assess the extent of coverage for migrants: the same coverage as nationals, more than emergency care but less coverage than nationals, and emergency care only or none if no inclusion (2015). MIPEx looks at a series of other indicators but for the sake of this research the last healthcare-related indicator will be the responsiveness of health services as in the availability of qualified interpretation and culturally sensitive services. This indicator observes three options: interpreters are available free of charge to all patients, some interpreters are available at a cost for patients and no interpretation is available (MIPEx, 2015).

MIPEx's indicators in socio-economic integration are particularly developed and wide reaching. Under the policy area of employment, the following MIPEx indicators will be used in this thesis: access to labor market, access to self-employment, recognition of academic and professional qualifications and working conditions (2015). MIPEx has various other indicators such as membership in trade unions but as this research will attempt to look at policies for each worker group, professionals and entrepreneurs, the aforementioned MIPEx indicators will thus suffice to evaluate the general context of reception in employment for Syrian refugees in each host country. Access to labor market and access to self-employment look at whether migrants are able to accept and take up any employment or self-employment opportunity under equal conditions as nationals and MIPEx attempts to evaluate this question by looking at three options: No additional restrictions than work permits, some limiting conditions that apply to foreign residents such as language tests, and migrants not being able access certain sectors and activities as they are solely designated for citizens (2015). Lastly,

working conditions indicator attempts to discover whether the conditions are equal for migrants with nationals, with the three options of equal treatment with nationals in all areas, no equal treatment in at least one area or no equal treatment in more than one area (MIPeX, 2015).

Another area that is assessed by MIPeX and will be evaluated in this thesis is education. Access to compulsory and higher education and access to vocational training are among the MIPeX indicators that will be evaluated for this research. MIPeX looks at whether states support measures such as financial support and campaigns to increase school attendance among migrant children and whether they support measures to boost children's successful completion of their education (2015). In both compulsory and higher education, the three options are: the state supports both measures to increase school attendance in completion, it partly supports one of the measures or it does not support these measures (MIPeX, 2015).

Lastly, for the social integration part, MIPeX has an anti-discrimination policy area, which mostly has legal indicators, such as the existence of laws against discrimination and harassment and enforcement mechanisms for these laws (2015). MIPeX specifically looks at whether the laws in the host country prohibit discrimination or harassment on grounds of race/ethnicity, religion/belief or nationality. MIPeX evaluates three options in this case as well; all three grounds, two grounds or no grounds, or only based on international standards with subject to legal interpretation (2015). In enforcement mechanisms MIPeX analyses whether the migrants have access to judicial, criminal and administrative procedures with the three options of all three, two of the three or only one (2015). Under the “state assistance for victims” indicator, MIPeX looks at whether the state provides the victim migrant with a free lawyer and an

interpreter when necessary with the three options of both, one of them or none (2015). It is important to note that MIPEX's anti-discrimination indicators only evaluate the legal and policy framework designed by a state to combat this issue. Despite the existence of such strong legal framework, discrimination and racism are still important issues in many countries, as these issues tend to do more with the social dynamics than the legal framework. Moreover, the existence of necessary legal framework and policies never fully guarantee a resolution to a social problem; it is the willingness of the society together with the state that eradicates a deep-rooted problem. Therefore, this thesis will attempt to shine a spotlight on the social dynamics, as in the context of reception by a host community toward the refugees, more so than the legal preparedness of the three states.

In sum, MIPEX's indicators serve as a solid starting point in examining various contexts of reception in numerous policy areas. Its three options questionnaire for each indicator very much resembles to the model of Portes and Böröcz (1989), which analyses contexts of reception by determining whether they are handicapped, neutral or advantaged. Nevertheless, there may be some limitations to the use of all MIPEX indicators in this research, as the index covers policy responses for migrants and not refugees, as in the case of the Syrian problem. In fact, government creation of refugee camps, provision of tents or other housing, assistance through social benefits such as stipends for immediate needs like food are not among the areas that are scrutinized by MIPEX through indicators, as the index focuses more on the issues of migrants in general instead of displaced people. Moreover, in none of the three countries the Syrian refugees are legally seen as migrants, which makes it important to look at the texts of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees for the missing policy areas.

According to the 1951 Convention, which took place under the United Nations, a refugee “is someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion” (UNHCR, p.3). Almost all Syrians in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon fit this description as most of them would be caught up in or become victims of an unprovoked violence should they decide to go back to their hometowns. If they do go back, a significant percentage of them will not be able to find their homes in the state they left, as the fighting has destroyed and continues to destroy critical infrastructure and a great deal of residential and commercial areas in most Syrian cities.

The Geneva Convention obliges refugee-receiving states to adhere to a wide-range of rules on welcoming and assisting refugees. In most policy areas, refugees are entitled to the same rights as migrants, who come from a foreign country. In some policy areas, refugees are entitled to more rights than migrants and equal rights with the native nationals of that country. The 1951 Convention recognizes basic needs such as food and housing as part of the set of rights contracting states shall provide to the refugees. In the article 20, the Convention requires the host states to provide the refugees with the same rationing system that applies to the citizens of that country (UNHCR, p. 24). As per housing, in the article 21, contracting states are asked to accord to refugees legally staying their country “treatment as favorable as possible and, in any event, not less favorable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances” (UNHCR, p. 24). This means that both in food and housing, the host countries are asked to pay utmost attention to the needs of refugees to make sure they receive a better treatment than other migrants residing in the country. However, it is significant to note that there is

no mention of obligations of a contracting state on healthcare provision to refugees, which will be examined under basic needs in this thesis.

Geneva Convention provides extensive rights to refugees in employment as well. According to the article 17 of the Convention, a refugee who seeks wage-earning employment is entitled to the most favorable treatment provided to foreign nationals in the host country (UNHCR, p. 22). Furthermore, the same article states that if a refugee has been residing in the host country for more than 3 years, as in the case of most Syrians living in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, obstructive labor policies levied on the employment of foreign nationals for protecting the local labor market shall not be applied to that refugee (UNHCR, p. 22). The Article 18 of the Convention requires the host states to provide the refugees with right to self-employment that is not less favorable than the one applying to migrant foreign nationals (UNHCR, pp. 22-23). This means that policies toward entrepreneurial refugees who want to embark on her or his business cannot be more restrictive than policies toward alien entrepreneurs. The same applies to refugees with liberal professions who hold diplomas recognized by the host country, according to article 19 (UNHCR, p. 23).

Education is one of the areas that are granted utmost importance in the Convention. The contracting states are required to provide all refugee children with the same treatment as its own citizens on “elementary education”, according to article 22, titled “Public Education” (UNHCR, p. 24). The Convention further states that refugees should be granted at least the same rights as foreign nationals should they seek to get education other than elementary education (UNHCR, p. 24). This right applies to recognition and conversion of foreign diploma and degrees in order to access to higher education as well (UNHCR, p. 24). Lastly, the Convention has a rather vague language

in regards to social integration of refugees, yet it strictly prohibits discrimination of refugees due to their race, religion or nationality in the third article (UNHCR, p. 17). The Convention further asks the host countries to facilitate the process of naturalization of refugees and ease this process, according to the article 34 (UNHCR, p. 17). These articles in Geneva Convention clearly set a valuable guidance on how to integrate and treat refugees. By succinctly stating in which areas the treatment should be in line with that of nationals or migrants, the Convention provides some important indicators for determining whether a context of reception is positive, negative or neutral in various policy areas. It is particularly important to note that the Convention requires host nations to provide the refugees with at least the same rights of those provided to foreign nationals and in some areas with those provided to the citizens of that country.

Among the three countries that will be compared in this thesis, Turkey is the only country that has signed the 1951 Geneva Convention. Nevertheless, Turkey continues to maintain a geographic limitation to its acceptance of the Convention, which means that only the refugees who are escaping from events which take place in Europe can get the refugee status (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2000). As a result, Syrian refugees are not legally considered as refugees in none of the three countries, since none of the three are bound by the 1951 Geneva Convention on the status of refugees with respect to the Syrians they host. It is then important to look at the EU's directive on temporary protection status to displaced people for more indicators, as Turkey legally recognizes the Syrians as parties under temporary protection.

The EU Directive on Temporary Protection was published in 2000 in order to establish the minimum standards for providing temporary protection to persons in the event of mass influx of displaced people that cannot return to their homeland (European

Union [EU], 2000). Although the EU sets the maximum duration of temporary protection at one year with another year of potential extension, it is important to examine the directive for the indicators it sets for context of reception of the host countries. The EU sets a rather vague criterion for fulfilling the basic needs of displaced people. It asks member states to provide those under temporary protection with “suitable accommodation” (EU, Article 13, 2000), without defining what a suitable accommodation entails. The Union further asks the nations to provide assistance with social welfare and the means of survival, if they do not have the means to do so (EU, Article 13, 2000). Thus the Union does ask the nations to help the displaced people with their basic needs such as housing and food, but it does not set detailed guidance as to the minimum standards on each case. As per medical care, the Union requires the nations to provide “at least emergency care and essential treatment of illness” and necessary medical treatment to persons with special needs such as “unaccompanied minors or persons who have undergone torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence” (EU, Article 13, 2000). In comparison to the language in Geneva Convention and MIPEx indicators, the EU sets a lower bar in regards to minimum standards for assisting with the basic needs of displaced people.

The EU asks the states to allow employed and self-employed activities of displaced people as long as they remain under temporary protection, with the reservation of certain “rules applicable to the profession” (EU, Article 12, 2000). Nevertheless, the Union thereafter says that the countries may prioritize citizens and foreign nationals that are legal residents, for reasons related to the policies regarding the labor market (EU, Article 12, 2000). As per education, the EU requires all the members to grant educational access to all displaced people that are under the age of 18, in line with the

rights of the citizens of the Union (EU, Article 14, 2000). The same article on education states that if the individual seeking to get education is an adult, it is up to the nation to assist her or him with access to education (EU, Article 14, 2000). The Union does not provide detailed instructions on social integration either, with vaguely stating that the nations are required to oblige with international law that forbids discrimination (EU, 2000). In sum, the EU's directive on granting temporary protection to displaced persons makes references to all policy areas that will be examined in this thesis; yet it does so without explicitly providing indicators that can be used in this research in order to determine whether a context of reception is negative, neutral or positive. All three blueprints' indicators are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Indicators for Different Policy Areas in MIPEX, Geneva Convention and EU Directive on Temporary Protection

| | MIPEX | Geneva Convention | EU Directive on Temporary Protection |
|--|---|---|--|
| Basic Needs (Housing, Food, Healthcare) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to housing equal with nationals or not • Conditionality of health entitlements • Extent of health coverage • Cultural responsiveness in health services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing treatment to be as favorable as that of aliens • Rationing to be in line with that of citizens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members should provide suitable accommodation • Assistance with means of survival • At least emergency care |
| Employment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to labor market • Access to self-employment • Recognition of academic and professional qualifications • Working conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment for wage-earning, self-employment and liberal professionals shall be at least like aliens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow employed, self-employed activities during temporary protection but nationals and foreigners may be prioritized |
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of state support for access to compulsory and higher education • Extent of state support in access to vocational training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee children should get same treatment as nationals in compulsory education • Treatment for education higher than compulsory education shall be at least like aliens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members required to grant educational access to all displaced people under the age of 18 • Up to governments to provide education to adults |
| Social Integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws prohibiting discrimination • State assistance for victims of discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict prohibition of discrimination of refugees due to their race, religion or nationality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nations are required to oblige with international law that forbids discrimination |

As can be seen in the comparison of the three blueprints for indicators, MIPEX and the Geneva Convention will be most useful for this thesis. As MIPEX focuses on migrant policies rather than refugee policies, indicators to determine whether Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon provide a positive context of reception in regards to the Syrian refugees' basic needs will be more based on criteria set in Geneva Convention of 1951, with the exception of healthcare services, for which MIPEX indicators provide a detailed account. MIPEX indicators will also be useful in determining the contexts of reception in employment and education. Lastly, in regards to the context of reception in social integration and discrimination, as MIPEX indicators only look at the existence of necessary legal framework, a self-proposed indicator of societal receptivity, which looks at the extent of which refugees are welcomed in a society will be introduced.

The Geneva Convention requires host countries to provide Syrian refugees with shelter conditions that are as good as or better than that of other foreign nationals in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, and MIPEX indicator looks at whether migrant residents' access to housing is equal with that of citizens. As a result, if housing conditions of refugees are as good as that of citizens, the context of reception will be considered positive, in line with the combination of indicators set forward in the Geneva Convention and MIPEX. The context of reception will be neutral if the conditions are somewhat in line with that of citizens, and negative if worse. If food and nutrition conditions are as good as that of the citizens of the three countries, the context of reception will be considered positive, taking the Geneva Convention clause on rationing as a reference. If conditions are somewhat in line with the citizens' conditions, the context of reception will be considered neutral and if they are worse than that of the citizens, the country will have a negative context of reception in food and nutrition

provision to the Syrian refugees. A sub-indicator to determine this will be based on the daily or monthly allowance given to Syrian refugees by the host government. That allowance will then be compared with the unemployment benefit or stipends citizens receive in that country.

As per healthcare, if a country has met all three aforementioned MIPEX indicators, which are unconditional health entitlements, same coverage as nationals and interpreters free of charge, the country will have a positive context of reception in health services provision. If a country meets only one or two indicators, the context will be considered neutral. Should a country meet none of the MIPEX indicators in healthcare, the context of reception will be considered negative.

MIPEX indicators will be utilized in employment as well with a minor tweak. For each low-skilled workers, professionals and entrepreneurs, access to labor market will be analyzed through MIPEX indicators separately. For a given group, if a country is regularly issuing work permits to Syrians from all classes (working, professionals, and entrepreneurs) and working conditions are the same as that of the citizens for all groups, the context of reception will be considered positive. If a country is setting some obstacles to work permits for some groups but the working conditions are the same as that of the citizens for all groups, the context of reception will be considered neutral. If a country is does not issue work permits to Syrians, leaving majority of them out of the labor force, and/or the working conditions are worse than that of the citizens, the context of reception will be considered negative. In this way, MIPEX's working conditions indicator will play a key role. Even if there is a continued flow of work permit issuances for a given group in a country without many hurdles, if the workers aren't getting equal treatment with nationals, the context of reception will be considered negative.

As per education, MIPEX's access to compulsory and higher education and access to vocational training indicators are going to be taken as references and will be combined with directives written in both Geneva Convention and the EU's directive on temporary protection. If the conditions for Syrian refugee children's access to compulsory education are worse than that of nationals, the context of reception for education will be automatically considered negative. If the conditions for access to compulsory education are in line with citizens' but there are issues with higher education and vocational training, the context of reception will be considered neutral. If the access to compulsory education is as easy for Syrian refugee children as it is for the children of citizens of a country and if there are supportive measures for higher education and vocational training, the context of reception for education will then be considered positive. The education indicators will be further supported by sub-indicators: the rate of school attendance for children under 18 and any data on child labor. These sub-indicators will be used to determine whether the children of Syrian refugees get the same opportunities as the children of citizens in education.

Lastly, none of the three blueprints set clear indicators that can be used for the social integration section of this research. All three of them mostly focus on the legal requirements of a state in preventing discrimination, whereas the issue can be persistent in the society despite the existence of a thorough legal framework. As this paper attempts to discover whether a host society as a whole has a welcoming and supportive attitude toward Syrian refugees, a new set of indicators will be introduced for the purpose of this research. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Social Policy and Development defines social integration as a “dynamic and principled process where all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain

peaceful social relations” (UN, 2005). In line with the definition, there needs to be an inclusive and peaceful dialogue in the society in order to achieve a successful social integration. No member shall feel like they are being discriminated against in a socially integrated society, neither the citizens of the host nation nor the Syrian refugees.

