

Why Do Employment and Socioeconomic Integration Have a Strained Relationship?

The International Protection Context
and Syrians in Turkey

Saime Özçürümez and Deniz Yıldırım

Introduction

With no immediate end to the increasing number of displaced persons, the central concern for all stakeholders in the variety of receiving states has become how to facilitate the process and means by which they become self-reliant. While becoming self-reliant, the displaced persons are almost concurrently expected to progress in socioeconomic integration. There is scant evidence on whether self-reliance and socioeconomic integration affect each other positively. The rationale for conflating the two processes can be explained by focusing on various possibly consequential relationships. When gainfully employed, displaced persons may become financially independent of the humanitarian assistance schemes. In turn, host states are likely to circumvent the controversy over whether hosting refugees constitutes a financial burden. Scholars very recently have proposed that “combining objectives of labor migration and humanitarian protection” may facilitate redesigning policies for both purposes (Ruhs 2019). Through legal employment, refugees are likely to reinstitute their dignity, highlight their contributions to the host society, and engage in social connections in the workplace and beyond, which together are expected to foster their socioeco-

conomic integration (Zetter and Ruauadel 2018). However, it is hard to identify such a causal path by analyzing the evidence from the experience of the refugee hosting countries. The evidence from a variety of cases reveals that while legal employment is a necessary condition for social inclusion of all vulnerable groups in a society (including refugees), it is not a sufficient condition for realizing socioeconomic integration and social cohesion (Zetter and Ruauadel 2018; OECD 2016; OECD and UNHCR 2018; Connor 2010). Such alarming evidence confirmed by several studies calls for the need for an even closer examination of the processes taking place in middle-income states hosting increasing numbers of displaced persons.

Displaced people's needs increase and diversify over time. States bordering protracted conflicts and receiving mass influx need to sustain institutional capacity prepared to remain resilient given such a challenge. These states also need to cope with the situation of wavering public approval about the presence of refugees and ever-expanding financial and administrative pressure on the national and local resources.

Aware of the multifaceted challenges of the larger set of refugee hosting countries in the low- to medium-income countries category, Betts and Collier (2017) argue that host countries may still transform refugees into economically productive actors. Their claim is that the low- to medium-income countries receiving displaced persons may introduce effective regulatory environments for employment, improve inclusive policies in the labor market, engage in skills development as well as qualification recognition of displaced persons, and promote entrepreneurial activities by refugees in order to enable them to access a variety of livelihood opportunities. These strategies, they expect, will lead to a "win-win" situation for refugees and the host states. While refugees will be relieved from the drama of victimhood, rising costs, and inhospitable public opinion, the host states will have more well-educated people and labor market supply to foster social and economic growth (Betts and Collier 2017). Different studies find that refugees also contribute to international trade and investment and increase entrepreneurship in host states (Bahar 2018). However, evidence from different cases and policy initiatives repeatedly prove that this approach is highly difficult to apply and even harder to sustain (Zetter and Ruauadel 2018; Ekren, 2018).

While not directly proposing a clear link between employment and socioeconomic integration of displaced persons, most studies assume that creating employment opportunities for refugees, even by undertaking strenuous structural transformations in the host economies, may result in overcoming most of the financial and social challenges attributed to hosting refugees. Most studies, then, brush over the complicated questions of whether, why, how, and to what extent being employed affects the likelihood of socioeconomic integration, instead focusing on the principle: legal employment is ipso facto necessary for social inclusion. However, principles need institu-

tional paths to follow and social pillars to stand on. This study seeks answers to the questions: what are the institutional paths and pillars for deciphering the relationship between employment and socioeconomic integration, and under what conditions do they work and why? The research is based on a systematic review of existing reports and literature on the relationship between employment opportunities and socioeconomic integration prospects for displaced persons. By analyzing the relationship between the context of employment and socioeconomic integration prospects for Syrians in Turkey, the study suggests that gainful employment is a necessary but definitely not a sufficient condition for promoting socioeconomic integration of refugees. This is partly the case because employability policies aim to remove fundamental barriers of access to employment such as language, qualification recognition, and vocational training. However, such policies are not necessarily supported by practices that establish and promote positive social interaction among refugees and host communities in general and among refugees' coworkers in particular. The precarity inherent in refugee employment magnifies the scarcity of such policies and widens the gap between employability prospects and socioeconomic integration.

