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THE IMPACT OF SYRIAN MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS ON SOCIAL COHESION: THE CASE OF GAZİANTEP

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

MHD Essam ABDELY

GAZİANTEP – 2024

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07/07/2024

HASAN KALYONCU UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE IMPACT OF SYRIAN MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS ON SOCIAL COHESION: THE CASE OF GAZİANTEP

MHD Essam ABDELY

MASTER THESIS

Advisor

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ABSTRACT

Migrants and social cohesion are closely related since harmony and stability in host communities depend on the effective integration of migrants. Creating inclusive communities where everyone feels respected and connected—including migrants—is necessary for social cohesiveness. Fair access to resources like jobs, healthcare, and education is essential for this integration process, as are initiatives to end discrimination and increase understanding between the parties. Social cohesion can only be achieved by effective policies and community involvement programs that enable refugees to successfully integrate into their new communities, thereby benefiting both the host society and the migrants themselves. This study aims to explore the business established by Syrian migrants in Türkiye, Gaziantep, on social cohesion and the dynamics of social cohesion based on different factors, utilizing the adapted Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) through an online survey directed to Syrian Entrepreneurs and Business owners in Gaziantep. The findings highlight that establishing a business in not alone a determinant factor for social cohesion; on the contrary, variables like level of education have an unseen impact; in addition, language as a perceived way of communication has a much more significant effect on social cohesion as a bridge to bringing host and guest society closer to each other.

Keywords: Migrants, Public Policy, Social Cohesion, Business, Language

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MHD Essam ABDELY

MASTER THESIS

Danışman

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Pelin ALİYEV

ÖZ

Ev sahibi topluluklardaki uyum ve istikrar, göçmenlerin etkin entegrasyonuna bağlı olduğundan, göçmenler ve sosyal uyum yakından ilişkilidir. Göçmenler de dahil olmak üzere herkesin saygı duyulduğunu ve birbirine bağlı olduğunu hissettiği kapsayıcı topluluklar oluşturmak, sosyal bütünleşmenin gerekli bir bileşenidir. Bu entegrasyon süreci için iş, sağlık ve eğitim gibi kaynaklara adil erişimin yanı sıra ayrımcılığı sona erdirmeye ve taraflar arasındaki anlayışı artırmaya yönelik girişimler de gereklidir. Sosyal uyum ancak mültecilerin yeni topluluklarına başarılı bir şekilde entegre olmalarını sağlayan ve böylece hem ev sahibi topluma hem de göçmenlere fayda sağlayan etkili politikalar ve topluluk katılım programları ile sağlanabilir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin Gaziantep ilinde Suriyeli göçmenler tarafından kurulan işletmelerin sosyal uyum üzerindeki etkilerini ve farklı faktörlere dayalı sosyal uyum dinamiklerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, Gaziantep'teki Suriyeli girişimciler ve işletme sahiplerine yönelik uyarlanmış Sosyo-Kültürel Uyum Ölçeği (SCAS-R) kullanılarak çevrimiçi bir anket uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, iş kurmanın sosyal uyum için tek başına belirleyici bir faktör olmadığını, aksine eğitim düzeyi gibi değişkenlerin de gizli bir etkisinin olduğunu ve dilin, ev sahibi ve misafir toplumları birbirine yaklaştıran bir köprü olarak sosyal uyum üzerinde çok daha fazla etkiye sahip olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mülteciler, Kamu Politikası, Sosyal Uyum, İşletme, Dil

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MHD Essam ABDELY

Gaziantep-2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **iv**
ÖZ ..... **v**
ACKNOWLEDGMENT ..... **vi**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **vii**
TABLE OF FIGURES ..... **ix**
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... **x**
1. INTRODUCTION **1**
1.1. Research Background 1
1.2. Problem Statement 2
1.3. Research Questions 3
1.4. Research Objectives 4
1.5. Research Hypothesis 4
1.6. Significance of the Study 5
2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK **7**
2.1. Definition of Migration 7
2.2. Causes and Consequences of Forced Migration 10
2.3. Definition of Social Cohesion 12
2.4. The Impact of Migration on Social Cohesion 13
3. SYRIAN FORCED MIGRATION AND TÜRKİYE'S POLICY RESPONSES **17**
3.1. Syrian Conflict and Syrian Migration Flow 17
3.2. Legal Status of Syrians in Türkiye: Syrians under Temporary Protection 21
3.3. Socioeconomic Profiles of Syrian Immigration Waves 26
3.4. Integration Policies of Türkiye towards Syrians Migrants 29
3.5. Previous Studies on Integration of Syrian Refugees in Türkiye 34
3.6. Previous Studies on the Linkage of Public Policy, Immigrant Business Establishment, and Social Cohesion: The Case of Türkiye 41
4. METHODOLOGY **45**
4.1. Scope of the Study 45
4.2. Research Design 45
4.3. Population and Sampling 46
4.4. Research Period 46
4.5. Research Limits 47