Therefore, the indicators to measure the context of reception in social integration will be based on discriminative actions and acts of hatred against the Syrian refugees. The context of reception in social integration will be considered negative if there are continuous recorded instances of verbal acts of discrimination and physical violence targeting the Syrian refugees in a host country. If there are some verbal acts of discrimination but no records of physical violence, the context of reception will be neutral. The context of reception will be positive if there are no verbal acts of discrimination and physical violence. Non-violent protests against Syrian refugees, false and misleading news articles trying to instigate prejudice against Syrians and discriminative political speeches will be among the examples of verbal act of discrimination. Instances of physical violence, rather self-explanatory, will cover any examples of physical attack targeting Syrian refugees, from damaging properties of Syrian refugees to actually inflicting physical harm on the refugees. News stories on instances of discrimination, surveys on citizens' view of the Syrians and interviews with a citizen from each country will be among evidences in determining the context of reception in social integration. Instances of discrimination in the job market, both by the state and by employers, will not be covered in this part as these examples will be evaluated in the employment section of socioeconomic integration chapter for each country. Indicators that will be used in this research are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Indicators That Will Be Used in This Research

| | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| Housing | Syrian refugees' access to housing is as good as that of citizens | Access to housing is somewhat worse than that of citizens | Access to housing is worse than that of citizens |
| Food | Access to food (allowances, stipends) is as good as that of citizens | Access to food for Syrian refugees is somewhat worse than that of citizens | Access to food (allowances, stipends) for Syrians is worse than that of citizens |
| Health | Host has all three for Syrian refugees: 1. Unconditional health entitlements 2. Same coverage as nationals 3. Interpreters/Cultural Assistance | Host meets 1 or 2 condition(s) | Host meets none of the conditions |
| Employment | 1. Host regularly issues work permits for all workers, professionals and entrepreneurs 2. Working conditions are not worse than that of citizens for each group | 1. Some issues with work permits for some groups 2. Working conditions are not worse than that of citizens for each group | 1. Major issues with work permits for some or all groups 2. Working conditions are worse than that of citizens |
| Education | 1. Access to compulsory education is the same as that of citizens 2. Access to vocational trainings and higher education for adults is the same as that of citizens | 1. Access to compulsory education is the same as that of citizens 2. Issues with access to vocational trainings & higher education | 1. Access to compulsory education is worse than that of citizens (School attendance, child labor) |
| Social Integration | 1. No record of verbal acts of discrimination 2. No record of collective physical attacks against Syrian refugees | 1. Some instances of verbal acts of discrimination 2. No collective physical violence | 1. Verbal acts of discrimination 2. Collective physical violence |

There are 6 interviews conducted for this research, for the purpose of providing the point of view of locals on the responses of their government and fellow citizens to this crisis. Interviewees in Lebanon and Jordan have an experience working with or for refugees, and thus have a good understanding of the policies and social tensions in their countries. A Jordanian scholar who conducts fieldwork and research in refugee populated areas, a Lebanese journalist who works extensively with the refugees and visits areas and camps where refugees live and a Lebanese engineer who works on infrastructure projects will provide insight into the daily life in the countries that are hosting the highest number of Syrian refugees. All interviewees were asked the same questions: What are some of the issues Syrian refugees face in regards to their basic needs such as housing, food and health care in your country? Are there any social tensions between the citizens of your country and the Syrian refugees? What are some of the issues refugees face in regards to competition in the job market, sectarian issues and discrimination, according to your own observations? How do you find your government's policies toward Syrian refugees in general? Would you argue that your government has created a positive context of reception for Syrian refugees? As the author of the thesis is a Turkish citizen, interviews in Turkey are conducted with two locals who are affected by the refugee crisis and a refugee child labor. Two locals, a taxi driver and a real estate agent, were asked the same questions as above, whereas the refugee child was asked questions inquiring into the personal struggles of the individual and his family in Turkey. Interviews with Lebanese journalist and Jordanian scholar were conducted via email. Interview with the Lebanese engineer was conducted by phone and all interviews in Turkey were conducted face-to-face.

CHAPTER 4

TURKEY

4.1 Background

It comes as no surprise that so many displaced Syrians wanted to seek refuge in Turkey, which shares its longest land border with Syria. For Syrians trying to escape their war-torn homeland, the northern neighbor was seen as one of the safest options, since the country had a relatively stronger political and economic establishment compared to the other countries in the region. Geography played an important role, too. For most northern Syrians, crossing to Turkey was the cheapest and the only feasible option and it being the last stop before Europe made it an even more appealing destination. Many of them had to choose Turkey as a transit station for pursuing the shiny European dream at the expense of losing their beloved ones and even their own lives. The bloodier the civil war turned with numerous extremist factions taking advantage of the power vacuum, the more Syrians lined up along the Turkish border gates.

The start of the crisis in Syria has also opened a scar in Turkey's relations with Syria. Turkish government's criticisms against the Syrian government's response to the crisis were not welcomed by the al-Assad regime. As the spat between Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Turkey and Bashar al-Assad's Syria grew, Turkey began supporting the Syrian opposition and asking for the removal of al-Assad, whom it blamed for murdering civilians with conventional and chemical weapons.

The ties between Syria's Bashar al-Assad and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan began to sour with the latter criticizing the Syrian regime for human rights violations in early 2011. The rift between Erdogan and Assad families, which once went on a holiday

together, has deepened with both sides attacking each other as the civil war progressed and eventually turned into an enmity. The hostility between the former good friends was vividly clear in the leaked emails of Syrian first lady Asma al-Assad when she was asked by Qatari princess Mayassa al-Thani whether she can share her email address with Erdogan's wife (Macdonald, 2012). "I use this account only for family and friends. It would be difficult for me at this stage to consider her in either category after the insults they have directed towards the president" (Macdonald, 2012) Asma al-Assad responded, according to media reports. This crack between the ruling families of two neighbors played a crucial role in shaping Turkey's policies toward Syrian civil war. Yet straining of the ties between the two ruling families was not the only factor shaping Turkey's attitude toward Syrian refugees. Some scholars argue that Turkey's broad aim to assert its authority in the region by underscoring its soft power was one of the reasons why the country adopted a welcoming approach to the Syrian refugees at the beginning of the conflict (Aras and Mencutek, 2015, p. 194). In fact, from the very early stages of the conflict, Turkey has implemented an "open doors" policy toward refugees from its southern neighbor, accompanying its policy of supporting "moderate opposition groups" that are fighting in its neighbor to topple the Assad regime (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2015). Aras and Mencutek argue that this policy was a different approach than Turkey's responses to past refugee crises, such as the Kurdish refugee influx from Iraq, and the country's ambition to become a regional power had an impact on its approach to Syrian refugees (2015, p. 194).

It is then important to examine whether Turkey's open doors policy toward Syrian refugees was accompanied by a positive context of reception, as humanitarian conditions for refugees could also be inadequate in an initially welcoming host country.

4.2 Basic needs

According to Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), which has been coordinating Turkey's response to the Syrian crisis, the country currently hosts around quarter million Syrian refugees in camps (AFAD, 2017). The latest information on Ministry of Interior General Directorate of Migration Management website reveals that Syrians are hosted in 26 camps in 10 cities in southern and southeastern Turkey (2016). These camps have "temporary housing facilities equipped with schools, hospitals and athletic facilities" (AFAD, 2017), according to information on AFAD's website. The government-run institution also states that the country provides free healthcare to all registered Syrians, education to about half a million Syrian children in Turkish schools, vocational training courses to around quarter million Syrians (AFAD, 2017). Furthermore, the EU and World Food Program collaborated with the Turkish government to initiate the Kizilay Food Card scheme, which is an aid program that allows Syrian refugees to use specific debit cards to buy food from stores and markets ("One Million Refugees," 2017). 34 U.S. dollars are deposited on Kizilay cards of over 1 million refugees every month with the program as of late 2017, according to state-run media ("One Million Refugees," 2017).

These initiatives may be a reflection of the country's attempt to create a positive context of reception for the basic needs of Syrian refugees. However, considering the fact that only quarter million out of 3.6 million registered refugees live in well-equipped refugee camps, more than 90 percent of registered refugees in Turkey are scattered across the country, struggling to make ends meet. Upon entering the country, Syrian refugees are either assigned to temporary housing facilities or may be sent to cities that are designated by Turkey's Ministry of Interior General Directorate of Migration

Management, according to the information provided by the government body (2014). Defining the refugees as parties that are “under temporary protection,” the Turkish law clearly states that the government has the saying in where Syrian refugees are allowed to settle once they enter the country: “Those under temporary protection may be allowed to stay in cities designated by General Directorate if it is deemed that public order, public security or public health will not be harmed” (2014). The temporary protection status, however, allows them to enjoy rights such as unlimited stay, free healthcare, education, housing and food for those staying in camps and protects them from deportation (ORSAM and TESEV, 2015, p. 13). However, some of the refugees staying outside camps and in designated cities across the country only get the healthcare benefit.

Many Syrian and non-Syrian refugees face unemployment and education issues in these government assigned cities. Especially the ones in central and eastern Anatolian cities struggle with underdeveloped refugee infrastructure combined with language and social barriers and a lack of an integration scheme, leaving them no choice but to illegally relocate to more affluent Turkish cities (Kirisci, 2017). Nevertheless, life in major, industrialized Turkish cities, where most Syrians live, is not easy either. Major cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa are known to have the highest rental fees, which makes homelessness a major issue for some Syrian families that are unable to afford to rent an apartment in these cities (Kingsley, 2017). The governorates of each host province give 250 liras allowance for Syrian refugee households living outside camps (“Suriyelilerle İlgili Doğru,” 2016) but this amount is certainly not enough to rent a proper place for a family in most of the Anatolian cities, let alone the aforementioned major ones, where annual increase in rent prices have reached double digits in the recent years. According to reports, “75% of Syrian non-camp refugees live in houses or flats,

while 25% live in informal settlements or makeshift arrangements” (Boluk and Erdem, 2016). So a significant number of them, over 800,000 to be precise, are either sparing no effort to make enough money to pay their rents or are either homeless or drifting through the streets, trying to find a stable shelter. A Turkish real estate agent confirms the findings in interview: “Although there are some rich Syrians that caused rent increases in some neighborhoods, most of the Syrian refugees live in very small apartments, especially in large cities like Istanbul. Some of them live in tiny 2-bedroom apartments with 10-15 fellow refugees, while some of them are not even that lucky” (Personal communication, November, 2017). In contrast, 99.8% of Turkish households live in residential dwellings all across the country, according to a research published by Turkish statistics agency in 2013 (TUIK, 2013). About 70% of Turkish households own their houses and thus do not bear the burden of paying rent, the same research shows (TUIK, 2013). This shows that there is a huge housing conditions gap between the refugees and Turkish nationals. Turkey has been insufficient in providing Syrian refugees with housing conditions that are comparable to those of its citizens, which indicates a negative context of reception, in line with the shelter indicator mentioned in the methodology.

Despite the lack of reliable data on malnutrition among Syrian refugees, the context of reception in food security issue can be determined by comparing the sub-indicator of food stipends and monthly aid, based on the Geneva Convention article on rationing. The World Food Program said back in 2012 that the Kizilay Food Card program was initiated in order to help each refugee with getting a basic diet of daily 2,100 calories (World Food Program [WFP], 2012). In 2012, the program vowed 80 Turkish liras per month per refugee (WFP, 2012), and over the six years the monthly

allowance increased merely by 40 liras to 120 liras, according to the official website of the program (Kızılay Kart, 2017). Turkish government, on the other hand, provides 670.64 liras of monthly allowance for citizens without income, insurance or guardians, according to the Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations (2018). Those households with monthly income of less than the one third of the minimum wage get free healthcare insurance with a program called “Green Card” (General Directorate of Development and Legislation, 1992) and unemployed citizens may get up to 1,310 liras a month for half a year if they fulfill some requirements (Turkish Employment Agency [ISKUR], 2018). It is clear that there is significant aid gap in terms of food security between the Syrian refugees, most of whom fled the war by leaving their lives behind and Turkish citizens with low income. 120 liras distributed via Kizilay cards, which is a program funded by the EU, is certainly not enough money to survive in the streets of Turkey. It is then possible to say that the context of reception in terms of food safety has been negative, as the government acts indifferently to the formation of a rationing gap between Syrian refugees and its own poor citizens.

As seen above, the Turkish government can definitely do more to alleviate some of the major issues related to basic needs of Syrian refugees. The giant room for improvement in the situation of Syrian refugees demonstrates that despite opening its doors to millions of refugees in a positive step, the Turkish government failed to provide a positive context of reception by ignoring and/or not being able to take care of the most humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees. Thus, the previous assumption that Turkey has a positive context of reception in regards to the basic needs of Syrian refugees proves to be faulty, as currently, the context seems to be negative.

One exceptional area is healthcare, in which the country has managed to successfully provide an inclusive and unrestricted service by allowing all registered Syrian refugees to get free healthcare service at Turkish state-run hospitals. Health entitlements of Syrian refugees in Turkey have been unconditional, meaning they do not have to pay the full cost of any of the services in person (Karaaslan, 2016). Moreover, all Syrian refugees living inside and outside camps have access to free healthcare (ORSAM & TESEV, 2015, p. 13); and the coverage is the same as the one that is offered to the citizens (Karaaslan, 2016). Although there are some issues with cultural assistance, the government also provides translators and interpreters to health facilities that have high concentration of refugees (Karaaslan, 2016). Arabic-speaking health personnel were appointed to many polyclinics that serve Syrian refugees (Girit, 2015) and the government started working on issuance of special work permits to Syrian doctors in 2017 (Gündoğan, 2017). In fact, some Turkish citizens have criticized the extent of healthcare services provided to Syrian refugees by claiming that the healthcare benefits they get from the government well exceed that of Turkish nationals. For instance, Yavuz argues that (2015) a Turkish citizen has to partake in financing the healthcare system by paying fees whereas all expenses of a Syrian refugee are covered by the government for the same exact service. Yavuz then declares that a government should not provide a better healthcare service to refugees than its own citizens and that doing so could harm the peace in the society and the hospitality of the Turks. The scholar, however, neglects to mention that there is a huge income gap between the refugees and Turkish citizens. The average household income of a Syrian refugee family was at 1,089 liras in 2016 (Balcılar, 2016), whereas in the same period, the average income of a single Turkish citizen in a household was at about 1,600 liras (TUIK, 2016),

which shows that an average Turkish household could be making at least four to five times that of an average Syrian household. It is also important to note that Turkey's unconditional and inclusive healthcare service for Syrian refugees does not usually come at a high quality. In fact, the quality of healthcare services in Turkey has deteriorated to a great extent. A presentation by TEPAV's Sak argues that public service provision capacity is diminishing in refugee-dense provinces, as physicians available per 10,000 people in provinces like Gaziantep, Kilis, Sanliurfa and Hatay were recorded to be below Turkey's average in 2015 (Sak, 2017, p. 6). Another report by ORSAM and TESEV also shows that there are serious capacity issues in state hospitals near the border with Syria, as the refugees take up 30% to 40% of the capacity in those hospitals (ORSAM & TESEV, 2015, p. 9). There is definitely a room for improvement in Turkey's healthcare provision to the refugees. Although the country's context of reception in healthcare would further advance if the government works on improving the quality of service with new infrastructure, doctor appointments and augmentation of cultural assistance services, it is possible to call the context of reception in this policy area positive, as health entitlements are unconditional, coverage is the same as that of nationals and there is a continuous effort to equip the health facilities with interpreters. Nonetheless, Turkey's context of reception for basic needs is mostly negative, as millions of refugees are outside camps, scattered across the country, living in small, cramped apartments or battling with homelessness; and as the aid distributed by the EU, Turkish government and WFP barely fulfill their immediate needs, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Contexts of Reception for Basic Needs in Turkey

| Basic Needs | |
|-------------|----------|
| Shelter | Negative |
| Food | Negative |
| Healthcare | Positive |

4.3 Socioeconomic integration

Although restrictions do not stop thousands of refugees from relocating to economically more feasible cities, a lot are at stake for refugees taking this path. “Those who move in search of work lose their legal status, without which they cannot enroll their children in school,” according to Human Rights Watch report (HRW, 2017). It is true that current Turkish laws and practices in place tend to favor Syrian refugees over non-Syrians.

While “non-Syrians must obtain and maintain legal status by registering every two weeks in their assigned city” and get permits for even short travels, there are slightly more relaxed restrictions imposed on Syrians (HRW, 2017). However, provincial governorates hosting refugees are allowed to decide on their own on how to handle refugee issues such as housing, food and transport; and they do introduce strict restrictions for Syrians too. For instance, in November 2017, governorates began banning Syrian refugees living in their jurisdiction from traveling out of these provinces without obtaining a travel permit, in line with directions from the Interior Ministry (“Valilikten Suriyeliler İçin,” 2017).

There are many restrictions in the employment area as well. According to some reports “less than 1 percent of Syrians of working age are in the formal labor market,” meaning almost all of the Syrian refugees work without legal permits in the informal market country (Kadkoy, 2017). Working in the informal labor market comes with

accepting to work for a lower wage than those in the formal market and without vital perks like pension and insurance. Syrians with “temporary protection” status can apply for a work permit in Turkey after completing 6 months of stay. Nevertheless, as of November 2017, of the millions of working age Syrians in Turkey, only 15,022 were given legal work permits since the program to grant refugees with legal permits commenced in 2016, according to Turkey’s Minister of Labor Julide Sarieroglu, who was cited by Yeni Çağ, which also posted a video of her speech (“Bakan Jülide Sarieroğlu,” 2017).

Part of the reason why a lot of them do not apply or cannot get these work permits has to do with the procedure. “Only companies can apply for these permits, not employees, and they must pay monthly social security for each worker — even if it’s a Syrian who doesn’t plan to stay in Turkey long-term,” so “some employers say it’s not worth the hassle,” reported Lauren Frayer from NPR (2017). A manager of a charity that teaches refugees methods of construction work spoke to Frayer: “It’s a very exhausting procedure. It takes nearly three months to get permission for the Syrians. It is also difficult for Turkish industry, doing all these procedures” (Frayer, 2017). The manager has not applied for work permits for the Syrian refugees she employs, despite running a civil society organization for their needs, mainly because of the bureaucratic hurdles set forward by the Turkish government (Frayer, 2017).