This study argues that both the existing international protection regime that aims to govern the employment prospects for refugees and asylum seekers and the *structural and agency* constraints in the economies of host countries constrain the attainment of policy objectives for employability of displaced persons in the host states. First, by reviewing evidence for those under international and temporary protection in Turkey, the study identifies the regulatory, structural, and agency-driven barriers to employability, which in turn affect socioeconomic integration. The point here is not that Turkey's case stands as unique or that policy initiatives in the country are flawed. The main argument is that the mass influx to Turkey (hosting up to four million Syrians and other displaced persons) magnifies the challenges associated with employability of displaced persons in host countries. Such a challenge is a consequence of how the international protection framework works in the national context in response to an unprecedented scale of demand on public resources. Therefore, the analysis of evidence from this case substantiates the need to facilitate employment policies with supportive practices for positive social interaction between refugees and host communities. Second, it discusses why the relationship between legal access to employment and prospects for socioeconomic integration through gainful employment in prolonged temporary protection conditions is strained. This study relies on historical institutionalism to explain the reasons for this continuous difficulty in overcoming this problem. The concept of "path dependence," this study argues, explains the reasons why policy innovations introduced for enhancing employability of refugees remain short of accomplishing their main objective: socioeconomic integration and self-reliance.

Research Design and Case Selection

The puzzle with Syrians in Turkey represents a significant case in relation to the research question on the nexus between employability and socio-economic integration for several reasons. First, despite the huge scale of influx from 252 in 2011 to 3,691,333 by November 2019 (GIGM 2019) and high unemployment rates in the cities where refugees are concentrated, the country's economy remains relatively fragile (Özpınar, Çilingir, and Taşöz Düşündere 2016). Second, the country experiences the consequences of the Syrian humanitarian crisis with continuous fluctuating movements of forced migrants. Therefore, the data from this country reveals evidence that will account for understanding how a continuous and complex movement affects the causal relationship in question. Third, Turkey responded to the mass influx by introducing the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR), which aimed to lead a favorable structural context for socioeconomic integration by removing the structural barriers to employability with national legal backing before the crisis peaked in 2015.

This study relies on a systematic review of scholarly articles and reports (from international organizations, public institutions, and nongovernmental organizations) published between 2011 and 2018, with a focus on how they discuss the link between employability and socioeconomic integration. The printed materials have been reviewed for their focus on the relationship between employability and socioeconomic integration of refugees. The study focuses on the changes in policies and discourse toward increasing access to labor markets, facilitating entrepreneurship opportunities and the development agenda, while referring to employability of refugees in Turkey.

“Path Dependence” in International Protection and Employability of Refugees

A narrow definition of path dependence helps explain the role of legal frameworks and regulatory approaches in shaping continuity and change in certain policy contexts such as those on international protection. Levi (1997: 28) explains that once a path is taken, costs of reversals increase in that the path chosen is usually followed until that path totally breaks down. Likewise, Arthur (1994: 112–13) stresses that paths are prone to create rigidity and inefficiency pointing out the costs of reversals. U-turns might push costs to *record levels* such that states might choose to proceed with the existing policies even though they may not be fully efficient. Hence, despite the changing nature and needs in this field, states might follow the existing frameworks to respond to emerging policy challenges as in the case of in-

ternational protection policies implemented at the national level for many countries.

The 1951 Geneva Convention, the main legal document on international protection, has also produced reasons for ensuring its continuity and stalling global policy change. Continuity in the case of the Convention is not that its ratification provided a “lock-in” effect definitely for asylum governance at the global level and by the nation-states. However, the Convention created its own institutions¹ that led to the mobilization of certain actors, who were more interested in ensuring the continuity of the rules instead of pursuing change in those rules for a considerable period of time. North (1990) explains the insistence on continuity of the present management strategies, policies, and/or institutions through adaptation of individuals to the latter. In addition, the self-reinforcing trajectories of institutions persuade individuals to preserve the existing entities (North 1990) as well as processes pursued to attain them. Nevertheless, there is still some possibility of revision in the policies selected and paths taken by the institutions. Scholarly debates point to “critical junctures” that enable changes at certain points in time. The text of the 1951 Convention itself reflects the political compromises and struggles that depict the critical juncture that resulted in the embodiment of this legal framework. As the historical institutionalist approach would suggest, the Convention also constitutes particular interests crystallized in a certain historical moment, a critical juncture, whereby the international community aimed to produce a legal agreement on governing asylum internationally and putting in print legal commitments of nation-states in the event of persecution of individuals and human rights violations. One main standard operating practice that the Convention highlights is that nation-states decide on the extent to which they will comply with the principles outlined in the Convention and on the implementation of policies for meeting the needs of those seeking asylum and/or granted refugee status. One of those principles that states maintain is the principle of *nonrefoulement*. However, states introduced, for example, geographical limitations to the implementation of the Convention, and some, such as Turkey, have preserved this settlement to this day.