4.6. Data Collection 47
4.7. Instrument 47
4.8. Data Analysis and Interpretation 48
5. RESEARCH FINDINGS 49
5.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample: 49
5.2. Relationship between Establishing Entrepreneurship/a Business and Social Cohesion 52
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 63
REFERENCES 70
ANNEXES 76
RESUME 81

TABLE OF FIGURES

Table 1: Laws and Regulations related to integration and normalization of immigrants in Türkiye……..25
Table 2: Syrian immigration Waves…….28
Table 3: Current Place of Living and Working…….……49
Table 4: Number of years of residence in the current location…….49
Table 5: Age in Years……49
Table 6: Sex of the respondents……50
Table 7: Marital Status…….50
Table 8: Education……50
Table 9: Turkish Language Proficiency……51
Table 10: Working Status…….51
Table 11: Do you have Turkish friends/coworkers? ……51
Table 12: Monthly Income in Turkish Lira……..52
Table 13: Challenges to Social Cohesion…….52
Table 14: Chi-Square Tests for Building and maintaining relationships/SCAS-R Scale question 1……..53
Table 15: Chi-Square Tests for Maintaining my hobbies and interests/SCAS-R Scale question 4……..54
Table 16: Chi-Square Tests for Working effectively with other students/work colleagues/SCAS-R Scale question 7……56
Table 17: Chi-Square Tests for Obtaining community services I require/SCAS-R Scale question 8……..57
Table 18: Chi-Square Tests for Gaining feedback from other students/work colleagues to help improve my performance/SCAS-R Scale question 12……..59
Table 19: Chi-Square Tests for Expressing my ideas to other students/work colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner/SCAS-R Scale question 17……...60

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAD	Disaster And Emergency Management Presidency (Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı)
DGMM	Directorate-General for Migration Management (Göç İdaresi Başkanlığını)
ESS	European Social Survey
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GLO	Global Labor Organization
IDPs	Internal Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IR	International Relations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
TECs	Temporary Education Centers
TEPAV	The Economic Research Foundation in Türkiye (Türkiye Ekonomi Politikaları Araştırma Vakfı)
TÜİK	Turkish Institute of Statistics (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu)
WVS	World Values Survey

1. INTRODUCTION

Mass migration has an old history back to the 1630s; 21.8 million people (4.9%) of the 446.8 million people living in the EU-27 on January 1, 2019, were non-EU-27 citizens as per EU migrant integration statistics 2020; the implication of immigration in contemporary life is not limited to migrant communities and impacts host communities as well. Both communities' social characteristics, culture, citizenship relations, language, and many other subjective and objective factors play a role in interactive patterns between migrants and host communities.

1.1.Research Background

Syrian migration started with the effects of internal conflict and continued with different motivations. Since 2016 and later, Turkish policy towards Syrian refugees has changed from temporary hosting to integration and long-time investment in Syrian refugees, (Stein,1981) draws attention to refugee experiences like the perception of a threat, decision to flee, reaching safety, repatriation, the early and late stages of resettlement, adjustment, and acculturation, and residual states and changes in behavior caused by the refugee experience.

Syrian tendency to stay in Türkiye remains high and unlikely to change; refugees have established a new life in the host community, creating internal and external networks and social bonds. In addition, and due to the policies and regulations Türkiye introduced to absorb the newcomers in the community, NGOs also played an essential role in responding to the social dilemma through social cohesion and integration projects to reduce social tension and exclusion that already exists due to transformation from the perception of Syrians presence will be temporary that turned into nearly permanent existence.