In addition to issues with obtaining a work permit, “language barriers, restrictions on movement within the country, and difficulty verifying qualifications are cited among barriers to employment for Syrian refugees in Turkey,” leaving “Syrian workers, especially those who are unskilled, vulnerable to exploitation in low-paying, informal jobs” (Ucak and Raman, 2017, p. 19). The government’s reluctance to issue

work permits applies to both low-skilled and professional Syrians. Syrian professionals that want to practice their professions face similar hurdles in work life, as they need to obtain work permits that are not being issued. Many of them run into problems with getting their licenses accredited by the Turkish authorities. For a lot of them language barrier remains an important issue in getting their qualifications verified. In fact, despite the urging need to employ more doctors at state hospitals due to rapid erosion of quality, Turkey has only in 2017 started working on a legislation to provide work permits to Syrian doctors, according to state-run news agency (Gündoğan, 2017).

Working conditions for Syrian refugees are much worse than that of Turkish employees too. The results of a survey by Birlesik Metal-Is, or United Metalworkers Union, with over 600 Turkish and Syrian textile workers demonstrate that the Syrian refugees on average get paid 25 percent lower than their Turkish colleagues for the same work (Turhan, 2017). The same study showed that 33% of the workers were getting less than the minimum wage (Turhan, 2017). As indicators for employment area consist of issuance of work permits and working conditions, it is clear that Turkey has a negative context of reception in employment as the country has not issued work permits for the 99% of the refugees and as the working conditions of the refugees are much worse than that of the citizens.

For Syrian entrepreneurs, on the other hand, the context of reception seems to be more advantaged. In analyzing Turkey's stance on Syrian entrepreneurs, a survey conducted by Building Markets with 230 Syrian-owned SMEs in Istanbul and Gaziantep between January and April 2017 serves as an important source (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 24).

48% of Syrian entrepreneurs that took part in Building Markets survey explained that they have chosen Turkey as the host country to start their businesses largely because of the ease of trade; and 46% of those who joined the survey cited country's developed economy as the main reason (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 24). When surveyors asked both seasoned entrepreneurs and first-timers about their target markets, "trading with the region" was seen as the primary opportunity with 39%; "serving the Syrian refugee market" was the second top option with 23%; and "introducing a new product to the Turkish market" was seen as the third most preferred opportunity with 23% (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 24). The Syrian entrepreneurs' answers to the question on difficulty of doing business were especially striking. Despite some challenges related to doing business in Turkey, overall, 76% Syrian business owners cited the process as "easy or very easy;" and 95% of Syrian business owners considered registering a company to be "easy or very easy" (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 24). In the process of starting their business, 45% of the entrepreneurs used legal and accounting services, and 39% relied on the informal help of fellow Syrians (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 24), which shows the urgent need for assisting the Syrian small and medium enterprise owners with the necessary professional assistance to kick-start their businesses.

When asked about major difficulties Syrian refugees faced while starting up and operating their businesses in Turkey, the top issue cited by them was language barriers with 40%, which was followed by difficult regulatory environment with 19% (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 25). In fact, there have been some hurdles set forward by Turkish municipalities against Syrian entrepreneurs who want to run localized shops serving the needs of Syrians. For instance, Turkey's southern Adana city, which is run by a mayor affiliated with Nationalist Movement Party and home to over 150,000 Syrians, has

banned Arabic signboards and posters and taken them down, in order to protect the Turkish language (“MHP’li Belediyenin Tabela,” 2017). This incident could definitely be an example of a negative context of reception toward Syrians from entrepreneurial class; and if the policy spreads to other provinces, it could definitely change the indices on ease of doing business in Turkey for Syrian entrepreneurs.

Another interesting finding in the Building Markets survey with Syrian business owners was that the Syrian business owners who partnered with Turks tended to be more successful, as more of those that partnered with a Turkish citizen said that their business was at a state of expansion and their average number of employees was higher than those who have not partnered with a Turk (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 25). This shows the need for training the refugee entrepreneurs on intricacies of doing business in Turkey and further emphasizes the need to equip them with language skills, as 30% of Syrian small and medium enterprise owners have no Turkish language skills (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 30). Some entrepreneurs raised issues related to a lack of familiarity with Turkish regulations and diminishing chances of success overtime (Ucak & Raman, 2017, pp. 12-13). A Syrian entrepreneur, who exports non-perishable foods to countries in the region including Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan, told Ucak and Raman:

One [challenge] has been to understand the rules and regulations of the Turkish government, and the banking system here in Turkey because [back in Syria] we rarely used banks. We used cash [for business transactions] and personal relationships, so this was completely new territory for us...I feel like we wasted a lot of money because we did not know what we were doing, and because we did not have the right information on accounting and legal procedures. (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 12)

The entrepreneur further claims that Turkish banking system treats Syrians differently with more complicated rules on verification and transferring money abroad (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 12). Another entrepreneur said: “We were able to survive initially

because of our own personal assets, and now because we are well established and have good accounting and legal support. Other small businesses are not as fortunate” (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 13). 71% of the Syrian entrepreneurs had businesses in Syria before coming to Turkey, meaning only 29% of them are first-time business owners (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 30). This shows that there is not much mobility between different socioeconomic classes. It is very likely that some refugees from the professionals class had invested their life savings into starting a business in Turkey as they were most probably unable to continue their professions due to issues related to verification of their qualifications and getting licenses. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that the overall ease of doing business for Syrian refugees in Turkey and the context of reception for Syrian entrepreneurs have been relatively more positive in comparison to other areas concerning the refugees. Moreover, the expansion of Syrian entrepreneurship in Turkey is not only beneficial to the refugee community but also to the host country's economy. There are many colorful neighborhoods in Istanbul and across Turkey, filled with Syrian shops and restaurants selling imported and made-in-Turkey goods. In fact, the number of Syrian businesses in Turkey is estimated at around 10,000, each employing about 10 people on average, according to a report (Huang, 2018, p. 1). Only in 5 years from 2011 to 2016, Syrians have invested around 350 million dollars in about 6 thousand companies (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 9). 2017 estimate is at additional 90 million dollars investment with anticipated establishment of another 2,000 companies (Ucak & Raman, 2017, p. 9). As Turkey opens its doors to Syrian entrepreneurs by further easing regulatory framework and assisting them with difficulties regarding language and accounting rules, there is no doubt that the burden of hosting more than 3.5 million

refugees will become lighter and the Syrian refugee community in Turkey will take a step toward self-sustenance and prosperity.

The integration of Syrian children into Turkish education system is another one of the most important challenges Turkey faces in the refugee issue. According to UNICEF's September 2017 report on Turkey, of the over 3.5 million registered Syrian refugees, 1.4 million of them are children and of that 1.4 million nearly 1 million children are at school ages, meaning between the ages of 5 and 18 (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2017). Nearly 40% of the Syrian school-aged children are out of school, according to UNICEF estimates based on the number of school-aged and enrolled refugee children in Turkey (UNICEF, 2017). Most of these Syrian children who are out of school work, various reports show. Child labor issue is among the most scarring problems Syrian refugees face in today's Turkey. Unable to afford rents or find well-paying jobs, many Syrian parents let and/or force their children to work at Turkish factories. A lot of them work in the garment and agriculture sector, helping production of apparel, food and other goods (Fair Wear Foundation [FWF], n.d.). Most of them work for 12 hours a day, with 61% of the children receiving "less than 100 Turkish liras per week" (Yalcin, 2016). Some parents interviewed by international media outlets say that they would like to send their children to school, yet they are not financially capable of doing so. "Life in Turkey is so expensive. We just cannot afford it," says a Syrian mother, whose two sons aged 7 and 10 work in a factory, in an interview with Financial Times (Pitel, 2017). Her younger son makes 50 liras per week, working 12 hours Monday through Saturday (Pitel, 2017).

Another child labor, who works at a barbershop in an industrial zone in western Turkish province of Bursa is 12 years old (Personal communication, December, 2017).

His parents have not been able to find a job since they fled the civil war in their country 4 years ago, he said in face-to-face interview. He works from 7 a.m. in the morning until 8 p.m. in the evening for 6 days a week and gets paid half of the minimum wage in Turkey. “I have 3 siblings and 2 of them are working at a textile plant. The other one can't work as she is a baby. I want to go to school but I can't. We can't feed 6 people otherwise,” he said in his broken Turkish (own translation).

He is one of the many Syrian child labors, who work under hard conditions at sweat shop-like enterprises, instead of going to school. It is important to note that education would be free of charge had these children were sent to school. But the negative context of reception in employment reflects on the context of reception in education as well, making numerous Syrian refugee parents to force their school-aged children to work under such harsh conditions.

Language is a very important divide between Turkish and Syrian people, as mentioned before. Turkish and Arabic have different linguistic roots and are written in different alphabets. Language barriers, which are also related to education subject, have an important impact on social and economic integration of Syrians. The Turkish government has not been very effective in organizing vocational courses to teach Turkish language to refugees to speed up their integration. According to a 2016 interview, “out of Kilis Elbeyli camp’s 25,000 Syrian inhabitants, only 39 have been able to attain the C1 proficiency certificate” on Turkish (Kaymaz and Kadkoy, 2016). Overcoming language barriers remains an important problem to fix issues ranging from education to entrepreneurial success. Teaching Turkish to more Syrian refugees will enable Turkey to provide a more positive context of reception across all areas. Turkish

speaking Syrians will integrate into the labor market more easily, adding momentum to Turkey's economic growth.

Overall, it is clear that with 40% of school-aged Syrian refugee children out of school, Syrians' access to compulsory education is more limited than that of the children of Turkish citizens. There are also serious issues with access to vocational trainings such as language courses for Syrian refugees. As the context of reception in education is evaluated by looking at the two indicators of access to compulsory education and access to vocational trainings, Turkey's context of reception in education is evidently negative.

Turkey is in a sensitive period in terms of ethnic tension, which also has an impact on employment opportunities of Syrian refugees from all economic classes. Tensions between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens are high in cities hosting the highest numbers of the refugees; and these cities have already had issues with unemployment prior to the arrival of refugees (Kaymaz & Kadkoy, 2016). Especially in southern cities and some parts of metropolitan cities, Turkish local and national media frequently report street fights, lynching attempts and other clashes between Syrians and Turkish citizens. Many refugees and locals have been seriously wounded in these violent incidents; and there have even been some fatal clashes. Hundreds of Turkish locals also held protests against Syrian refugees in some of the provinces that host numerous refugees.

For instance, a series of protests were organized on social media and continued for days in multiple southern and southeastern cities in the summer of 2014. In July 2014, about a thousand Turkish locals in southeastern Kahramanmaraş province took to the streets to protest the presence of Syrian refugees in their city, chanting, "We don't want Syrians", *Hürriyet* newspaper reported (Yolcu, 2014, own translation). Angry

crowds clashed with police, attacked a bypassing car of a Syria family and attempted to lynch them, according to Hürriyet, which also posted a video of the violent events (Yolcu, 2014). There were several protests in Adana and Gaziantep provinces in the same month as well. An angry crowd in Gaziantep attacked Syrian shops, shouting, “Turkey belongs to us,” after a car with a Syrian plate injured a 54-year-old mother and her 5-year-old child in a traffic accident, online news outlet Diken reported (“Adana ve Maraş’tan,” 2014, own translation). A few days after that event, 20 people were detained in another anti-Syrian protest attended by 300 hundred locals in Gaziantep city center (“Gaziantep’te Suriyelileri İstemiyoruz,” 2014). A local media outlet interviewed some of the locals that marched to the Gaziantep municipality building:

They harass our children; make inappropriate hand gestures to our sisters in the streets. Rents increased because of the Syrians. Employers are firing us and hiring Syrians. They are enjoying their hookah pipes in the parks of Gaziantep instead of fighting. We have given them our beds and all of our items in our homes. While we are doing all this, they are attacking our mothers, sisters and honors. We are not against them but the state should gather them in camps. (“Fatma Şahin’e Suriyeli,” 2014, own translation)¹

Another local complained about lack of beds in hospitals due to the influx of refugees:

When a Syrian goes to the hospital, there is no need for appointment, no need for queuing up, no need for money. I have worked for this country; I have given my years. But I don’t have as much rights as [them.] I am the foreigner and Syrians are the owners of this country. (“Fatma Şahin’e Suriyeli,” 2014, own translation)²

In other events, a group of about 10 masked people raided Syrian refugees’ shops with butcher cleavers and sticks over commercial competition around the same date in southern Adana province (“Adana’da Satırlı ve Maskeli,” 2014). In August 2014, a month after the violent protests, locals gathered in the streets of Gaziantep again, this

¹ See Appendix for the original Turkish

² See Appendix for the original Turkish

time protesting the alleged murder of a Turkish landlord by his Syrian tenant (“Suriyeli Ev Sahibini,” 2014). Special operations unit of Turkish police had to rescue the family of the alleged Syrian murderer by using pepper spray to disperse the angry crowd that surrounded the house, escorting them out in an armored vehicle, daily Milliyet reported (2014).

There were more recent incidents as well. In February 2017, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported that Turkish locals of Yuregir district in southern Adana province attacked Syrian refugees living in tents with weapons for an unknown reason (Bozkurt, 2017). 3 Syrian refugees suffered gunshot wounds (2 of them were in critical condition) and angry locals set their tents on fire and broke the windows of their cars (Bozkurt, 2017). The tensions between the host community and Syrian refugees are not limited to southern and southeastern provinces of Turkey. In the capital Ankara, a brawl broke out between the locals of Demetevler neighborhood and Syrian refugees after rumors that a Syrian refugee raped a 5-year-old girl spread on social media, according to media reports in July 2017 (“Suriyelilerle Vatandaşlar Arasında,” 2017). In Istanbul’s Guvercintepe neighborhood of Basaksehir district, locals torched a building occupied by around 30 young Syrians and fired shots and threw stones at Syrian refugees’ shops after rumors that a Turkish boy was stabbed by a Syrian boy (Alkaç, 2015). A Syrian shopkeeper from the neighborhood told Hürriyet Daily News that he was in fear in the wake of violent events: “I came here with my family three years ago. Now we are afraid of walking on the streets” (2015). Meanwhile, an elected neighborhood official, or mukhtar,³ told the newspaper that the crime rate increased with the arrival of Syrians (Alkaç, 2015). It is important to note that many false rumors that circulate on the internet

³ A mukhtar (“Muhtar” in Turkish) is an elected official of a neighborhood or village

regarding criminal activities by refugees contribute to the negative perception on Syrian refugees in the country.

While some Turks, like the mukhtar, point at crime related concerns, the influx of refugees changing the labor market structure in many cities plays an important role in the rise of tensions as well. Some Turkish communities have been complaining about diminishing job opportunities, shrinking wages and rising rents with the arrival of Syrian refugees (Boluk & Erdem, 2016). A report published by Turkey's central bank partly refutes these claims. Although the employment prospects of natives have been negatively affected by the arrival of refugees, there was no significant impact on their wage outlook, according to a research published by Central Bank employees (Ceritoğlu, Gürçihan-Yüncüler, Torun, & Tümen, 2017). Some locals, however, still claim that loss of employment opportunities was coupled with shrinking wages after the arrival of Syrian refugees, even in provinces that are not so close to the Syrian border. "Syrians have taken most cheap jobs away from Turks in Konya. Employing a Syrian refugee works for business owners because Syrians are willing to work for way less than us. So our wages go down as well," said a native cab driver in interview in central Konya (Personal communication, December, 2017).