Recalling Mahoney’s (2000) depiction of “path dependence” as referring to “historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties,” this study asserts that the defining role of the 1951 Convention constraints on the relationship between refugee employability and socioeconomic integration prospects is critical. The 1951 Convention sets the formal rules for the global governance of international protection. It does so in a way that it also shapes the decades-long continuity in policies addressing employability of refugees in national contexts to be defined by nation-states’ policies and preferences.

Tracing Path Dependence in Employability of Syrians in Turkey

Multiple articles of the 1951 Convention refer to gainful employment and labor market entry conditions for refugees in the host countries. Relying on Article 17 of the 1951 Convention, the signatory states are expected to provide refugees who lawfully reside on their soil with equal rights to join in wage-earning employment as other nationals of foreign countries. The same article regulates under which conditions a signatory state cannot impose restrictive measures on a refugee's entrance into the labor market.² Article 18, on the other hand, encourages the signatory states to treat refugees, who lawfully stay in their territory and are willing to set up their own businesses in primary, secondary, and/or tertiary sectors, "as favorable as possible" and "not less favorable" than other aliens who meet similar criteria. Likewise, Article 19 requires signatory states to approach refugees who lawfully reside on their soil and other aliens as equal as possible when they meet the necessary conditions to practice their profession (1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol). The spirit of the Convention, then, reminds nation-states that access to labor markets is one of the ways that eases the continuous survival of refugees and persons in need of international protection, who might otherwise remain dependent on social assistance schemes. However, signatory states interpret Article 17, which regulates providing refugees with equal rights to participate in wage-earning employment as favorably as other foreign residents, in ways that allow them to refer to the requirements of Article 17 as recommendations rather than obligations (MEDAM 2018). Furthermore, the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol do not detail, nor do they endorse, what signatory states should do in order to promote and ease the entrance of refugees into their labor markets. Betts and Collier (2017) affirm this conclusion by indicating that the international legal framework does not prescribe, nor does it enforce, national regulations to be in place for labor market access or livelihood creation for refugees. In this context, signatory states mostly bestow national solutions that result in various responses apropos employment of refugees by distancing themselves from a universal solution (MEDAM 2018). Even efforts put into recent universal solutions, i.e., the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (UN 2016) and the ILO's "Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labor market" (ILO 2016), maintain cautionary statements by prioritizing "needs of the existing labor force and employers" over refugees' needs.

Overall, the lack of international enforcement or sanctions for regulating labor market access to the benefit of displaced persons and integration of refugees, on the one hand, and the presence of a diverse repertoire of national policies, on the other hand, result in, even if inadvertently, reinforcing

precarity of refugee employability. Refugees fall into the vicious cycle of having to sustain their lives either through humanitarian assistance schemes managed by international and/or national governmental and/or nongovernmental bodies for an indefinite period of time or remain vulnerable to the risk of working illegally and/or under poor conditions, and/or juggle for securing income from both. Such conditions are even more challenging in situations of protracted conflict.

The Settlement Law (1934) at the national level and the 1951 Convention at the international level defined Turkey's legal commitments in the field of international protection until the introduction of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2014. The Settlement Law (1934) facilitated the support for those attached to Turkic and Muslim identity to migrate to Turkey from the former lands of the Ottoman Empire such as Bulgaria and Bosnia (Kirişçi 1996). Turkey has ratified the Convention with geographical limitation. Turkey does not allow those coming from outside Europe to be granted refugee status. The Settlement Law was consulted by governments for coping with the cases of mass influx of Iraqi Turks in the 1990s (Parla and Daniş 2009) and while hosting them for a number of years. However, for those who come from outside of Europe and could not be received under the Settlement Law, Turkey has long remained as a country of temporary residence until moving toward other countries or returning to the country of origin.