According to the report prepared by the TÜİK (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu), deposits in Turkish banks had reached 1.5 billion liras by 2015. Syrian entrepreneurs have also contributed to job creation and economic growth, with around 10,000 companies established by the newcomers, resulting in around 100,000 new jobs for both Syrians and host community members. The support of establishing new business and entrepreneurship projects to enhance access to the labor market and provide decent work opportunities was

one of the major channels to increase social cohesion through eliminating the traditional immigrant portrait, introducing immigrants as a productive and positive addition to the community, and increase the level of acceptance and tolerance. While the EU-Türkiye deal aimed to eliminate illegal immigration to Europe from Türkiye, it has also resulted in more funding for job creation for Syrians, mainly to minimize driving factors of immigration and to softly enforce integration and cohesion through establishing a joint business that is presumed to increase and intensify social interaction between both parties from one side and integrate them with state systems, structures, and institutions.

1.2.Problem Statement

The ongoing Syrian conflict, which began in 2011, has led to the displacement of millions of Syrians, many of whom have sought refuge in neighboring countries, including Türkiye. As of 2023, Türkiye hosts over 3.6 million registered Syrian refugees, the largest refugee population in the world (UNHCR, 2023). Amidst this demographic shift, Syrian migrant entrepreneurs have emerged as significant actors within the Turkish economy, establishing businesses that contribute to local markets and create employment opportunities. Despite these economic contributions, the social integration of Syrian refugees remains a contentious issue, with implications for social cohesion in host communities.

Social cohesion, broadly defined as the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among community members (Chan et al., 2006), is critical for the stability and prosperity of multicultural societies. High levels of social cohesion are associated with reduced social tensions, improved economic performance, and enhanced overall well-being (OECD, 2011). However, integrating large refugee populations poses challenges, including potential economic competition, cultural clashes, and societal prejudices (Ager&Strang, 2008).

Syrian migrant entrepreneurs in Türkiye present a unique case for examining the interplay between economic integration and social cohesion. For instance, entrepreneurial activities by Syrian refugees can foster economic interdependence and mutual benefits, potentially enhancing social cohesion (İçduygu&Diker, 2017). On the other hand, these activities might exacerbate local tensions if perceived as unfair competition or if they fail to

bridge cultural divides (İçduygu, 2015). The dual role of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs as economic contributors and social agents necessitates a nuanced understanding of their impact on social cohesion.

Existing literature has highlighted the economic integration of refugees through entrepreneurship, emphasizing both opportunities and challenges. Some studies (Wauters& Lambrecht, 2008; Kloosterman&Rath, 2001) underscore the potential of migrant entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and innovation. However, less attention has been given to how these economic activities influence social relations and cohesion within host communities. While Syrian entrepreneurs have been recognized in Türkiye for their economic contributions (Erdoğan et al., 2021), their impact on social cohesion remains underexplored.

This research aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs on social cohesion in Türkiye. Specifically, it seeks to conclude recommendations that enhance the social cohesion of Syrian migrants within Turkish communities by examining the relations of different interrelated factors and exploring connections between those factors that help create needed frameworks and approaches on different levels that reduce tensions and establish bonds between both communities.

1.3.Research Questions

This research aims to explore the effect of business on social cohesion and understand how establishing a business can affect the social cohesion of Syrians in Türkiye by examining the social cohesion of Syrian entrepreneurs who established a business in Gaziantep.

Sub-questions are below:

1. How did the political instability/conflict affect the migration of Syrians over periods of time?
2. How do entrepreneurial activities by Syrian migrants influence social interactions between Syrian refugees and local Turkish residents?

3. In what ways do Syrian migrant businesses facilitate or hinder social integration and cohesion in host communities?
4. What role do local and national policies play in supporting or impeding Syrian migrant entrepreneurship?
5. How can policies be designed to support economic integration and promote social cohesion?

1.4.Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- to investigate the impact of Syrian migrant entrepreneurial activities on social interactions between Syrian refugees and local Turkish residents.
- to evaluate the role of Syrian migrant businesses in facilitating or hindering social integration and cohesion in host communities.
- to develop policy recommendations that support economic integration and promote social cohesion.
- to measure the extent to which Syrian migrant entrepreneurs contribute to reducing social tensions and fostering mutual understanding in Turkish communities.
- to propose measures that can maximize the positive impact of Syrian migrant entrepreneurship on social cohesion.