Nevertheless, neither the crime related concerns, nor the labor market linked ones should be an excuse for the ongoing violence. Social integration hinges on a peaceful society that does not discriminate against any member. Xenophobic protests, physical attacks and verbal provocations are discriminative acts that reinforce prejudice against the refugees, making thousands of innocent ones feel unsafe in a foreign land, where they came to escape life-threatening conditions. There are many Turks that embrace and help the refugees as well, perhaps more than the ones that view them

negatively. Yet it is the repeated occurrence of violent events that stick to minds, place fears in the hearts of the innocent. A series of collective verbal acts of discrimination and physical violence toward Syrian refugees hence make Turkey's context of reception in social integration negative, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Contexts of Reception for Socioeconomic Integration in Turkey

| Socioeconomic Integration | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Education | Negative |
| Employment | Negative |
| Social Integration | Negative |

4.4 International and civil society support

International and civil society organizations have been assisting the Turkish government with its response to the crisis from the very beginning, in order to alleviate the context of reception. Especially, the United Nations and its subsidiary organizations have been playing an important role in mitigating the refugee crisis in the country. Turkish government has been leading the refugee response with the UNHCR, which has been “providing direct operational support, capacity building and technical advice to the Turkish authorities” (UNHCR, 2017, p. 2). The UNHCR also serves as a bridge between various UN agencies, international partners and civil society organizations, coordinating their efforts to create an impact in the most needed areas and avoid wasting resources by duplication (UNHCR, 2017, p. 2). The UNHCR is working on improving all aspects of a refugee's life such as the registration and determination of refugee status, resettlement, protection, education, basic needs and cash-based interventions, livelihoods, health and

camp coordination and camp management (UNHCR, 2017, pp. 2-5). The UN agency verifies registration data of 2.7 million Syrian refugees under Turkey's temporary protection in cooperation with Turkey's Directorate General of Migration Management, registers new asylum-seekers, undertakes resettlement processes for refugees under dire security conditions, offers advanced Turkish language courses in coordination with Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, procures Turkish language textbooks (over 900,000 so far), provides winter assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers, delivers grants and cash assistance for education, shelter and livelihoods, improves refugees' access to the labor market through training programs, alleviates the barriers in healthcare service delivery through interpreters in hospitals and finally supports AFAD in managing refugee camps in south eastern Turkey (UNHCR, 2017, pp. 2-5). There is no doubt that the UNHCR needs a great deal of financial support to get all these projects done. Unfortunately, constant funding gaps disallow the UNHCR to deliver all these services in full capacity. In fact, as of late 2017, the UNHCR was able to find funding for only 39% of its funding need for the projects for Syrian refugees in Turkey (UNHCR, 2017, p. 1). The UNHCR says (2017) that 61% of the funding requested for Turkey, which is worth nearly a quarter billion dollars was still missing (p. 1). In sum, the UNHCR continuously works to improve the context of reception for Syrian refugees in Turkey. They have turned negative and neutral contexts of reception in basic needs and social integration into advantaged ones for thousands of Syrian refugees. Nevertheless, the vast funding gap illustrates the road untraveled in creating a positive context of reception for the majority of the Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Another UN body, the UNDP, has been working on projects such as “strengthening municipal services with a particular focus on waste management” with a

budget of 8.74 million dollars, “strengthening the municipal capacities on public services and creating public areas/social zones” with a budget of about 10 million dollars, and “income generation for Syrian women in cooperation with a garment company based in Turkey” with a budget of 303 thousand dollars. (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2017, p. 3) Yet all these projects have a limited scope and only reach out to a small portion of the Syrian refugees living in the country. The first project led to diversion of 7,200 tons of recyclable solid waste from landfills per year, helping Kilis Municipality extend the life cycle of Kilis sanitary landfill by approximately two years; but only a little over a hundred thousand Syrians living in six different camps benefited from UNDP's support to enhance solid waste management capacity in Sanliurfa, Kilis and Gaziantep (UNDP, 2017, p. 4). UNDP's second project, which is on providing vocational training courses in different occupations, reached only 1,810 Syrians of the around 3.6 million living in Turkey (UNDP, 2017, p. 4). The third project allowed 350 Syrian women to engage in income generation activities by working in the manufacturing sector in cooperation with a Turkish garment company (UNDP, 2017, p. 4). These projects definitely improved the context of reception for Syrian refugees who took part in them but reaching out to only a few thousands among millions of refugees living under crippling conditions demonstrates the need for expanding the scopes of these projects.

The European Union has so far promised to provide the highest amount of financial aid to Syrian refugees in Turkey amongst all organizations, with 3 billion euros pledged from 2016 to 2017 (European Commission, 2018). Nevertheless, of that pledged amount only 1.4 billion euros are provided in 2016 and 2017, and of that 1.4 billion euros, 998 million euros went to EU's program called “Emergency Social Safety Net,”

also known as the Kizilay card program in Turkey (European Commission, 2018). The EU claims that the program that is conducted in coordination with the World Food Program and various Turkish agencies has reached over 1.1 million refugees as of January 2018 (European Commission, 2018). There is no doubt that Kizilay card program has been effective in meeting the immediate basic needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees, yet as previously mentioned, 34 dollars a month is far from enough to meet the basic needs of even a nuclear family in Turkey. Excluding the Kizilay card program, the EU has provided 400 million euros for the needs of the Syrian refugees so far, including 84 million euros for bi-monthly cash transfers to refugee families, whose children attend school in Turkey (European Commission, 2018). The EU funds a total of 45 humanitarian projects in Turkey, with 19 organizations working closely with Turkish organizations to provide protection, healthcare and education to Syrian refugees (European Commission, 2018). The context of reception in Turkey, especially in regards to basic needs of the refugees, certainly improved thanks to the EU's support but it was clearly not enough to turn it into a positive one.

Furthermore, the EU's efforts in Turkey have been heavily criticized for being hypocritical, as it has signed a deal with the Turkish government on March 18, 2016, in an attempt to prevent refugee inflow to the union from Turkey (European Commission, 2017). As the crisis deepened, a number of EU members decided to introduce border controls to protect themselves from the rising inflow (European Commission, 2017). The EU heads of states urged to make a deal with the Turkish government after “more than one million Syrian refugees arrived in the EU in 2015” (European Commission, 2017). According to the EU, the core principle of the agreement entailed the following:

All new irregular migrants or asylum seekers crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands will be returned to Turkey, after an individual assessment of their asylum claims in line with EU and international law. For every Syrian being returned to Turkey, another Syrian will be resettled to the EU from Turkey directly (1:1 mechanism). (European Commission, 2017)

As of January 2018, “916 irregular migrants have been returned from Greece to Turkey and more than 4,000 Syrian refugees resettled from Turkey to EU Member States”

(European Commission, 2017). This may appear as a small number considering the fact that there are hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees on both sides of the Aegean Sea. Nevertheless, registration rate at refugee hotspots has jumped to 100% from 8% and arrivals to the EU from Turkey have slumped to 27,711 from 988,703 in 2015, demonstrating the “success” of the deal for the EU (European Commission, 2017). The EU's seemingly successful deal, however, meant different things for Syrian refugees that were stuck in Turkey. The lack of mobility, not being able to meet up with their relatives in Europe and losing hopes on settling in a European country with a relatively more positive context of reception are among the disadvantages they now have to face.

The number of civil society organizations (CSOs) has rapidly increased since beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2012. These organizations have been “filling the vacuum in the field owing to the lack of state presence outside camps, and they are often seen by Syrians as part of the state's machinery” (Mackreath and Sagnic, 2017, p. 2). Through localized and spot-on projects, these organizations have been successful in helping some refugees in need. Nevertheless, Mackreath and Sagnic (2017) argue that even though their number and activities are on the rise, there exist a lack of communication and problems of cooperation and coordination among civil society organizations (p. 2). Mackreath and Sagnic (2017) claim that competition for funds and differences in political stance and worldview are the main reasons behind these issues

(p. 2). Turkey's civil society organization sector has also been shaped by the entrance of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in extraordinary numbers to a great extent. (Mackreath & Sagnic, 2017, p. 2) These organizations, some of which were mentioned above, “are increasing the capacity of civil society through funding and partnerships but, through this process, they are also creating competition and marketization in the field, which is driving CSOs from voluntarism to professionalism” (Mackreath & Sagnic, 2017, p. 2). Premature development, poor management and lack of skilled Turkish professionals who are willing to work in this sector also hinder their ability to provide effective humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees. Especially the newly established Turkish CSOs are yet to overcome issues with finding skilled labor and volunteers to overcome language and cultural barriers in communicating with and helping the refugees. Mackreath and Sagnic (2017) also argue that many CSOs believe that the Turkish state “is cooperating only with those who are ideologically aligned with it, or even creating its own CSOs” (p. 3). The two researchers criticize the rising role of Turkish government in shaping these civil society organizations:

Traditional roles and relations of the state and CSOs are enduring in this regard despite increasing levels of cooperation in the field. The response to Syrians by the state and civil society is prompting renewed questions about what position civil society should hold in relation to the state. The policies of the government to regulate CSO activities, such as AFAD’s expanding role, EYDAS and accreditation, are regarded as an infringement of the relatively autonomous space of non-government aligned CSOs. (Mackreath & Sagnic, 2017, p. 3)

On the other hand, Turkey's fight against a religious cult led by a U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, who is blamed for masterminding a failed coup attempt in July 2016, coupled with its fight against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and its affiliates had an impact on some of the civil society and international organizations working in the country on the Syrian refugee crisis. Oregon-based Mercy Corps was one of the targets

of Turkey's recent purge. The Turkish government has revoked Mercy Corps' registration, forcing the organization to shut down its operations in Turkey in March 2017 (Mercy Corps' 2017). Although the government did not comment on why the organization was shut down, a pro-government newspaper, *Yeni Şafak* reported a few months before the closure of the relief group that some U.S.-based relief foundations such as Mercy Corps, International Medical Corps and Medical Relief were helping Syrian-Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), which is considered by Turkey as a terrorist organization affiliated with the outlawed PKK ("US Aid Foundations Help," 2016). Mercy Corp claimed that it had been delivering "urgently needed, lifesaving assistance to 350,000 to 500,000 innocent civilians in Syria each month" and "providing a range of social services and other emergency assistance in Turkey, reaching about 100,000 Syrian and Turkish men, women and children in 2016 alone" (Mercy Corps, 2017).

Overall, international organizations' direct support to the Turkish government and Syrian refugees has turned negative contexts of reception in basic needs and socioeconomic integration into positive ones for some of the refugees in Turkey. However, the assistance has been limited to a large extent, having little impact on the context of reception of the majority of the Syrian refugees in Turkey. Turkish government's interceptions in activities of some international non-governmental organizations on suspicions related to supporting terrorism coupled with its preferential treatment of those politically aligned with itself may be impairing the positive impact that some organizations could have offered to the refugees. Funding gaps in major organizations' financial needs to alleviate the crisis remain another important obstacle to overcome in turning the context of reception to a mostly advantaged one in Turkey.

Perhaps some of the more affluent European countries, which do not want an increased influx of Syrian refugees in their countries, should step in to fill the funding gap of independent international organizations working in Turkey to address the humanitarian crisis.

4.5 Turkey overall assessment

Turkey's policies toward Syrian refugees are not wide-reaching, inclusive and effective, making it appear as a host with mostly negative context of reception across many areas of concern. Thousands of Syrian kids are crippling under harsh conditions in Turkish sweatshops as child labors, thousands of them are out of school, thousands of Syrian adults are homeless and thousands of them are jobless. Perhaps the only striking area with arguably positive context of reception is healthcare.

Yet increasing social tensions between the citizens and Syrian refugees may be shadowing the efforts in most of the policy areas, as it has a significant impact on the future of Syrian refugees in the country. Widespread backlash from the citizens extensively affects the naturalization prospects of the refugees, making the government reluctant in taking steps toward an inclusive society. In fact, many years after the conflict, despite hosting over 3.5 million Syrian refugees, Turkey has only given citizenship to around 12 thousand Syrians, including the ones who arrived before the civil war, according to a Hürriyet article citing an opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) lawmaker, who has requested the information from the government (Babacan, 2017). Although the official statistics agency has not published an official data on the number of naturalized Syrians in Turkey, Turkish Ministry of Interior announced in late 2017 that 7,827 Syrians were granted citizenship from 2011 until the end of 2016

(Ministry of Interior Affairs of Republic of Turkey, 2017). Moreover, Turkey has not been naturalizing hundreds of thousands of Syrian babies who were born in the country, making them face statelessness (Sezer, 2015).

Turkey says it “has spent over 30 billion dollars to care for more than 3 million Syrians and 200,000 Iraqis fleeing war in their own homelands,” according to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s remarks at the United Nations General Assembly on September 2017 (UN News, 2017). Turkish opposition, led by CHP chief Kemal Kilicdaroglu, strongly criticized this claim and asked the government to be clear about where the money has been spent (Başaran, 2017). One thing is clear; even if Turkey has spent that much money on refugees so far, it needs to come up with a better plan to address refugees’ basic and socio-economic needs. As the fighting in Syria continues, it is also clear that Turkey’s refugee issues will not be resolved in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, Turkish government along with international organizations have to do more to change the context of reception for Syrian refugees in the country, if they do not want this crisis to spiral into a much more severe socioeconomic crisis a few years down the road.

CHAPTER 5

JORDAN

5.1 Background

Jordan has been on the receiving end of refugees from the region for many years.

Surrounded by neighbors that have had serious internal conflicts, Jordan has received millions of Palestinian, Iraqi, Syrian refugees, “earning it a reputation as an island of peace” (Su, 2017). Nevertheless, there had been some tensions between the Jordanian government and Palestinian militias in the past, which also led to straining of the ties between Jordan and some other Arab states, including Syria. For instance, the Black September of 1970 was a critical moment in Jordan's stance toward the increasing Palestinian refugee presence in the country. As the country shares a long border with Israel, various Palestinian groups resisting against the Israeli state have used Jordan as a base to train militias and carry out attacks. As the time passed and the Palestinian militias gained strength, they began to ignore the authority of Jordanian government, “increasing frictions between Jordanian police and military on one hand, and with the Palestinians on the other” (Shoup, 2007, p. 24). The situation came to a breaking point in September 1970, when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or PFLP, hijacked and blew up a number of planes belonging to international airline companies (Shoup, 2007, p. 24). The Jordanian army and the Palestinian fighters fought an intense battle over the control of Jordanian capital Amman and the Palestinian fighters were forced to leave the country after being defeated by the government (Shoup, 2007, p. 24). What soured the Jordanian and Syrian ties during this conflict was the fact that Syria directly supported the Palestinian armed militias. On September 20, the Damascus

regime started an incursion by committing “a reinforced division to the Jordanian civil war,” with 170 tanks and more than 15,000 soldiers (Mobley, 2009, p. 163). Syrians, however, eventually had to withdraw from Jordan after strong resistance by the Jordanian army and pressures from the United States and the Soviet Union (Mobley, 2009, p. 166). The ties soured again in 1981, after Jordan arrested two members of the paramilitary of Rifaat al-Assad, who is the brother of former Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, “for involvement in a plot to assassinate former Jordanian Prime Minister Mudar Badran” (“Al-Assad's Syria,” 2012). Nevertheless, the two countries began to improve ties in 1990s and early 2000s, up until the start of the notorious Syrian conflict.

When the Syrian crisis began, Jordan has initially opened the doors to its neighbors fleeing the conflict in their homeland, signaling that it was willing to welcome its Syrian neighbors with a positive context of reception. Jordan's King Abdullah was “the first Arab leader to openly say Syrian President Bashar al-Assad should stand down” (“Jordan's King Calls,” 2011) short after the unrest began in Syria. Nevertheless, as the refugee crisis intensified, Jordan began to send mixed messages about its ability and willingness to host Syrian refugees. Despite being welcoming at first, Jordanians’ stance on Syrian refugees hardened overtime and “as a result, the government limits the inflow of refugees and devotes considerable resources to policing the border” (Haynes, 2016). Much of this unwillingness to take constructive action was stemmed from the country's previous experience with Palestinian refugees. As Dorai demonstrates, Jordanian “authorities fear a repeat of this situation which could result in the permanent settlement of a large number of refugees in the Kingdom” (Dorai, 2017).

Jordanian Kingdom hosts about 1.3 million refugees, “with only half of them registered with UNHCR,” making up a 20% ratio to the Jordanian population, according

to an April 2017 speech by Prime Minister Hani Mulki (“Jordan Reached Its Maximum,” 2017). In comparison to Turkey, Jordan hosts significantly more Syrian refugees as a percentage of general population, which in part could potentially explain why its policy response has been more limited.

5.2 Basic needs

Many Syrian refugees that fled to Jordan face major issues with housing conditions. A Jordanian scholar, who has conducted research in the country on Syrian refugees, said in interview that: “The government and NGOs have been providing many Syrian refugees with aid to care for their healthcare and education needs and even coupons to provide them with food, but housing is a larger problem” (Personal communication, March, 2018). Jordan has three refugee camps, which are all located near its border with Syria in north; Al Za’atari, Azraq and Emirati-Jordanian (McDonald, 2017). Za’atari camp in northern Mafraq region bordering Syria has become the largest refugee camp in Jordan for Syrian refugees. The camp, which was opened in July 2012, hosts around 80,000 people, according to UN Refugee Agency third quarter 2017 report (UNHCR, 2017). The camp hosts 15% of all Syrian refugees in Jordan population and its population is composed of 56.9% children, aged 0 to 17 years (UNHCR, 2017). It is estimated that around 50% all Syrian refugees in Jordan under 18, according to World Food Program (WFP, 2016).

Za’atari camp’s situation has attracted lots of international media attention, as it has become a sophisticated city on its own, the fourth largest one in Jordan, precisely (UNHCR, 2013). Housing-wise, nearly all residents (99.3%) reside in pre-fabricated caravans in the camp, according to a report dated March 2017 by REACH (UNHCR,

2017). Despite the improving conditions over the years since its foundation almost 6 years ago, it is, however, a city that is “still dependent on aid flows—much of it in the form of debit cards” (Karasapan, 2015).

According to the UNHCR’s November report, nearly 7 thousand and 53 thousand registered Syrian refugees live in Emirati-Jordanian and Azraq refugee camps, respectively (UNHCR, 2017). The same report shows that nearly 140 thousand Syrian refugees live in 3 camps, whereas 516,179 registered Syrians live in urban areas (UNHCR, 2017). 185 thousand of all registered Syrian refugees live in the Amman governorate, which hosts the capital Amman city (UNHCR, 2017). The living conditions of Syrian refugees outside camps have been scrutinized less than those living in camps. “While many Syrians receive some aid to cover rent, housing prices in Jordan are quite expensive and this has made the housing situation much harder for Syrians,” interviewee said. Nevertheless, some reports show some positive indicators in terms of housing, at least in comparison to Turkey. About 87% of households reported to be living in (almost all rental) apartments or houses (UNHCR, 2017), which is 12 percentage points higher than those registered Syrian refugees living in Turkey. The majority of households (87.1%) lived in apartments or houses, with most (96.1%) renting their accommodations (UNHCR).