Turkey's most extensive experience with mass influx coming from non-European origin countries resulted in Turkey receiving them in temporary accommodation centers and returning them to their country of origin within a short space of time. The lesson learned was that temporary refugee protection policies work in coping with forced migration, that there is no urgent need to prepare for labor market access for refugees (let alone socio-economic integration), and that those who arrive either return or move on in a reasonable period of time. During the early 2000s, while the movement toward Turkey continued, the numbers hovered around a couple of hundred thousand, which were manageable by Turkish standards when considered as a percentage of the total population.

When Syrians started arriving in 2011, the earlier experience shaped the public and policymaker perceptions and, hence, the initial coping mechanisms and policy tools put to use. Policymakers and the public expected that the mass influx would end in a few years and the displaced persons would return to their countries of origin. In order to run temporary accommodation centers, set up for Syrians, the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (DEMP), whose portfolio consisted of attending to the needs of mostly natural disaster victims, had been in charge of managing the crisis. The emergency approach that pooled in multiple financial, technical, administrative, and human resources operated on the assumption that the

situation was (and would remain) manageable by national means and actors, even with the increase in the arrival of displaced persons in the hundreds of thousands in the post-2013 period. The emergency approach to coping with the mass influx did not incorporate the social cohesion approach.

Drafted totally independent of the Syrian emergency, the LFIP helped set out the legal basis for (1) registration procedures, (2) the lawful stay of Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) in the country until the conditions in Syria allow for safe return, (3) Temporary Protection identity cards, (4) free access to social services such as health and education as well as access to labor markets. The geographical limitation had a strong “continuity” in Turkey’s asylum governance; therefore, while Turkey abided by the principle of *nonrefoulement*, the country limited the policies to the arriving Syrians in the framework of temporariness. As a result, Turkey, where geographical limitation is maintained, enacted the “Act No. 6735: International Labor Force Law” (ILFL) first as a secondary legislation in January 2016, then as a law in August 2016 (Uluslararası İşgücü Kanunu 2016) in order to facilitate Syrians’ labor market access. The ILFL enabled beneficiaries of temporary protection to acquire work permits and access labor markets in Turkey. Despite the gradual transformation in policy principles easing the labor market entry of the Syrians under temporary protection, the increase in the number of full-time and legally employed lag behind any reasonable level to suggest that Syrians under Temporary Protection have become self-sufficient in general and/or legally employed in particular.

First, the ILFL regulated the conditions under which one might be eligible for work permits. Persons under temporary protection are primarily expected to sign fixed-term employment contracts with employers, with which the latter should apply for work permits. Once the work permit of a Syrian under temporary protection is approved by authorities, employers are required to pay a certain fee in order to finalize the procedure. Work permits are restricted to a position and an enterprise specified in fixed-term employment contracts. Hence, it provides limited access to the labor market and reinforces dependency on the preferences of the employer. With no sustainable incentives in sight for the employers, the legal employment prospects remain limited. Recruitment of Syrians under temporary protection is dependent on whether they meet the qualifications requested in the relevant regulations and/or no national qualifies for the position.

In the Turkish case, employers are not required to apply for work permits for the agricultural and livestock sectors, and there is no quota for employing Syrians under Temporary Protection in these sectors only. According to the World Bank statistics, the share of the agriculture sector was only 19.39 percent of the Turkish economy in 2017 (World Bank 2018). The low share of these sectors in the Turkish economy and the seasonal hiring trends maintain the precarity of employment prospects. In other sectors, the number of

Syrians under Temporary Protection cannot exceed 10 percent of the total Turkish workers in a given enterprise where there are more than ten workers. If there are less than ten Turkish employees in a given enterprise, then only one Syrian under Temporary Protection can be recruited. Implementation of quotas could be bypassed only when there is not a Turkish candidate who qualifies for the job that a Syrian under Temporary Protection has applied for. The major challenge that the ILFL does not overcome is those remaining in the informal sector. According to the Turkish Confederation of Employers' Associations (TCEA) report, well before being granted the right to work and access to labor markets in 2016, three hundred thousand Syrians had been working informally in various sectors (Erdoğan and Ünver 2015), and recent studies note that more than one million Syrians under Temporary Protection of working age (fifteen to sixty-five) work informally in Turkey (Del Carpio, Seker, and Yener 2018). Even two years after being granted the right to work and access to labor markets, only 19,925 Syrians reported working legally and most are working under poor conditions (İçduygu and Diker 2017).