1.5.Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 0: Syrian migrant businesses does not facilitate increased social interactions between Syrian refugees and local Turkish residents, therefore not leading to improved social integration and more robust community relations.

Hypothesis 1: Syrian migrant businesses facilitate increased social interactions between Syrian refugees and local Turkish residents, leading to improved social integration and more robust community relations.

1.6.Significance of the Study

The research will analyze the facts and provide a complete picture of the mass migrations of Syrians to Türkiye. It will contribute to the literature that examines the unprecedented waves of around 4 million Syrians settled in Türkiye, which have affected the Turkish communities and created tension in many instances due to the unpreparedness of communities to accommodate this large number of immigrants.

This research will focus on Syrians who established business activities, mainly in the southern provinces of Türkiye (the case of Gaziantep), and seeks to understand how businesses established by the newcomers can affect social cohesion.

Understanding the impact of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs on social cohesion is crucial for developing effective integration policies. Such policies should promote economic opportunities for refugees and foster positive social interactions and mutual understanding between refugees and host communities. By examining the social dynamics surrounding Syrian migrant entrepreneurship, this research contributes to a comprehensive approach to refugee integration, with implications for policymakers, community leaders, and scholars in the fields of migration studies and social cohesion.

The research includes six chapters: The first chapter introduces the study topic of "Social Cohesion of Syrian Migrants Entrepreneurs," focusing on establishing the problem statement and research questions. The purpose is to justify why studying the subject is necessary and what research questions the study will answer, providing a broader context and general consequences related to the topic. In the second chapter, Key Concepts and Theories, the research literature related to the topic is introduced by reviewing and providing key definitions and concepts, the relevant studies that were used, and theories and frameworks relevant to the study subject. The third chapter focused on applying the theoretical frameworks explained in chapter two to the subject of the study by selecting the most relevant theory and aspects covered for each and enabling comparative analysis. The fourth chapter explains the research methods and procedure used to test the study hypothesis using tested instruments to measure the variables and relations between different study aspects, utilizing the Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) adapted to Türkiye context. The Fifth Chapter

provides findings from the data collection process in Chapter Four, along with descriptive statistics and analysis of the study variables relations. The Sixth Chapter is the final chapter, discusses the results from previous chapters and draws conclusions, their implications, and recommendations.

2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.Definition of Migration

Migration refers to the movement of an individual from one place of residence to another. Within the field of demography, migration is defined as a movement that results in a long-term or permanent change in the usual place of residence. Many definitions assert that the movement must cover a substantial distance and lead to the individual residing in the new location on a somewhat permanent basis (Castles& Miller, 2009).

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), migration is broadly understood as the movement of people from one location to another, typically across significant distances and with the intention of establishing a new place of residence. This definition encompasses both voluntary and involuntary movements and includes individuals who move for a variety of reasons, such as economic opportunities, environmental factors, or escaping conflict and persecution.

Migration is typically defined operationally as a move that crosses a specified political boundary, such as a county, or into a different labor market to establish a new place of residence. Migration within a country is known as internal migration, while crossing a national boundary is termed immigration or emigration. When an individual leaves a country, it is called emigration, and when a person moves into a country, it is called immigration. Thus, an act of international migration simultaneously involves both emigration and immigration.

International migration themes change along with inconstant conditions but are mainly split into different categories based on the factors influencing migration; one of the typical four themes of migration is identified as per (Jennissen,2004): Individuals moving from one country to another for family reunification and family formation are considered chain migrants. Asylum seekers who visit a foreign country seeking refugee status are considered asylum migrants. Other types of immigration were classified based on different factors such as willingness to migrate: Forced and Voluntary migration. People who cross borders to other countries due to conflicts and political uncertainties are considered forced

migrants, while voluntary is those who voluntarily migrate searching of personal gains, better working conditions, and financial rewards. In comparison, political migration is the movement from one country to another due to civil unrest and political discrimination (Bell et al.,2010).

Mass migration has an old history dating back to the 1630s; 21.8 million people (4.9 %) of the 446.8 million people living in the EU on January 1, 2019, were non-EU-27 citizens. The implications of immigration in contemporary life are not limited to migrant communities; they impact host communities as well. The social characteristics, culture, citizenship relations, language of both communities, and many other subjective and objective factors play a role in interactive patterns between migrants and host communities.