Living in an apartment or house does not necessarily equate to comfortable living conditions in the life of most Syrian refugees, regardless of their host country. “Crowding, defined as five or more people per sleeping room, was observed in 25.1% of households” and a survey showed that there was an average of 3.75 Syrian refugees per sleeping room (UNHCR, 2017). For instance, a Syrian refugee, who left Syria in March 2013 due to increased intensity of the bombings with his 2 wives and 5 children, first

stayed in Za'atari refugee camp, but had to leave shortly after to live in Amman “as their children were getting sick all the time from the dirty water, and were developing respiratory problems from the dust in the camp,” he said in interview with UNDP’s Morales (Morales, 2016). The Syrian family, who sold their land and farm near Homs to flee to Jordan, now has nothing left and lives in a small rented house in Amman. UNDP’s Morales illustrates the dire conditions of one of the many Syrian families living in urban areas of Jordan:

Because [the father] has no identification papers and cannot work, they struggle to pay the rent and make a decent living. In fact, they haven’t been able to pay rent for the past two months. [The father] fears he and his family will be kicked out, and will have to return to Za'atari and live in a tent. (Morales, 2016)

The Jordanian context of reception in housing still has a lot of room for improvement considering the crowding and quality issues. Nevertheless, the fact that around 90% of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in apartments or houses, which is a significantly higher percentage than the one in Turkey, still points at a positive sign in terms of access to housing. In contrast, the analysis of the raw data published by Jordanian Statistics Agency in 2015 shows that 97.8% of Jordanian households live in conventional housing types such as apartments and villas, whereas the remaining 2.2% live in mobile and marginal housing units like tents, hair tents, caravans and barracks (Department of Statistics, 2015). Another research shows that around 73% of the residents own their homes (Alnsour cites 2010 Department of Statistics data, 2016). It is clear that access to housing for Syrian refugees in Jordan is not as good as that of citizens. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that the situation is somewhat worse than that of Jordanian citizens and definitely better than it is for Syrian refugees in Turkey. As the majority of the Syrian refugees (around 90%) outside camps live in houses or apartments in Jordan, the context

of reception in housing will be considered neutral, in line with the housing indicator that compares access to housing for refugees with citizens.

In order to determine the context of reception for food security in Jordan, it is essential to compare Syrian refugees' access to food via stipends with that of Jordanian citizens. According to a survey by CARE International, 82% of the Syrian refugees in urban areas in Jordan live below the poverty line (CARE International, 2017). Another research shows that most households (93.7%) depended on cash or vouchers from UN or an NGO (UNHCR, 2015). 'Depending' seems to be an accurate way to describe this situation as the results of same survey demonstrate that the median monthly household income of Syrian refugees, excluding humanitarian assistance was at around 100 Jordanian dinars (UNHCR, 2015). Given that the cost of a food basket composed of "rice, bulgur wheat, pasta, pulses, sugar, vegetable oil, salt and canned meat" was at around 22 Jordanian dinars in 2014 (Luce, 2014), a family of four would have nothing left for rent and other expenses after spending 88 dinars to fulfill their basic food needs.

WFP's cash voucher program helps the majority of the refugees with their food needs in Jordan. According to information on WFP Country Brief on Jordan, around half a million Syrian refugees, or approximately 75% of all Syrian refugees in the country, were assisted via the cash voucher program (WFP, 2018, pp. 1-2). Refugees that are part of the program have been getting around 24 Jordanian dinars per month for their basic food needs (Luce, 2014). WFP's food assistance program has greatly reduced food insecurity among Syrian refugees in Jordan. According to a Comprehensive Food Security Monitoring Exercise report published by the WFP in 2014, food insecurity among Syrian refugees is at 6% (Luce, 2014), whereas food insecurity rate is 5.7% for Jordanians (WFP, 2018). The WFP report also claims that 90% of the Syrians' food

consumption could be classified as acceptable and the remaining 10% consists of 8% borderline and only 2% poor (Luce, 2014). It is important to note that this extent of food security among the Syrian refugees in Jordan was achieved with the efforts of the WFP and its fundraisers. The Jordanian government plays an important role in the distribution of foreign aid. Nevertheless, while it pays from 40 dinars to 180 dinars per month to its citizens living below the poverty line and/or with no income (International Labor Organization [ILO], n.d.), it has been doing less, in comparison, to help Syrian refugees. A noticeably high public debt to GDP ratio of around 95% (“Public Debt Amounts,” 2018) and a much smaller government budget than that of Turkey considerably limits Jordan’s response to the crisis; so the country has given international organizations the lead in reaching out to the refugees that are in dire need of help. In sum, the Jordanian government provides more assistance to its citizens in need than Syrian refugees in regards to stipends for food; but since the refugees’ access to food is not significantly worse than that of the citizens, the context of reception in food security in Jordan will be considered neutral, in line with the indicator based on rationing clause in the Geneva Convention.

Syrian refugees in Jordan experience serious issues in health care too. Between 2011 and November 2014, Syrians with Ministry of Interior service cards “could access health care in the Ministry of Health facilities for free, and were treated like insured Jordanians,” but “in November 2014, the government changed its policy and required Syrian refugees holding MoI service cards to pay the same rates as uninsured Jordanians,” according to Amnesty International’s report published in 2016 (Amnesty International). The same report also included claims that Jordan denies entry to some war-wounded Syrian refugees and to those who do not have their ID despite being

injured (Amnesty International, 2016). Amnesty details its claims with following data collected via interviews with humanitarian workers in Syria:

The exact number of those rejected at the border is not known to Amnesty international; however, credible reports from humanitarian workers providing medical assistance to injured people in Syria indicate that at least one or two war-wounded people were denied entry at the Tel Shihab border in 2015 on a daily basis. In February 2016, around 120 war-wounded were admitted into Jordan, and between 20 and 30 people were turned back. (Amnesty International, 2016)

The inflow of Syrian refugees had an impact on quality and availability of health care in Jordan too. As Syrian refugees face many acute and chronic health concerns, the spike in the number of patients has debilitated the Jordanian Health Ministry's resources and ability to respond to the crisis and "has put increased strain on both medical and human resources within the Ministry of Health in Jordan" (McDonald, 2017). "It hurt us when it comes to the educational system, our healthcare," King Abdullah of Jordan told BBC in early 2016, referring to the socioeconomic costs of hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Syria (Doucet, 2016).

The government's discriminative healthcare policy toward Syrians has taken a big toll on the refugees' budget. Syrian refugees reported 243 Jordanian dinars of monthly household income in a UNHCR research conducted by Nielsen; they also reported that about 100 dinars of the 243-dinar aid go to healthcare spending, which corresponds to over 40% of their total income (UNHCR and Nielsen, 2017). On the flip side, uninsured Jordanian citizens enjoy a subsidized rate with 35% to 60% reduction in their health care bills. As a result, since Syrian refugees do not have unconditional health entitlements and the same coverage as Jordanian citizens, the context of reception in health care is clearly negative, in accordance with the two healthcare services indicators established through MIPEX, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Contexts of Reception for Basic Needs in Jordan

| Basic needs | |
|-------------|----------|
| Shelter | Neutral |
| Food | Neutral |
| Healthcare | Negative |

5.3 Socioeconomic integration

In his BBC interview, the Jordanian King cautioned that the country is at a “boiling point”. Turkey has sent similar warnings in the past. “If the number of refugees in Turkey surpasses 100,000, we will run out of space to accommodate them” (Sanchez, Spencer, & McElroy, 2012), Turkey’s former Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu alerted back in August 2012. However, despite the deepening of the crisis, Turkey has kept accepting increasingly more refugees, eventually hosting a quarter million of them in camps and over 3 million outside. Turkey has, to a great extent, kept its promise on its open doors policy. Jordan, on the other hand, has begun deporting Syrian refugees. “In the first five months of 2017, Jordanian authorities were deporting about 400 registered Syrian refugees per month”, according to a Human Rights Watch report (2017). Jordan goes ahead with systemic deportations pointing at the need to increase its security (Su, 2017), defying the Arab Charter of Human Rights, to which Jordan is a party and which “prohibits collective expulsions under all circumstances” (HRW, 2017).

But why has Jordan, a country known for being safe haven for refugees, begun to harden its stance? Economy definitely plays a huge role. Like in the case of Turkey, Syrians fleeing their homeland to Jordan had an impact on the labor market. Previous cases of migration had a different socioeconomic impact on Jordan, according to Jawad

Anani, economist and president of the Economic and Social Council, who spoke to the Washington Post: “In many ways, while Iraqis came to Jordan with investments and were effectively job creators, Syrians are arriving as job-takers” (Luck, 2013). King Abdullah too complained about how Jordanians were struggling to find jobs due to the influx of Syrian refugees (Doucet, 2016).

Working conditions are vividly far from perfect for Syrians in Jordan. According to a Washington Post article, “Syrian refugees, most of whom are not authorized to work in Jordan, say they are often left at the mercy of employers, forced to perform long hours of labor — sometimes back-breaking — for low salaries” (Luck, 2013). Another report shows that the salaries they get in the informal market are so low that 90% of registered refugees of Syrian descent living in urban areas are below the poverty line and 67% of the refugee households are indebted (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). In addition to the overwhelming majority of the refugees living below the per capita poverty line of 68 Jordanian dinars a month, 10% of the Syrian refugees are even below the abject poverty line of monthly 28 dinars per person (Kattaa, 2015, p. 7).

It is very difficult for Syrian refugees to get work permits in Jordan. But it is not only that; the refugees are also unenthusiastic about them. Syrian refugees in Jordan are not willing to work with a legal permit, as they do not want to lose the aid they receive from international organizations and close the doors to resettlement option for good (Sak et al., 2017, p. 8). Furthermore, Errighi & Griesse (2016) demonstrate that the fact that work permits are designated for a particular position and “the existence of a rigid, sector-by-sector quota system for migrant workers constrain not only the reallocation of workers in line with productivity developments, but also labor mobility and the incentive for Syrian refugees to seek lawful forms of employment” (p. 21). The reluctance of

Syrian refugees to work formally in Jordan reflects on the official numbers. Data published in 2015 by the Jordanian Labor Ministry showed that merely 1.7% of more than 300,000 immigrant workers in the country were Syrians (Sak et al., 2017, p. 5). The government of Jordan pledged to make it easier for Syrian refugees to get work permits in the country (Sak et al., 2017, p. 8). Nevertheless, despite a target of 50,000, only 37,000 Syrian refugees were able to obtain work permits in 2016 (Sak et al., 2017, p. 8). A lot of Syrians are also discouraged from working formally, as most official jobs are offered in agriculture, construction and retail sectors, which are not appealing due to remote work locations and inadequate transportation infrastructure (Sak et al., 2017, p. 8). As a result of this situation, a lot of Syrians belonging to working and professionals classes opt for lower wages and illegal employment, which fundamentally harms their living conditions.

Another issue is that the government confiscates identity documents of those Syrians in refugee camps and disallows them from getting work permits (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 12). Syrians in refugee camps “can be ‘bailed out’ by Jordanian nationals, but the required documentation is very difficult to obtain and Syrians need to undergo very complex background security checks,” which makes it common for refugees to exit camps without authorization to get paid through working illegally (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 12).

The context of reception is better for Syrian refugees coming to Jordan with capital and an entrepreneurial intent, as in the case of Turkey. The residence law of 1973 “contains a provision that allows foreign entrepreneurs to obtain a residence permit if they are in Jordan to invest in commercial or industrial ventures” (Kattaa, 2015, p. 4). This provision is expanded with 1995 Investment Law No. 16 and its 2000 amendments,

detailing “the operation of these foreign investors in Jordan’s commercial and industrial sectors” (Kattaa, 2015, p. 4). Jordanian government recently passed new decrees allowing for Syrian producers in the manufacturing sector to start up and run businesses in industrial zones (Kattaa, 2015, p. 4). This is not only a positive step for Syrian entrepreneurs that want to continue their businesses in Jordan, but also one for Syrian workers, who may get the opportunity to work officially at their fellow countrymen's businesses with a work permit (Kattaa, 2015, p. 4). Although it is possible to say that context of reception for Syrian entrepreneurs is more neutral than negative, business owners make up a small percentage of the entire Syrian labor force. The working conditions for the Syrian refugees in general are much worse than that of the citizens, as they work more but get compensated less than the nationals. Major issues regarding work permits make it further clear that the context of reception in Jordan for employment opportunities is negative as the country fails to fulfill the aforementioned indicators.

There are mixed signals in the education front as well, with mostly a negative direction and some signs of gradual improvement. Up until late 2017, Syrian refugees were required to get a service card issued by the Jordanian government in order to send their kids to schools (Esveld, 2017). The service card system made it almost impossible for some refugee families to enroll their children in schools, as those who have relocated from camps to host communities or urban areas without permission were not issued these service cards (Esveld, 2017). Moreover, the refugees were required to provide their children’s birth certificates in order to be eligible for a service card; and this created serious complications for Syrian refugee children’s access to compulsory education, as around 40% of the Syrian refugee children in Jordan do not have birth certificates

(HRW, 2016). A positive move by the Jordanian government was the decision to get rid of this practice in September 2017: “Jordan’s prime minister, Hani Mulki, announced that public schools would not turn away any child seeking an education, with or without a service card” (Esveld, 2017). The impact of this action on the school attendance rate of the Syrian refugee children is yet to be seen, yet Prime Minister Mulki, is known for sugarcoating the Jordanian government’s response to the refugee crisis. Mulki in April 2017 claimed that the enrolment rate of Syrian refugee children in Jordanian public schools has reached 90% (“Jordan Reached Its Maximum,” 2017). However, reports by international organizations refuted that claim. According a report by an independent organization, 170,000 Syrian refugee children were official enrolled in Jordanian schools in 2016-2017 period, still leaving 90,000 Syrian children out of the school system (Dupire, 2017). This would mean that only 65% of the Syrian refugee children are actually enrolled in schools, about 25 percentage points lower than the prime minister’s claim. In contrast, 2014 data showed that only 3% of Jordanian youth aged 15-24 had not completed their primary education, with the percentage of youngsters without formal education as low as 1% (Education Policy Data Center [EPDC], 2014). Another report by Save the Children shows that the percentage of Syrian refugee households, which to an extent rely on income created by their children has reached about 50% (Save the Children, 2017), which shows that a great deal of Syrian children are still working in the informal market.

Jordan has major issues in regards to limitations with infrastructure and number of teachers in providing access to compulsory education to Syrian refugees as well. A Guardian article citing Save the Children’s Jordan advocacy manager shows that around 200 schools across to country had to implement a double shift system through which

they only offer 3 to 4 hours of education to students (Summers, 2017). There were also some reports on Syrian refugee children dropping out of school due to bullying by Jordanian students and teachers; and girls being pulled out of the school system by their parents due to lack of security, as some were allegedly being harassed on the way to school (Summers, 2017).

Syrian refugees in Jordan also have problems in regards to access to higher education. The rate of the Syrians aged 18-24 in higher education is at 4.5% in Jordan, a figure that was as high as 26% back in Syria (Hawamdeh and El-Ghali, 2017, p. 13). The fact that most aid agencies and international organizations mostly focus on providing scholarships for compulsory education exacerbates issues related to access to higher education (Hawamdeh & El-Ghali, 2017, p. 13). In sum, the access to compulsory education being worse than that of Jordanian citizens combined with issues with access to higher education make it clear that the context of reception in education for Syrian refugees in Jordan is negative.

There have been some social tensions between the Jordanians and Syrians as well, although perhaps not as severe as the ones in Turkey and Lebanon. In 2012, for instance, a fight broke out between Syrian and Jordanian children as they were playing outside Bashabsheh refugee camp, which then led to an adult brawl; but the police intervened quickly and secured the camp ("Police Contain Brawl," 2012). In 2014, hundreds of refugees started a riot, protesting the meager humanitarian conditions at the Za'atari camp after a Syrian child was allegedly run over by Jordanian police ("Syria Crisis: Deadly Clash," 2014). A refugee was killed and some others were wounded in violent clashes with Jordanian police, yet there weren't any clashes between the Jordanian citizens and the refugees ("Syria Crisis: Deadly Clash," 2014). The Jordanian

scholar argues that such tensions have stemmed from a combination of refugees being viewed as job-takers by the Jordanian public and the government further instigating this notion by finger-pointing at refugees when it has to defend funding cuts or deterioration of quality in public services:

Jordanians often claim that Syrians are taking their jobs away by working for cheaper salaries and that Syrians are not hard-working. Some of this tension has been caused by the government. For example, the government blamed Syrians for lifting subsidies on some essential products such as bread. The government said that refugees were using a large part of this subsidy, which is why it had to lift it. Also, since public schools and government-run medical centers started accepting Syrians, the service quality in these places deteriorated further although they weren't good in the beginning. So some Jordanians blame Syrians also for worsening of the public services. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

It is important to note that this particular stance of the Jordanian government and some Jordanians blaming the Syrians for weakening public service quality has not lead to widespread xenophobia and collective and continuous racial attacks against refugees in Jordan, unlike the existence of some instances of both in Turkey and Lebanon. A Jordanian official spoke precisely about this subject to PBS back in 2015:

Now, you will not see in Jordan what you see in Europe, massive demonstrations against the refugees. You see some voices here, that these are our skinheads who make noise here and there, but there will not be any mass — negative mass movement opposing either the Syrians or the Iraqis. Once the dust settles down at the end of the day these are Arabs and people see them as fellow Arabs. (“Why More Syrian Refugees,” 2015)

The Jordanian scholar, who asserted that there have been very few discriminatory incidents, also supported this claim: “People occasionally talk about small fights but I have not seen news coverage of [violent events]” (Personal communication, March, 2018). Nevertheless, discriminative verbal statements have been fairly common among Jordanian citizens as the competition in the job market coupled with the strains on the already limited resources in the country, taking their toll on public services. In an

interview with the New York Times, a Jordanian shopkeeper expressed his distress over the issue:

We welcomed them, even in our homes, but Jordanians are suffering to find work, classrooms are crammed, hospitals can barely cope, newlyweds can't find homes to rent, and we no longer feel like we should be the ones to suffer because of them. (Sweis, 2013)

The words of another Jordanian citizen, who spoke to the Washington Post, were rather menacing: "Syrians are taking our homes, our jobs and our livelihoods. If the government does not take action, we will take matters in our own hands" (Luck, 2013).