The studies by the World Bank also point out that the younger the Syrians under Temporary Protection, the more they have opportunities of being hired by the employers (World Bank 2015). This stresses that employers prefer to hire children because they are able to learn the job and language rapidly and do not resist poor working conditions. As a result, Syrian children are employed in low-skilled jobs without regulated safety conditions in sectors such as textiles, construction, shoemaking, agriculture, and clothes shops (Caspani 2015). Especially in the southeastern part of Turkey, the number of children working in garbage collection is significantly high (Lordoğlu and Aslan 2016). Child Labor Report indicates that children work more than eight hours a day and six to seven days per week, going against international and national legal frameworks (Human Rights Watch 2015).

There are serious efforts to end child labor among Syrian refugees. UNICEF underlines that as of January 2016, more than six hundred children who were "at risk or engaged in child labor" were provided support services (UNICEF 2016). Similarly, the former Ministry of Family and Social Policies (current Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services) provides parents with "conditional cash transfers" in exchange for children being enrolled in education (İçduygu 2016). Considering children compose almost 50 percent of the arriving displaced population (UNHCR 2018), implementing comprehensive child protection policies is indispensable for socioeconomic integration policies to work.

The employability of displaced persons is usually constrained by the incremental change that characterizes policy responses to transforming demands in most countries including Turkey. Despite several policy tools introduced to increase employability, their scope for impact is constrained

by the structural conditions of the economy. A major gap resurfaces in this setting and in a more magnified way due to the scale of the problem, policies of employability address only barriers of employability. However, those policy tools remain in need of complementary policies to support socioeconomic integration.

From Employability to Socioeconomic Integration: Fixing the Broken Link

The link between employability and socioeconomic integration is complex. Studies identify that socioeconomic integration depends on the construction of social connections with the local level in the host state (Ager and Strang 2008). While employment presents a venue through which meaningful “two-way” social connections can be established, evidence proves that such a relationship is highly contingent. Neoclassical economics dictates that the reason why an individual is unemployed is strongly linked to his/her previous experience and/or skills that do not match the market’s needs (Evans and Kelly 1991; Fugazza 2003). The findings of most research on displaced persons suggest that the ever-present difficulty for this group is more complex: it is the discrimination they endure by both the employers and coworkers in host state job searches and workplaces (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007a). Studies confirm repeatedly that all displaced persons and those with refugee status continue to accept poor or unsatisfactory employment conditions in order to create their livelihoods and thus suffer through seriously debilitating job search processes (Ward and Masgoret 2007; Weiss, Sauer, and Gotlibovski 2001; Fugazza 2003; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007b). Therefore, while accessibility of employment may suggest that the context meets one prerequisite for establishing social connections in the host state, the practices they encounter may still impede forming connections facilitating socioeconomic integration.

There is scant evidence to suggest that receiving states consistently take initiatives to remove structural barriers to labor market participation for displaced persons (MEDAM 2018; Del Carpio, Seker, and Yener 2018) and/or complement them with policies and practices for promoting social interaction among displaced persons and host communities in the workplace. There are sporadic efforts by employers in different countries, which upon closer examination are neither comprehensive nor sustainable (OECD and UNHCR 2016; Ekren 2018). Host states, in general, do not enforce policies penalizing employers for employing refugees without work permits (Degler and Liebig 2017) or introduce effective incentives for improving workplace conditions.

Some enterprises hire refugees on the basis of corporate social responsibility (OECD and UNHCR 2016). Such approaches, however, prove neither viable nor replicable, especially in the countries that have received the most refugees in the past decade (according to UNHCR statistics in the following order: Turkey, Pakistan and Uganda, Lebanon, and the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2018; UNHCR 2018). Many employers in the private sector prefer supporting refugees by offering them training and internships rather than hiring them for full-time jobs (OECD and UNHCR 2016). Additionally, while promoters of vocational training for refugees and displaced persons to increase their chances of employment are abundant, studies reveal that having gone through vocational training does not guarantee labor market participation by itself (Korkmaz 2017). The uncertainty around the labor market entry prospects of displaced persons and the lack of long-term employment opportunities for them result in double jeopardy for refugees' socioeconomic integration prospects. If they secure some form of employment (informal, part-time, or full-time), they attract the antagonism of fellow employees for having compromised the long-earned settlements about pay scale and working hours. They remain vulnerable to the discretion of employers due to lack of guarantees for securing long-term employment with long-term work permits and absence of effective enforcement mechanisms for formalizing work for them. The context, then, stalls prospects for establishing meaningful social connections with both the employees and coworkers.