The 1951 Geneva Convention on the legal status of refugees and the 1967 Protocol are the result of significant historical developments that ensure that refugees have legal rights at the international level. The Convention is the most fundamental legal document that defines refugees, including their rights and responsibilities. 1951 Refugee Convention or the Convention on the legal status of refugees, multinationals and the United Nations Convention on refugee status, asylum, and Asylum defines the responsibilities of the countries receiving parties' rights. The Convention also regulates the status of persons who do not qualify as refugees, such as war criminals. The Refugee Convention is part 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which protects people's requests for asylum due to persecution and torture. Based on the substance. Refugees can enjoy the rights and privileges granted to them by the Convention.

According to the 1951 Geneva Convention, a person is granted refugee status after determination procedures of the foreigner who is outside the country of original nationality and unable to take advantage of the protection of that country or does not want to take advantage of it due to fear, or being a stateless person who is outside the country of residence where he previously lived because of such events, cannot return or does not want to return because of this fear. The most important article in the agreement is Article 33, which regulates the refoulment of refugees: No state party shall return or return a refugee to the borders of countries whose life or freedom will be threatened due to ethnicity, race, religion, nature,

membership in a particular social group or political ideas, in any way. The UNHCR serves as a guardian to the convention and 1967 protocol, and all of the refugee receiver countries treat the refugees based on this agreement articles and regulations (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951).

Asylum is legal protection that is given to refugees that protects them from being returned to their home country against their will, where they might face persecution at the hands of government agents or other groups. Furthermore, asylum offers protection and immunity from extradition granted by a government to a political refugee from another country (1951 UN Refugee Convention).

The terms “refugee,” “asylum seeker,” and “migrant” describe individuals who are moving and have left their home countries, crossing international borders. The World Bank defines migrants as “*individuals who have left their country of origin and moved to another country for more than one year" and categorizes them into different types based on their reasons for migration, such as economic migrants, family migrants, and refugees*” (World Bank, 2018). According to the IOM, a migrant is "*any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is*" (IOM, 2019). A refugee is someone who has fled their home country due to the risk of serious human rights violations and persecution. These threats are so severe that they felt compelled to seek safety elsewhere because their own government is unable or unwilling to protect them. Refugees are entitled to international protection (UNHCR 2019 adapted from 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 protocol).

"Migrant" and "refugee" are often used interchangeably; therefore, it is crucial to distinguish between them due to their distinct legal definitions (Amnesty International). In comparison, asylum seeker is an individual who has left their home country and is seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country. However, they have not yet been legally recognized as a refugee and are awaiting a decision on their asylum claim (adapted EU and UNHCR definitions).

There is no internationally accepted legal definition of a migrant. Organizations, including Amnesty International, typically define migrants as people who are outside their country of origin but are not classified as asylum seekers or refugees. Migrants may leave their country for various reasons, such as work, education, family reunification, or to escape poverty, political unrest, gang violence, natural disasters, or other serious situations.

2.2.Causes and Consequences of Forced Migration

Forced migration occurs when individuals are compelled to leave their homes due to external pressures that make it impossible for them to stay; there are three leading causes for forced migration:

1. **Conflict and Violence** are one of the primary causes of forced migration. The Syrian conflict, for example, has displaced millions of people. This conflict has resulted in widespread violence, destruction of infrastructure, and severe human rights violations, forcing people to flee to safer areas (UNHCR, 2021). Other examples include the conflicts in Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Yemen. Also, ethnic and religious persecution based on ethnicity, religion, or political beliefs forces individuals and groups to seek refuge in other countries. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar is a stark example, where systematic persecution has driven hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee to Bangladesh (Amnesty International, 2017).
2. **Natural Disasters and Environmental Change** such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and tsunamis can cause immediate and large-scale displacement. For instance, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti displaced hundreds of thousands of people (Ferris, 2010). In addition to long-term environmental changes such as desertification, sea-level rise, and changing weather patterns can make areas uninhabitable.
3. **Economic Factors** such as severe poverty and lack of economic opportunities can force individuals to migrate. While economic migration is often voluntary, severe financial distress can make the movement seem more forced (Castles&Miller, 2009); it is most likely driving voluntary migration rather than forced.
4. **Political Factors** such as government repression and human rights violations, and repressive regimes can force individuals to seek asylum in other countries; defectors

often flee due to harsh government repression (Human Rights Watch, 2020); this is characterized by more individualistic than mass immigration since it is mainly linked to opposition groups in a given country.