Other Jordanians like a journalist cited in a New York Times article, argued that Syrians should not be held accountable for problems with water and electricity services as citizens were protesting about these issues even prior to the arrival of Syrian refugees (Sweis, 2013). The context of reception for Syrian refugees in social integration can thus be defined as neutral, as shown in Table 6, since there have not been a series of collective acts of violence targeting Syrian refugees, despite the existence of some discriminative verbal acts.

Table 6. Contexts of Reception for Socioeconomic Integration in Jordan

| Socioeconomic Integration | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Education | Negative |
| Employment | Negative |
| Social Integration | Neutral |

5.4 International and civil society support

The UN has been leading the refugee coordination efforts in Jordan through its unit UNHCR as well. The UNHCR co-chairs several sectors among the eight sectors set up

the provide support within the Jordan refugee response and their thematic working groups, “namely the Basic Needs Working Group with NRC, the Health Working Group with WHO, the Protection Working Group with NRC...the Shelter Working Group with NRC and the Livelihoods Working Group with DRC” (UNHCR, 2018, p. 2). All of these sectors provide support to the Jordanian decision-making bodies with tackling the Syrian refugee crisis. (UNHCR, 2018, p. 2) The UNHCR runs many projects on a wide range of subjects including protection, access to energy, education, health, durable solutions, community empowerment and self-reliance (UNHCR, 2018, p. 2).

There has been a great leap forward in healthcare: “As of January 2018 UNHCR provides comprehensive primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare services free of charge for vulnerable Syrians and for all non-Syrians in urban areas” (UNHCR, 2018, p. 3). Nevertheless, there is a huge funding gap in the UNHCR's needs for responding to the humanitarian crisis in Jordan. The UNHCR needs a total of about 275 million dollars in 2018 to meet requirements to help Syrian refugees in Jordan (UNHCR, 2018, p. 3). Yet, “as of February 2018, UNHCR has received only \$17.8 million in funding, equal to 6% of total needs” (UNHCR, 2018, p. 3). The issue of funding gap at the UN and its agencies' efforts need to be addressed for these organizations to create a positive context of reception for more Syrian refugees.

As in the case of Turkey, the EU has been one of the main donors of Syrian refugees in Jordan. The European Commission has sent about 637 million euros to Jordan since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, through macro-financial, development and humanitarian assistance (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). 308 million euros of this assistance, meaning nearly half of it, went to basic needs assistance such as health, food winterization support, shelter, water and sanitation, psychosocial support and

protection programs, according to report by the supranational organization (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). The EU has further set up specific programs for Syrian refugee children and women in Jordan and initiated an “education program to ensure Syrian children complete primary and secondary education in Jordanian schools” (European Commission, 2018, p. 2).

A lot of foreign governments, international non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations have focused on Za’atari camp from the start of the Syrian crisis and the humanitarian conditions in the camp have improved to a great extent thanks to these efforts. The German government even built a 12.9-megawatt peak solar photovoltaic plant in the camp for 15 million euros, making it the largest solar plant ever built in a refugee camp (Frangoul, 2017). Nevertheless, Za’atari accounts for only a very small part of the Syrian refugee problem in Jordan. Negligence toward the bigger part of the Syrian crisis in Jordan among international organizations and media was demonstrated in a blog post dated October 2015 by Jeff Crisp from Refugees

International:

The intense focus on Za'atari over the past three years has deflected attention from the fact that the vast majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan—more than 85 percent—are not living in camps, but in urban, suburban, and rural areas scattered across the country. (Crisp, 2015)

As per Jordan's own civil society organizations, it is possible to argue that their numbers need to increase. There are approximately 3,800 civil society organizations in Jordan, which is a relatively small number compared to its regional neighbors like Yemen with 10,000 associations and foundations, Morocco with 116,000 associations and Algeria with over 93,000 national and local associations (Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development [ARDD], 2016, p. 4). There are also serious issues

regarding implementation of both internal and external aid in Jordan, due to bureaucratic hurdles set by the Jordanian government as demonstrated in a report published by ARDD:

Government approvals for projects and implementation are another challenge facing both international and national organizations. The long wait times have a significant impact on how funding comes into the country and how assistance is provided to those in need. The approval process can delay funding by months and can make some projects moot. (ARDD, 2016, p. 4)

In sum, international organizations and civil society organizations have been initiating various projects in an attempt to create an advantaged context of reception in Jordan. Nevertheless, these attempts have been to some extent obstructed by a combination of the lack of funding, the lack of large and effective network of civil society organizations and convolutions caused by complicated and inept bureaucratic structure of the Jordanian government.

5.5 Overall assessment

In Jordan, the negative context of reception for Syrian refugees in some areas has been largely due to the attitude of the government rather than its people. As the Jordanian scholar demonstrates, the Syrian refugees have become the culprit for most wrongdoings in Syria: “Jordanian government has used Syrians to ask for more financial aid internationally. Yet the economy has been bad and deteriorating. Although the government has received a lot of foreign aid, it has blamed Syrians for its mismanagement of economy” (Personal communication, March, 2018). Jordan’s denial of entry to Syrians with war injuries, imposition of extra fees to registered refugees seeking health care, collective deportations of some refugees in the past couple years demonstrate that the country has been implementing particularly unfriendly refugee

policies, pointing to an evidently negative context of reception. In addition, the country has still not taken any concrete steps toward naturalization of Syrians or their children born in the country (Harel, 2016). However, there still are some advantages for refugees such as the inexistence of language barriers combined with cultural proximity and education initiatives set forward by the Jordanian officials. Housing conditions survey and monthly income data further demonstrated that there are indeed some areas where more effective policies are implemented in Jordan, in comparison to Turkey. Furthermore, international organizations' efforts in providing support to Syrians to fulfill their basic needs make context of reception in some areas like shelter and food neutral. Nevertheless, the hypothesis based on language and cultural similarities that the Jordanian government should have created a positive context of reception in socioeconomic integration is proven wrong, as the country has a negative context of reception in education and employment and a neutral one in social integration. In sum, Jordan has negative context of reception in health, education and employment, and neutral context of reception in housing, food and social integration.

CHAPTER 6

LEBANON

6.1 Background

Lebanon and Syria have not been going along so well prior to the start of the Syrian civil war. In fact, Syria has occupied Lebanon in 1976 and remained in the country until the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, the father of the current Prime Minister Saad Hariri, was assassinated in a car bomb attack in 2005. Many Lebanese blamed the Syrian government for the attack and took to the streets to protest against the Syrian military presence in their country. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was even accused of threatening Rafik Hariri with breaking Lebanon, should Hariri back the removal of Syrian army from Lebanon, according to media reports (Wright, 2011). Following Hariri's death, despite denying involvement in the assassination, Syria had no choice but to withdraw its forces from Lebanon, after staying in the country for nearly 30 years ("Hariri Wanted Moderates," 2011). The tension between the two countries spiked after the beginning of civil unrest in Syria, with leaders of both countries constantly fulminating against each other. In late 2012, Syria issued an arrest warrant for Saad Hariri (Evans, 2012), while Hariri claims even today that the Assad regime "wants him killed" ("Lebanon's Hariri Says," 2017).

Lebanon has been crippling with political instability and sectarian clashes for a long time. The country hosts more than eight ethnic and sectarian groups; and with all of them being minorities, they have each repeatedly invited foreign forces to interfere in their internal conflicts on their behalf (Mullany, 1991, p. 44). Part of the reason behind this constant state of instability and ever-lasting conflict is seen as the complex and

convoluted governmental structure that has not been proficient enough in preventing, intervening in and resolving conflicts. Since the 1943 National Pact, the structure of the government and societal ties has been largely based on the “first and only” population census in Lebanon's history (Soffer, 1986, p. 198). As a result of the census, which was held in 1932, the political relationships in the state were constructed in favor of the Christians, with a ratio of 6 to 5 (Soffer, 1986, p. 198). Document of National Understanding, also known as the Taif Agreement, was signed in 1989, marking the end of Lebanon's decade-and-a-half civil war; and the deal redistributed administrative authority among Lebanon's various sectarian groups (Salem, 2006, p. 14). The agreement led to a new structure in which “parliament must elect a Maronite Christian as president and a Shiite Muslim as Speaker, and the president must name a Sunni Muslim to be prime minister” (Salem, 2006, p. 14). According to many scholars, this complicated structure disallowed the government from functioning effectively. This “ruling troika arrangement” created another chaotic system based on instability and unrest, as the holders of the top three most powerful posts were in a constant battle for influence (Traboulsi, 2012, p. 251). The vastly divided and arguably inefficient governmental structure had an extraordinary impact on all aspects of life in Lebanon, from security, healthcare, municipal services to response to refugee crises. The influx of Palestinian refugees, followed by Syrian refugees thus further incapacitated the Lebanese government, which was already entangled and bureaucratically paralyzed by a set of political spats.

Lebanon, a country of 6 million people, is hosting thousands of Palestinian and Iraqi refugees on top of the 1 million registered Syrian refugees, making it “the highest per-capita concentration of refugees worldwide, where one person out of four is a

refugee” (European Commission, 2018). At the beginning of the conflict, the Lebanese government has implemented a ‘no refugee camps’ policy, unlike Turkey and Jordan. Some reporters explained that this decision was stemmed from the country’s bitter experience with Palestinian refugees, half a million of whom have been living in Lebanon for more than six decades ever since the establishment of first UN camps in the country (Rainey, 2015). In effect, the Lebanese were worried that hosting the displaced in official refugee camps would eventually pave the way for their permanent stay in Lebanon (Rainey, 2015). Some independent observers support the government’s no camp policy. For instance, Amanda Gray, an urban displacement policy adviser at the International Rescue Committee UK claims that “no camp” policy might actually be better for the refugees: “Camps hinder opportunities for displaced communities to find solutions [to their problems]. They hinder self-reliance, because the people within are hampered by restrictions and their ability to access opportunities outside” (Rainey, 2015).

6.2 Basic needs

Perhaps Gray’s argument could have been more valid had the Lebanese government complimented the “no camp” policy with all-encompassing and effective policies targeting the integration of Syrian refugees. Yet the dismaying truth reveals that because of this policy, Syrian refugees are trying make ends meet in nearly 1,700 communities across Lebanon, where a number of them live in improvised shelters, collective tented settlements, construction sites and workplaces (European Commission, 2018). Almost 9 out of 10 Syrian refugees in the country, who have to pay for basic needs like food, rent, clothes, medicine out of their own pockets, live in 251 locations, which are some of the

most impoverished and impuissant neighborhoods in Lebanon, according to a European Commission report published in 2017. A lot of them also live in temporary self-made camps in remote areas in Lebanon, including the Bekaa region, which was already one of the poorest regions in the country, even prior to the arrival of Syrian refugees. A Lebanese journalist, who has visited some the camps and areas where Syrian refugees live, say the following regarding their conditions in interview via email:

Those who are registered and number around 1.5 million live mostly in the Bekaa region in makeshift refugee camps, all huddled together with barely anything. I have visited some of these camps and the situation becomes really dire in the winter time as you start hearing stories of refugees freezing to death or a fire engulfing the camp because they light up something for heating. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

Those Syrian refugees, who manage to escape the dire living conditions in these temporary encampments, flee to major cities as in the case of the Syrian refugees in Turkey and Jordan. “There are homeless people in Beirut and around Lebanon and this phenomenon has increased as the refugees kept coming in,” the journalist added: “You see them on the pavement, running after cars right when the light turns red, knocking on windows and asking for money, both women and men...but mostly children” (Personal communication, March, 2018).

For instance, a Syrian-Palestinian refugee woman, who was born in Syria and lived in a refugee camp in the countryside outside of Damascus before the civil war, is among the thousands of refugees struggling in Lebanon (Morales, 2016). Despite living in a refugee camp in Syria as well, their rights are now much worse off in Lebanon, she said in interview with UNDP (Morales, 2016). The woman, who now lives in an overcrowded refugee-camp-like settlement in Lebanon, describes the living conditions as “far worse than in the camp she left in Syria” (Morales, 2016).

According to UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP's Vulnerability Assessment Report of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, the refugees' shelter conditions have been deteriorating in the recent years and more refugees are living in places that are below minimum humanitarian standards (2017, p. 22). The percentage of refugee households that had one or more of the three major issues (overcrowding, dangerous structural conditions, urgently needed repairs) in regards to their housing conditions increased to 53% in 2017 from 42% in same period a year ago (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 22). Only a little over 70% of refugee households were found to be living in residential buildings such as apartments/houses or concierge rooms, while nearly 20% of them were living in improvised shelters like informal settlements and tents, and around 10% of the refugees were living in "non-residential structures, such as worksites, garages, farms and shops" (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 22). The percentage of refugee households, which were found to be living in overcrowded shelters that were below the minimum humanitarian standard of 4.5 square meter per person, increased by 7% year-over-year to 34% in 2017 (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 22). The average monthly rent Syrian refugees had to pay was at around 183 U.S. dollars, with a range of 35 dollars for setting up a tent on a piece of land to 328 dollars for a small apartment in Beirut (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 22).

In contrast, 98% of the Lebanese households are living in apartments (67%) and independent houses (31%), according to the results of a research conducted by the Lebanese government in 2012, on the year of the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis (Yaacoub and Badre, 2012, p. 15). The same report cites an earlier research that showed that above 70% of the Lebanese households own their homes (Yaacoub & Badre, 2012, p. 15). The Lebanese government's research also shows that the Lebanese households

tend to live in spacious dwellings with many rooms (Yaacoub & Badre, 2012, p. 15). 85% of the dwellings owned by the Lebanese citizens had 3 or more rooms excluding kitchens and bathrooms, according to the report (Yaacoub & Badre, 2012, p. 15). In sum, there is a huge gap between the shelter conditions of Syrian refugees and the Lebanese citizens. Up to 30% of the refugees have been trying cope with grim winter conditions in informal settlements every single year, as the Lebanese government, incapacitated by its own economic and political problems, does very little to nothing to ameliorate their conditions. As access to housing for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is significantly worse than that of the citizens, the context of reception in shelter can be described as negative.

Considering their dire housing and living conditions, it comes as no surprise that a majority of Syrian refugees face food scarcity issues. Vulnerability assessment further revealed that 91% of the refugee households were found to be food insecure to an extent in 2017; and the percentage of households that are ‘moderately and severely’ food insecure grew to 38% from 36% in 2016 (UNHCR, 2017, p. 3). In contrast, the number of low-income Lebanese people that are unable to meet basic needs related to food safety was at 300,000 in 2012, which makes up less than 7% of the population of the country, according to former president Michel Sleiman (USAID, 2017). The former president’s claim was supported by another research conducted in 2015, which showed that 10% of Lebanese households were subject to food security issues (UNHCR, 2018, p. 73). As in the case of the refugees in Turkey and Jordan, WFP initiated cash card program makes up the highest portion of monetary support to Syrian refugees in Lebanon (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 3). The majority of the Syrian households depend on the WFP-initiated cash voucher program to survive through the

tough conditions in all three countries. WFP provides monthly food assistance of 27 dollars to over 690 thousand registered refugees in Lebanon (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 3). The government assumes that there are at least 300 thousand more unregistered refugees (Kukrety, 2016, pp. 9-23), as it asked the UNHCR to stop registering more displaced Syrians as refugees in 2015 (Amnesty International, 2016). This means that close to half a million more Syrian refugees have no chance for receiving any kind of assistance and aid from UN bodies, as the cash voucher program and UNHCR's other programs designated for Syrian refugees only cover the needs of registered refugees (Kukrety, 2016, pp. 9-23). The national social security system of Lebanon does not have any mandate to tackle issues related to nutrition or food security; it also does not implement a cash support mechanism targeting the food needs of citizens or refugees (Karam, Zureiqat and Rammal, 2015, p. 41). It only has certain food subsidy programs such as wheat, sugar beet and agricultural export subsidies (Karam et al., 2015).