Additional barriers persistently weaken the link between employment and socioeconomic integration of displaced persons. Research notes that obstacles faced by refugees are multifaceted and different from those faced by immigrants (Connor 2010; Bakker, Dagevos, and Engbersen 2017). When refugees arrive in the host state, most suffer from trauma and a variety of health problems, which become a barrier to even start planning for livelihood opportunities (Chiswick, Lee, and Miller 2008). They are uncertain about the duration as well as the conditions of their stay and highly unfamiliar with the new social, economic, and political context. Considering that most states immediately accommodate them in reception centers or camps, the prospect of self-reliance is further hampered by physical confinement for meeting humanitarian protection needs. Almost 60 percent of refugees live in cities instead of camps around the world (Park 2016). In time, displaced persons may move to the urban centers in large numbers.

Harmonized unemployment rates in Turkey are increasing, and the youth unemployment rate was 20.1 percent in 2018 (OECD 2019). The unemployment rates in the cities populated with displaced persons suggests that available positions may not suffice to meet the demand coming from job seekers, both Syrian and Turkish. Considering that the employment gap for disadvantaged groups including non-natives remained the highest in

Turkey compared to other OECD countries (OECD 2017), the likelihood of increasing the prospects of Syrians under Temporary Protection for access to the legal economy is low unless effective job creation policies are introduced. Statistics also reveal that of those employed, 18.3 percent are in the agricultural sector, 19.5 percent are in the industrial sector, 7.4 percent are in construction, and 54.8 percent are in the services sector. While most opportunities seem to be in the services sector for both locals and the Syrians under Temporary Protection, the language and qualification recognition barriers limit the likelihood of the latter being employed in this sector (Erdoğan and Ünver 2015; İçduygu 2016). Hence, even when effective job creation policies may be implemented, a lack of proficiency in the Turkish language severely impedes or holds back the Syrians under Temporary Protection from being recruited (Ortensi 2015).

In addition to the prevailing reluctance to hire refugees, employers in Turkey widely express their “pessimism” about the economic integration of the Syrians under Temporary Protection due to language and skill recognition barriers (Erdoğan and Ünver 2015). Having acknowledged that attitude and in order to ease the socioeconomic integration of displaced persons in Turkey, various public and private actors offer language training as well as vocational training. However, challenges of the variety of policy initiatives and interventions concerning training programs remain and are manifold. The most striking challenge is that all policies and practices are offered through short-term projects in need of monitoring, evaluation, and impact analysis. Almost eight years into the mass influx of Syrians and hundreds of thousands of people under international protection from different source countries, there is little data on either the cost of training programs and their returns or which actors would be more effective as suppliers for these skill enhancement policies; which sectors would have continuous demand for these peoples’ labor; which vocations would need to be prioritized; and when, where, and why the trainings would need to be provided and for how long. Due to the lack of any reliable impact analysis, investing in the vocational training or financial literacy of those under international protection and temporary protection do not present a convincing case for a high priority policy objective. The initiatives require a complementary comprehensive approach to social integration supported by a concrete policy agenda as would be needed in all countries receiving refugees.

Policymakers expect that introducing opportunities for learning the language and increasing levels of education would increase chances of employment. However, researchers stress that there is not a definite positive correlation between the increase in the level of education and the probability of being recruited in well-paid jobs in formal sectors for refugees (İçduygu 2016). Yet the question of whether the currently employed Syrians under Temporary Protection have higher levels of education compared to those who are unemployed remains unanswered.