There exists a serious income gap between the refugees and the low-income citizens of Lebanon (Karam et al., 2015, p. 36). Syrian refugee households were found to be making below 5,000 dollars a year whereas poor Lebanese households were making up to 8,400 dollar per year, according to a report published in 2015 (Kukrety, 2016, p. 41). As the majority of the Lebanese households (over 70%) do not have to pay for rent thanks to the high home ownership rate, they are certainly better equipped to fight against Lebanon's food insecurity plague. The government, meanwhile, does not produce sound policies that can help both Syrian refugees and the citizens to overcome issues related to food security and agriculture, despite the fact that the country has the highest share of arable land per person in the Arab World (USAID, 2017). In sum, as

there is a growing giant gap between the percentage of food insecure refugees and citizens amidst the inaction of the Lebanese government, the access to food for Syrian refugees is clearly worse than that of citizens, marking a negative context of reception in food security in Lebanon.

Refugees' access to healthcare system, on the other hand, is a particularly scarring subject in Lebanon's case. The joint research showed that owing to the efforts of UNHCR, 89% of Syrian refugee households had access to primary healthcare services when they were in need, but in some places over 40% of the refugees did not have access to even primary health services (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, pp. 36-37). According to a UNCHR report, which was published in November 2017 and based on a survey conducted in September of the same year, most refugees were aware of the support available for access to healthcare yet those in need of care spent an average of 154 U.S. dollars for healthcare a month. Considering the limited socio-economic integration of Syrian refugees, 154 dollars a month stands as a significantly expensive figure, chipping away the refugees' quality of life, showing that there is no unconditional health entitlement for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Moreover, some of the refugees in need of more than primary healthcare services were neglected. About a quarter of the refugee households were in need of secondary or tertiary healthcare service and of those in need up to 20% of the refugee households did not have access to it, according to the results of the research conducted by three UN bodies (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 38). 53% of the refugees cited high treatment costs as the main reason for not being able to access secondary and tertiary healthcare services, while 28% cited not being accepted by health facilities and 13% pointed at transportation costs (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 38). There are major issues

with hospitalization of Syrian refugees too. Those facilities that accept them thanks to UNHCR contracts only do so if the refugees have “obstetric and life-threatening conditions;” and the patients still have to pay 25% of the fees related to hospitalization (UNHCR, 2018, p. 91). In addition to the high uncovered fees associated with hospitalization, patients requiring treatment for life-threatening illnesses like cancer and chronic conditions such as dialysis for chronic renal failure are not covered, neither by the Lebanese government nor by international organizations (UNHCR, 2018, p. 94). On the flip side, insured Lebanese citizens get 90% coverage by the National Social Security Fund for their hospitalization costs and 80% coverage for their medication and examination costs (Reindel and Zucco, 2010). While Lebanese citizens with terminal illness get full coverage by the National Social Security Fund, the remaining uninsured citizens, which make up around 40% of the nationals, get 80% coverage for their hospital bills by the Lebanese Health Ministry’s financing scheme (Reindel and Zucco, 2010), which shows that Syrian refugees get a worse healthcare coverage than the Lebanese citizens. In sum, as Syrian refugees do not have unconditional health entitlements and same coverage as citizens, Lebanon’s context of reception in health services is negative, in line with the indicators based on MIPEX.

In sum, Lebanon’s contexts of reception in shelter, food and healthcare are all negative as shown in Table 7. Access to housing for Syrian refugees is worse than that of citizens, as the lack of organized, government assisted camps force thousands of refugees to live in conditions that are below minimum humanitarian standards in squatter areas across the country. Access to food for Syrian refugees is worse than that of the citizens, as the majority of the households are food insecure and barely survive with the WFP food vouchers. The context of reception in healthcare is negative as there

are major issues in terms of access to healthcare services, especially with regard to the conditions on health entitlements and coverage of hospitalization and secondary and tertiary treatment.

Table 7. Contexts of reception for Basic Needs in Lebanon

| Basic needs | |
|-------------|----------|
| Shelter | Negative |
| Food | Negative |
| Healthcare | Negative |

6.3 Socioeconomic integration

As the tensions between the Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees grow, so do the socio-economic disparities. The accelerated influx meant fewer jobs for both the Lebanese and Syrians and it particularly meant worsening working conditions for Syrian refugees. Both registered and unregistered refugees face various barriers to entry to job market. The Lebanese government has mostly resorted a negative context of reception in terms of residency and labor policies, which made the working conditions of the refugees shoddier. In fact, Lebanon admitted its poor employment and residency policies in a joint report titled “Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020,” published jointly by the government and the UN: “Constraints related to residency and labor policies and their implementation, as well as challenging market conditions, have also compelled displaced Syrians and Palestine Refugees from Syria to resort to illegal and exploitative labor in order to meet basic needs of their families” (UNHCR, 2018, p. 12). As a result, 76% of displaced Syrians live below the poverty line with earning only 3.84 dollars a

day, 87% of them are in debt with an average cumulative debt of nearly 800 dollars, and 74% of the displaced Syrians over 15 years of age are without legal residency (UNHCR, 2018, p. 12).

One of the biggest issues Syrian refugees from working and professional classes face is indeed difficulties with finding a job; and getting a legal job is almost impossible. “With little job opportunities for Lebanese themselves, refugees cannot find jobs. Also, if a refugee has a business or a job, they are not eligible to receive UN aid or any kind of aid at all,” according to the Lebanese journalist (Personal communication, March, 2018). Many of them who do find a job work in the illegal economy since the number of work permits issued by the Lebanese government is very small. In fact, the Lebanese Department of Labor estimated the number of formally working Syrians at a little over 2,000, “which is less than 1 percent of the estimated total Syrian labor force in the country” (Sak et al., 2017, p. 5). There have been some options for those seeking to work without getting into the formal labor pool. For example, the Lebanese journalist stated that despite facing the wrath of Lebanese cab drivers, a lot of Syrians began to drive taxis, taking advantage of the relaxed regulations in some municipalities and the lack thereof in others. As demonstrated by the journalist, a lot of Syrians opt for jobs for which they do not need to register:

Syrians now get a taxi license plate without registering in the taxi union and drive around doing business. Lebanese taxi drivers have protested against this. Truck drivers did the same. In Lebanon, there is an informal sector unaccounted for and in remote areas, Syrians and Lebanese alike can get away with not registering with the government. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

As per legal employment, The Lebanese government allowed the registered Syrian refugees to work legally in Lebanon until early 2015, but then increasing social discord coupled with issues with provision of public services led the Lebanese officials to

suspend that right (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). In February 2015, the government started issuing a document on “rules about Syrians’ entry to and residency in Lebanon, stipulating that displaced Syrians wishing to renew their residency permits on the basis of a UNHCR registration certificate have to sign a pledge not to work, certified by a notary” (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). By forcing Syrian refugees to sign a pledge not to work, Lebanon simply forces them to “sustain their livelihoods through humanitarian assistance provided by the Lebanese government and with support from the international community” (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). Some refugees are able to obtain working permits if they are willing to be employed in some designated sectors. Yet, the government changes the legal status of those Syrian refugees who manage to get work permit and sponsorship to “migrant workers”, even though they are still counted as refugees by UNHCR (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). In December 2014, the Lebanese government implemented the Decree 197 of the Ministry of Labor, which “limits possible work for Syrian nationals to agriculture, construction and cleaning services (i.e. sectors traditionally depending on migrant workers)” (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). These designated sectors show that the Lebanese government has created a negative context of reception for Syrian refugees from professional class, while providing a neutral/negative one for some of those from working class. Although it is possible to find legal employment in other sectors, it only happens very rarely and the path to working permit is filled with bureaucratic obstacles. For those who can find a job in another sector, the working permit costs 4 times of the ones for those in agriculture, construction and cleaning sectors; and “an employer must first prove his inability to find an adequately skilled Lebanese worker for a given job, before he can request a permit for a qualified Syrian worker” (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11).

While the Lebanese government has welcomed the working and professional class Syrians with mostly a negative context of reception in terms of employment opportunities, it has been rather indifferent toward Syrian refugees who transfer their wealth to Lebanon, in pursuit of entrepreneurship. The Lebanese government allows Syrians, as other foreigner entrepreneurs “to set up and run their own business activity, even under full foreign ownership” (Errighi & Griesse, 2016, p. 11). Thus, the context of reception in Lebanon for Syrian entrepreneurs can be defined as neutral at best, as they still face many issues including limited access to financial instruments like loans. International Labor Organization research on issues and challenges Syrian refugees face in Lebanese labor market suggests that Lebanon should improve access to loans for business-owner Syrian refugees as doing so “would give incentives for many entrepreneurs to increase the scale of their enterprises and enhance the employment of more educated and skilled labor” (Ajluni & Kawar, 2015, p. 5). In sum, despite the Lebanese government’s more neutral stance toward entrepreneurial Syrians who brought their wealth to the country, its reluctance to issue work permits combined with work conditions of Syrians that are considerably worse than that of the Lebanese citizens point at a negative context of reception in integrating Syrian refugees to the workforce, as demonstrated in Table 8.

Table 8. Contexts of Reception for Employment Opportunities in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon

| | Turkey | Jordan | Lebanon |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Working Class | Negative | Negative | Negative |
| Professionals | Negative | Negative | Negative |
| Entrepreneurs | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral |

Syrian refugees' access to education is another important issue in Lebanon. According to the EU's estimates in 2016, almost half of the Syrian refugee children did not have access to any education, instead enduring harsh conditions as child labors, young brides or even members of armed organizations (EU, 2016). Human Rights Watch supported this claim by saying in a 2016 article that despite several positive steps by Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education to enroll Syrian children in formal education, the system is still not stable as 250,000 Syrian children, corresponding to 50% of all of them, are not enrolled in the education system (HRW, 2016). Reports from 2017, however, showed some signs of improvement. Enrolment rate of children aged 6-14 jumped to 70% from 52% in 2016, according to the joint report (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 32). In places like Bekaa, where the school enrolment rate was as low as 30%, significant efforts by the UNICEF and the government helped the rate to almost to double to 59% (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 33). Despite the great leap forward in a single year in access to education across the country, the conditions for Syrian refugee children are still much worse than that of Lebanese children. Syrian children aged 15-18 had the lowest school enrolment rates as only around 3% of them were attending public secondary schools (UNHCR, 2018, pp. 13-14). In contrast, among

the Lebanese students of primary school age, only 4% were out of school, according to data collected in 2014 (EPDC, 2014, p. 1).

It is not only the access to compulsory education that is problematic. There are major issues in regards to child labor, early marriage and access to vocational trainings and higher education as well. Results of a survey revealed that 22% of the Syrian girls aged 15 to 19 are married, and the rate of married girls was recorded to be as high about 40% in some governorates (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 21). Another research showed that the percentage of 15 to 18-year-old Syrian children getting vocational education at public schools was only at 3% (UNHCR, 2018, pp. 13-14). Finally, the vulnerability assessment report revealed that around 5% of children aged 5 to 17 and 20% of children aged 15 to 17 said that they have worked at least one day in the past 30 days (UNHCR & UNICEF & WFP, 2017, p. 19). As in the case of Turkey and Jordan, Syrian families in need of money feel forced to rely on their children for financial support, making child labor a major obstacle to school attendance (UNHCR, 2018, p. 14). Despite an improvement in the conditions with the Lebanese government and international organizations stepping up their efforts, thousands of out-of-school Syrian refugee children are still exposed to child labor, early marriage and violence as their Lebanese peers continue their education uninterruptedly in the same country. Lebanon's context of reception in education will thus be considered negative, as access to compulsory education for Syrian refugees is worse than that of the Lebanese citizens.

Lebanon's Prime Minister concisely summarizes the current state of social integration of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. "Today if you go around most of the host communities, there is a huge tension between the Lebanese and the Syrians. I fear civil unrest," Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri told journalists in March 2017 (Perry, 2017).

Hariri said, very much in the spirit of King Abdullah of Jordan, that Lebanon was close to “breaking point” as number of Syrian refugees reached 1.5 million (Perry, 2017).

There is, indeed, a serious social upheaval in Lebanon as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis. Perhaps in a comparison of Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, xenophobia stands as the most serious issue in the last one. Despite sharing the same language and ethnicity, some Lebanese citizens have turned against refugees due to discriminative sectarian politics coupled with economic costs of integration. There is even an online petition signed by 22 thousand people asking for relocation of Syrian refugees to safe zones in Syria (“change.org”, n.d.). “How can we invite a beloved guest to our house when we don't even have enough to feed our own children?!” campaign’s Lebanese founder Linda Boulos-Macari says in statement on change.org.

"The Syrians in Lebanon are like the Mexicans in the United States," a Lebanese engineer said in interview: "There is racism; I'm not going to lie, especially in major cities. When a Lebanese woman falls in love with a Syrian, it's like a laughing matter," he added (Personal communication, February, 2018). He said that a lot of Lebanese think that Syrians should go back to their cities when they are safe and the government should work around a plan to not let them stay here:

Everyone in Lebanon is bothered by the fact that job opportunities are way fewer now after the arrival of the Syrians. The Lebanese were already struggling before their arrival and now the youth unemployment has surpassed 30%. Hotels, restaurants, valet-parking companies have begun to employ Syrian refugees as it costs much less to hire them. I believe the tension started from there. (Personal communication, February, 2018)

The Lebanese journalist confirms the fellow citizen’s claims in interview:

Tensions are high between refugees and their host communities. Many municipalities impose a curfew on refugees living in their parameters especially that many Lebanese blame Syrians for any possible crime. They also blame them now for the lack of employment opportunities, especially in low paying jobs.

Everywhere you go, the waiters, the bartenders, the phone operators are all Syrians. These jobs were occupied by the Lebanese in the past. It is cheaper to employ Syrians, especially in restaurants, as they don't ask for the minimum wage and employers don't have to pay a government fee for social security when they employ them. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

As in the case of Turkey, Syrian refugees are accused of criminal activities and distorting the labor market in Lebanon. The Lebanese government seems to do little to counter the rising anti-refugee sentiment and xenophobia, and considering statements like Prime Minister Hariri's, it seems to be instigating some of it. In fact, the reluctance to deescalate the anti-refugee sentiment may be a deliberate government policy, as it wants the refugees not become a permanent part of Lebanon's already complex societal structure. The journalist claims the rationale behind Lebanese government's actions is as follows:

Lebanon has been lobbying for end to crisis and safe return of refugees because keeping the refugees, who are mostly Muslims, harms the sectarian balance in the country. The government's fear is that the Syrian crisis would be prolonged and international community would pressure Lebanon to naturalize them. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

Another issue the Syrian refugees face in Lebanon is the risk of encountering raids by Lebanese security forces, which conduct terror operations continuously. It is true that in all Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, some terrorist groups, like the Islamic State, have used the refugee influx to infiltrate in these countries. Respectively, security and intelligence forces in all three countries have been conducting operations targeting suspicious refugees. Extent of security concerns regarding Syrian refugees in Lebanon has reached an all-time high when al-Nusra and the Islamic State attacked the town of Aarsal in 2014, killing and capturing dozens of Lebanese soldiers (Personal communication, March, 2018). The Lebanese journalist succinctly summarizes the anti-refugee sentiment that spread after the event in interview:

There are lots of news stories on army intelligence or police detaining Syrians for being affiliated with ISIS or Nusra Front, which is also a fear factor among refugees. In 2014, the Nusra Front and ISIS waged a mini war against the Lebanese Army in Aarsal (or Ersal) and the militants abducted dozens of soldiers and pretty much occupied the big town in the north. Many officials have said that refugees had harbored the militants while others said that the refugees themselves living in the camps were the militants. (Personal communication, March, 2018)

There have also been many reports regarding human rights violations against Syrian refugees in Lebanon. A local non-profit civil society organization called the Lebanese Center for Human Rights, has published a report on victims of torture from Syria in July 2016. The group states that torture victims from Syria are unable to recover despite the efforts of civil organizations, as some of them go through similar traumas in Lebanon too (The Lebanese Center for Human Rights [CLDH], 2016, p. 16). The organization claims that the Lebanese authorities “almost openly use torture as a way of investigation and do not show any will to protect the particularly vulnerable refugees from Syria who were subjected to torture in their country of origin” (CLDH, 2016, p. 16).

Like in Jordan, Syrian refugees held protests in criticism of their mistreatment in Lebanon. Tensions were especially high in the town of Aarsal after police detained 350 Syrian refugees following a police raid that was targeted by Syrian suicide bombers in the summer of 2017 (Wood, 2017). Syrian activists called for protests after 4 refugees died in police custody but the Lebanese officials responded by banning all protests (Wood, 2017) and arresting the organizer Syrian activist (“Operator of Facebook,” 2017).

It was not only the government that used physical violence against Syrian refugees. In July 2017, a group of Lebanese citizens recorded a video of them beating up a Syrian refugee; they were kicking the man on the ground as they demanded him to

curse all Syrians in the video that spread on social media (Estatie, 2017). The group allegedly sent messages on social media asking for Lebanese to beat up Syrians wherever they see them, claiming that the refugees go against the Lebanese army and support terrorism (Chehayeb, 2017). In February 2018, a brawl broke out between Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees in Koura district of Batroumine, injuring several people in fistfights and gunshots, according to a report by Naharnet citing the Lebanese national news agency (“Several Lebanese, Syrians Injured,” 2018). Another fight between the nationals and Syrian refugees in Shebaa town injured 4 people in March 2015 (“Four Injured in Brawl,” 2015). The increasing violence and discrimination against Syrian refugees has prompted hundreds of Lebanese to take to the streets to protest racism in Beirut (Tahhan, 2016). Some protestors heavily criticized their government for instigating discrimination in the country (Tahhan, 2016). In fact, the government has not denied taking a discriminative stance against Syrian refugees. Lebanese Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil in late 2017 succinctly summarized the Lebanese government’s unwillingness to naturalize Syrian refugees in a confessional speech:

We will not tolerate today what we had resisted in 2011, which is the creation of Syrian refugee camps. Syrian citizens have only one route, which is the route that leads to their homeland. Yes, we are racist Lebanese and at the same time we are open to the world and no one has the right to lecture us about being humanitarian. (“We Are Racist,” 2017)

In sum, there have been many instances of discriminative verbal and physical attacks targeting Syrian refugees in Lebanon, both by the government and by angry locals. Series of government crackdown on refugees combined with collective verbal and physical attacks make up a negative context of reception in social integration in Lebanon, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Contexts of Reception for Socioeconomic Integration in Lebanon

| Socioeconomic Integration | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Education | Negative |
| Employment | Negative |
| Social Integration | Negative |

6.4 International and civil society support

The vacuum caused by the Lebanese government's dysfunctionalities coupled with other external factors, has led many international and civil society organizations to step in to ameliorate various domains of the refugee crisis (Barakat, 2015, p. 1). The UN bodies play the most important role in external support Lebanon receives in tackling the Syrian refugee crisis. Like in the case of Turkey and Jordan, the UNHCR conducts various projects on registration and determination of refugee status, resettlement, protection, education, basic needs and cash-based interventions, livelihoods and healthcare in order to improve all aspects of the lives of Syrian refugees. Although the UNHCR data shows that there are officially close to a million refugees in Lebanon, the agency has not been able to register new refugees since May 2015, in line with a request from the Lebanese government (UNHCR, 2018). Thus individuals awaiting to be registered after that date are no longer included in the official list, making them unable to receive some of the benefits the registered refugees receive from both the UN and the government.

The UNHCR has a serious funding gap in Lebanon too. In 2017, funding requirements were at more than 2 billion dollars, yet the agency received only 735

million dollars, which is about 36% of the total appeal (UNHCR, 2018). The UN bodies, however, continue working to create an advantaged context of reception with many projects that change the lives of the refugees. As in the case of Turkey and Lebanon, the UN has been further helping the refugees with monthly vouchers and the Syrian refugees have not been the only beneficiaries of this service. “Syrian refugees get food stamps or vouchers from the UN's WFP, which they can use to get food from supermarkets. My cousin actually has a supermarket and his main business nowadays is from the Syrian refugees; they come with those certified vouchers and the UN buys those vouchers from him,” the Lebanese engineer said in interview (Personal communication, February, 2018). This example demonstrates the fact that a positive context of reception created for the refugees could also have a positive impact on the native population.

The European Commission, on the other hand, has channeled the least amount of funding to Lebanon amongst the three countries. The European Commission has sent 439 million euros in humanitarian funding to Lebanon to help its response to the Syrian refugee crisis, including 85 million euros in 2017 (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). The Commission pledges to provide less than its 2017 funding in 2018, with 80 million euros (European Commission, 2018, p. 2). Since the beginning of the crisis in 2011, the EU's “humanitarian assistance has been aimed at refugees faced with dire levels of poverty, and who are living on the margins of society, often in substandard accommodation” (European Commission, 2018, p. 2).

As previously mentioned, the sectarian congestion within the Lebanese government prevents it from responding to the crisis in an efficient and effective manner. It is difficult to blame the government's unresponsiveness entirely on the

gridlocked political structure. There is an evident unwillingness within Lebanon's political leaders to take constructive steps in fixing the refugee problem, as the government has not signed the International Convention for Refugees. In response to the lack of government response, stemming from a combination of political deadlock and reluctance, “civil society organizations are playing a disproportionately large role vis-à-vis Beirut in providing services to Syrian refugees” (Schenker, 2016, p. 4). With more than 8,000 civil society organizations registered with the Ministry of Interior, Lebanon has more than two times civil society organizations than Jordan (Schenker, 2016, p. 3). “According to the Lebanese Center for Human Rights, that amounts to 1.3 associations per 1,000 inhabitants—about six times the number per capita in Egypt” (Schenker, 2016, p. 3). Some of these organizations have achieved outstanding accomplishments in creating a more positive context of reception for many Syrian refugees. For instance, an organization called Jusur helped to get Syrian teachers certified in Lebanon, by providing educational requirements for hundreds of refugees in collaboration with international universities, “including Cambridge, which offers an annual grant as part of this cooperation” (Barakat, 2015, p. 1). This stands out as a great example of a local civil society organization working to improve the context of reception for Syrian refugees with professional qualifications, or those working class Syrian refugees who want to move to skilled labor class. Another group Himaya is working to provide psychological and emotional support to Syrian youngsters who are affected by violence, while Amel Association conducts educational and relief efforts and sponsors water treatment projects in areas shared by both the Lebanese and Syrians (Barakat, 2015, p. 1). There are hundreds more Lebanese civil society organizations working to improve conditions

for Syrian refugees, be it basic needs such as shelter, food and healthcare or other issues such as education, employment and environmental problems.

Nevertheless, the Lebanese civil society organizations have limitations as well. Although Lebanese civil society organizations trying to improve the situation for Syrian refugees “worked very hard at the beginning of the crisis - when the international response was too weak - and managed to build up a very good reputation, many had to stop their activities after a year or so” due to “lack of support,” argues Fadi Hallisso, the co-founder and general manager of Basmeh wa Zeitooneh for Relief and Development, a Lebanese association that works mainly with Syrian refugees in Lebanon (Hallisso, 2014). Hallisso argues that Lebanese civil society organizations need more long-term funds and a more professional working structure in which more skilled-labors are hired to tackle all issues in a more proficient way (Hallisso, 2014).

Overall, the government's inefficient and inactive aid apparatus has prompted civil society organizations to operate more extensively in Lebanon, especially in comparison to Jordan and Turkey. The biggest issue that both international and civil society organizations face is the funding gaps they need to fill to create a more positive context of reception for Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

6.5 Lebanon overall assessment

Lebanon had a bumpy experience with Syrian refugees, after having had a similar one with Palestinian refugees. The lack of funding combined with the reluctance to respond heightened the extent of humanitarian crisis in the country. The Lebanese journalist highlights the government's inaction: “The government's way of dealing with refugees was leaving most critical decisions to municipalities to determine policies each on their

own and how they see fit, like in the example of curfews” (Personal communication, March, 2018). Although they have made improvements in some areas like health care and education, they have imposed obstacles to getting permits, which has hindered refugees’ access to their basic needs.

There are also serious policy gaps regarding social integration of refugees for which the government needs to start taking concrete steps to prevent a potentially bigger civil unrest. Despite sharing the same language and a similar culture, there are serious social issues between the Lebanese and Syrian populations, even more so compared to Jordan and Turkey. The issues between the host community and the refugees also largely incapacitate Syrians’ prospect for naturalization. In fact, the Lebanese foreign minister has openly stated that the Lebanese government does not want to naturalize Syrian and Palestinian refugees but it would like to naturalize the Lebanese people living abroad (Obeid, 2016). Additionally, the government’s insistence on no-camp policy has exposed thousands of Syrians to crippling conditions in urban areas, where they face food scarcity, homelessness and health problems. In sum, Lebanon has a negative context of reception toward Syrian refugees across all areas, despite some signs of improvement in education.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This research compared the responses to the Syrian refugee crisis specifically in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, as the three countries have received the largest number of registered Syrian refugees since the beginning of the civil war in 2011. Other countries like Iraq and Egypt have also received Syrian refugees yet they host significantly less registered refugees than the three countries. It is also important to note that the total number of Syrian refugees in the three host countries is underestimated, as each one of them also hosts a large number of refugees who are not registered with UNHCR. Consequently, the Syrian refugee crisis has had the greatest impact on and changed the social dynamics of Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, making the comparison between the three countries relevant.

In order to compare Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon's individual responses, this research first evaluated the concept of "contexts of reception" introduced by Portes and Böröcz and expanded its scope to apply it to a variety of policy areas under basic needs and socioeconomic integration categories. The thesis then identified an importation limitation in Portes and Böröcz's research, which is the lack of well-defined indicators that make a context of reception positive, negative or neutral. In order to address that limitation, texts of Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), the 1951 Refugee Convention in Geneva and the European Union's 2001 Directive on Temporary Protection were examined to devise a set of indicators that could be applicable to this research. Each country's context of reception in shelter, food, healthcare, education,

employment and social integration were then analyzed individually, utilizing the area-specific indicators that were determined based on the three guides.

The thesis tested the hypothesis that Turkey has offered a positive context of reception to Syrian refugees' basic needs, considering the amount of money it claims to have spent and the political speeches regarding its welcoming attitude toward refugees. The thesis further investigated the hypothesis that Jordan and Lebanon should have had a positive context of reception in terms of socioeconomic integration given language, cultural, religious and ethnic similarities between Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Both hypotheses were found to be untrue, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Overall Comparison of Contexts of Reception in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon

| | Turkey | Jordan | Lebanon |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Basic Needs | | | |
| Shelter | Negative | Neutral | Negative |
| Food | Negative | Neutral | Negative |
| Healthcare | Positive | Negative | Negative |
| Socioeconomic Integration | | | |
| Education | Negative | Negative | Negative |
| Employment | Negative | Negative | Negative |
| Social Integration | Negative | Neutral | Negative |

In the first case, Turkey was found to have a negative context of reception for Syrians' basic needs except for healthcare. Turkey's context of reception was also negative across

the board in socioeconomic integration categories. There have been serious tensions between Syrians and Turks in some neighborhoods and unwelcoming attitude towards the refugees in all aspects of life. Nevertheless, a lot of Turks are also either welcoming or indifferent toward them, driven by political reasons for some, humanitarian and religious reasons for others. However, persistent issues of Syrian refugees in finding shelter and food, hundreds of thousands of children being out of school, thousands of Syrians working without work permits for low pay and ongoing social tensions are evidences for negative context of reception. Turkey has achieved to provide neutral context of reception in ease of doing business for Syrian entrepreneurs and a positive one in healthcare services for the refugees. It is important to note that some policies of the Turkish government were less friendly for non-Syrian refugees.

In contrast with the hypothesis introduced at the beginning of the research, both Jordan and Lebanon have chosen to implement quite restrictive labor policies for Syrian refugees by not issuing enough work permits and hence leading them to opt for illegal employment. Despite having a neutral stance toward Syrian entrepreneurs, the two countries had a negative context of reception for working and professional class Syrians, which makes up for the majority of the refugees. It is indeed interesting to note that all three of the countries had a neutral context of reception for richer Syrian refugees who came to the host nation with an entrepreneurial intent. Nevertheless, neither of the three has been regularly issuing work permits to Syrian workers and professionals, practically forcing them to work in the informal labor market under harsh working conditions for a lower pay than that of the citizens of the host country. Easing the process of getting work permits, issuing more permits and ameliorating the work conditions of the Syrians would not only greatly help the Syrian refugees with getting back on their feet, it would

also greatly contribute to the economy of the host nation. Neither of the countries also seemed to be mulling to actively grant citizenship to Syrian refugees or their babies who were born in the host country.

Lebanon had further serious issues with social integration and discrimination, for which the government needs to act in order to prevent a potentially bigger social unrest. Government's unresponsiveness to rising tensions seemingly exacerbated the situation, making hundreds of thousands of refugees feel unwelcomed in the country. Civil societies and international organizations have been working to improve the context of reception for refugees in all countries, but in Lebanon, they had to step up their efforts to offset the lack of government support. Nevertheless, bureaucratic hurdles coupled with a lack of funding and government support limited these organizations' abilities to reach out to more refugees. In all three countries, civil society organizations that are politically closer to the government received more support and operated with fewer restrictions.

Contexts of reception in shelter and food being relatively better in Jordan in comparison to the other two countries does not necessarily mean that the conditions in Jordan's refugee camps are better than the ones in Turkey. As the majority of the refugees in Turkey live outside government-run camps in Turkey, the research mostly focused on the context of reception of hundreds of thousands of refugees trying to make ends meet in host cities across the three countries. As per healthcare, Turkey's initiatives since early 2000s to ameliorate infrastructure all across the board could have arguably contributed to its positive context of reception. The creation of an inclusive health system that covers all residents and foreigners in the country, coupled with hefty construction and renovation spending for public hospitals have indeed been important items of the ruling Justice and Development Party's election agenda since its rise to

power in 2002 (Kabouche, 2018). As a result, Syrian refugees have benefited from the pre-established health infrastructure in Turkey; yet allowing them to access this pre-existing network of services was a deliberate policy choice by the government.

Sectarian and ethnic issues ostensibly play an important role in the difference between contexts of reception in social integration in the three countries. For instance, Lebanon's negative context of reception in social integration was mostly due to the complicated sectarian structure of the country. The country's divided social structure creates tensions among the different religious groups who strive to maintain or enhance their political power within the country. As a result, "racist attitudes are largely interrelated with religious identity" in Lebanon (Chalala, 2013). The large influx of Syrian refugees, who are mostly Sunni Muslims, thus seems to have exacerbated racist attitudes in the country, with some Lebanese groups acting out of fear that the increase in the number of Sunni Muslims would mean less power to their religious groups. This discriminative sentiment is vividly not present in Jordan, which is a predominantly Sunni country. Unlike in Lebanon, the general tendency in Jordan is to treat Syrian refugees as fellow Arabs, as shown via the Jordanian politician's remarks. On the other hand, the negative context of reception in social integration in Turkey, which is a country with Sunni Muslim majority, can be attributed more to the ethnic difference than a religious division. In all countries, however, members of host communities attempt to justify their discriminative or even violent actions against Syrian refugees by citing economic and security-related concerns.

A limitation of this research could be that its scope for indicators is limited to Geneva Convention of 1951, EU Directive on Temporary Protection and MIPEx, a project co-funded by the EU. Whether the context of reception in a given policy area is

negative, neutral or positive was determined by using indicators derived from these blueprints, which arguably set standards for policy areas through a Western lens. Jordan and Lebanon have not ratified the Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees; and despite having signed it, Turkey does not refer to its Syrian guests as refugees. In addition, neither of the countries is legally bound by the policy indicators introduced by MIPEX. A criticism thus could be that the indicators are solely based on a Western perspective and may not be fully applicable to the context of the Middle East. A recommendation for further research could be to expand the scope of indicators by looking at other blueprints, in an attempt to analyze the contexts of reception through a wider range of indicators and a perspective that is more pertinent to the realities of the region.

In sum, there is a long road untraveled in all three countries for ameliorating the living conditions of Syrian refugees. As the ongoing civil war in Syria continues to displace more civilians, it is clear that the refugees in these three countries will not be able to go back to their homes any time soon, which makes it even more important for the governments to efficiently intervene to alleviate the crisis and start evaluating the refugees' naturalization prospects. While meeting the basic needs such as shelter, food and healthcare is essential for humanitarian reasons, a successful socioeconomic integration of the refugees coupled with an inclusive social environment would boost the economies of the three countries. The host countries should bear in mind that creating a positive context of reception for their Syrian guests would not only improve the refugees' living conditions but also have a positive impact on themselves.

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APPENDIX

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE TEXT OF PAGE 48 BLOCK QUOTES

“Çocuklarımız taciz ediliyor, bacılarımıza sokakta el hareketi yapıyor. Suriyelilerin yüzünden ev kiralari yükseldi,işverenler de bizi çıkarıp yerimize Suriyelileri alıyor. Savaşmak yerine Gaziantep'teki parklarda nargile keyfi yapıyorlar.” diyen eylemciler “Evimizdeki yatak, yorganlarımızı verdik, evimizde eşyamız kalmadı,biz bunları yaparken onlar analarımıza, bacılarımıza, namusumuza saldırıyorlar. Biz onlara karşı değiliz, devlet onları kamplarda toplansın, içimize almasın” dediler.

Suriyelilerle olan sorunlara çözüm bulunmasını isteyen bir vatandaş ise “Bu nereye kadar gidecek? Ev sorunu var, iş sorunu var, ahlak sorunu var, edep sorunu var. Bu sorunları kim çözecek? Yetkililerden açıklama bekliyoruz. Hastanelerde yatak yok bunların yüzünden. Bir Suriyeli hastaneye geldiğinde randevuya gerek yok, sıraya gerek yok, paraya gerek yok. Ben bu memlekete çalışıp emek vermişim, yıllardır hayatımı vermişim. Ama onun kadar hakka sahip değilim bu memlekette. Bu memlekette yabancı olan benim, bu memleketin sahibi olan Suriyeliler” diyerek tepkisini dile getirdi.