The recognition of academic degrees of immigrants in general and of refugees in particular (Frykman 2012; Liversage 2009; Dean and Wilson 2009; Dietz et al. 2015) is not straightforward and takes time. In addition, for those who have been subject to forced migration, providing proof of work experience in Syria and/or academic credentials and/or relevant education and skills when asked is extremely difficult. They usually lack credible documentation, and/or the available documents require translation and certification. In this context, accepting to work under poor conditions remains as a continuous challenge for the displaced persons and the policymakers. On the one hand, willingness to work under poor conditions facilitates access to a means of livelihood and establishes social networks. On the other hand, such a start usually seals the future prospects for employment as remaining precarious at best.

Syrians under Temporary Protection can also earn their livelihoods by setting up their own businesses in Turkey. Some reports quote that “there are 9.978 companies that are either owned or partnered by a Syrian in Turkey” (TEPAV 2018: 13). The report also notes that more than half of these companies employ less than five people, and the business owners note their lack of knowledge about how to seek subsidies to grow their companies (TEPAV 2018: 8). One of the striking findings of this report is that more than 70 percent of Syrian business owners would prefer to stay in Turkey even after the conflict is over (TEPAV 2018: 33) because they note by comparison that Turkey’s business environment is better than Syria’s. Srivastava (2016) had already claimed that Syrian entrepreneurs contribute positively to Turkey’s economy. Further studies are also needed regarding the financial and social context for promoting Syrian-operated businesses in Turkey in order to analyze their effects on socioeconomic integration in detail.

Conclusion

Coping with the influx of displaced persons fleeing a humanitarian crisis unearths multiple policy dilemmas and challenges for countries receiving and hosting these persons. These challenges are partly due to the structure of the existing labor markets in receiving countries and partly due to the characteristics of the foreign workforce, which is expected to become economically active in a given period of time. In the case of Turkey coping with mass influx, current legal instruments and policy tools point out the incentives for national policymakers to sustain continuity of existing policies and resort to only incremental change for employability of refugees. While Turkey pursues a combination of policies to facilitate labor market access for refugees, such as formalizing temporary protection as well as facilitating work permit acquisition through renewing regulations, these policies still might not include all employable SuTP in formal sectors and might not prevent them from remaining in precarious work conditions. There is also limited

evidence that complementary policy initiatives could address the challenges of SuTP employment in particular. Even though a combination of policies has been introduced to ease the entrance of SuTP into Turkey's legal economy, the present circumstances resonate the call for the exigency to shift to a development agenda with more urgency than ever because the existing policy toolkits for employment can surmount the myriad of challenges only for so long with no end date for the Syrian crisis in sight.

A whole host of studies on employability of refugees and how this would benefit both refugees and host countries around the world does exist. Most of them overemphasize the role of employment for facilitating socioeconomic integration. This chapter has major implications for current debates that rely on employability as clearing the path to enhance socioeconomic integration of displaced persons in host states. First, the national policy instruments promoting employment with objectives compatible with the international framework have limited impact on socioeconomic integration. Second, national-level structural and agency-related challenges to increase employability need national-level solutions. Third, further research is needed to design employment policies and pursue enabling conditions for facilitating socioeconomic integration for the benefit of both host states and refugees.

Saime Özçürümez is director of the Human Mobility Processes and Interactions Research Lab (HMPI-Bilkent) and associate professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Bilkent University. She conducts research and publishes on migration and asylum governance in the European Union, Turkey, and Canada. She also focuses on health and diversity, gender and forced migration processes, and social cohesion.

Deniz Yıldırım is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Bilkent University. Her dissertation explores how the recent institutional change has taken place in the areas of asylum and international protection in Turkey in the 2000s. She is particularly interested in the institutional contexts within which the policy and institutional entrepreneurs emerge, function, and create change. She carried out research at Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights in 2018–19. She has coauthored a book chapter on Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP), health services, and NGOs in Turkey, and has worked on various national and cross-national collaborative research projects on migration.

Notes

1. Thelen and Streeck (2005: 9) define institutions as “collectively enforced expectations with respect to the behavior of specific categories of actors to the

- performance of certain activities.” Hall emphasizes the institutions as also being constituted of “formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating procedures” (Thelen and Steinmo 1992).
2. A refugee could not be constrained to enter the labor market if s/he has been living in the receiving country more than three years and/or has a spouse or a child who holds citizenship in the country of residence. However, Article 17 paradoxically and legally renders possible the preventing of a refugee from entering national labor markets of signatory states for his/her first three years of residence if s/he is not married to a national or has a child holding the citizenship of the receiving country.

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