The consequences of forced migration have multiple facets and dimensions affecting the migrants themselves, their home countries, and the host countries. **Health and Safety Risks**, where forced migrants face significant health risks during their journey and upon arrival in new locations. These include exposure to diseases, malnutrition, and lack of access to healthcare services (WHO, 2018). The physical and psychological trauma of displacement can have long-lasting effects, including PTSD and depression; it has been estimated that 22% of displaced, war-affected Syrians in Lebanon suffer from moderate to severe depressive symptoms (WHO, 2022).

Many forced migrants lose their homes, possessions, and sources of income. They often arrive in host countries with few resources, leading to dependency on humanitarian aid or losing their life while trying to secure the path to their destination-rich country; more than 29,000 recorded deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea from 2014 to 2024, between 2014 and 2018, for instance, about 12,000 people who drowned were never found.

Globally, it is estimated that 8,000 people have died attempting to flee their countries. In 2016 alone, more than 5,000 refugees perished while trying to reach European shores, making the Mediterranean Sea the deadliest migration route. Over recent years, this sea has seen the highest number of casualties and missing persons. The Mediterranean is traversed by Western, Central, and Eastern routes, with the Central Mediterranean route being the most perilous. Approximately 4,600 people lost their lives on this route in 2016. The identification of bodies is particularly challenging due to the conditions at sea. For example, in 2019, most refugees who drowned in the Mediterranean were not identified, and their countries of origin remained unknown (Statista, July 2024).

Host countries may experience economic strain due to the sudden influx of refugees. This can affect public services, housing, and job markets. However, migrants can also contribute positively by filling labor shortages and stimulating economic activity (World Bank, 2018), while home countries suffer from brain drain and loss of workforce, which can

hinder economic development and recovery post-conflict. The loss of skilled and educated individuals can have long-term negative impacts on the country's development. Integrating large numbers of forced migrants into host communities can be challenging, leading to social tensions and xenophobia. Effective integration policies are essential to mitigate these issues (Betts&Collier, 2017).

2.3.Definition of Social Cohesion

The concept of social cohesion has evolved significantly in academic research, from early sociological theories to contemporary multidimensional frameworks. Initially developed within sociology, it has gained significant traction within the field of IR due to its implications for global stability, migration, conflict resolution, and transnational cooperation. This review traces the evolution of social cohesion in academic research and explores its intersections with International Relations (IR), highlighting critical theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and contemporary debates.

Durkheim (1893) is credited with foundational work on social cohesion through his distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity is characteristic of homogeneous societies, while organic solidarity arises in complex societies with interdependent roles. Parsons (1951) expanded on Durkheim's ideas, viewing social cohesion through the lens of structural functionalism. He argued that societal stability depends on the alignment of various social systems, such as the economy and family, performing essential functions. Parsons' theory suggests that social cohesion arises from consensus on societal values and norms transmitted through social institutions, paralleling how international institutions and norms contribute to global stability (Parsons, 1951).

Scholars like Dahrendorf (1959) argued that social cohesion is often undermined by social inequalities and power struggles. These ideas have influenced IR theories focusing on power dynamics, conflict, and inequality. While Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) introduced the concept of social capital, highlighting how social networks and relationships contribute to social cohesion. This is pertinent to IR, particularly in understanding how international networks and alliances contribute to global cohesion. The civic engagement and social capital work of Putnam (2000) emphasized the importance of civic participation for

social cohesion. In IR, these ideas reflect the role of civil society and NGOs in fostering international cooperation and peace.

Social cohesion, in essence, motivates the creation of policies aimed at addressing societal issues like conflict, discrimination, tension, fragmentation, violence, and hostility between groups. As a result, social cohesion is often linked to post-crisis scenarios, where it is implemented through various measures to address different types of social disruption resulting from waves of migrants to new host society and transformation of temporary stay to long term or settlement of migrants in the new country (Özçürümez et al., 2020).

2.4.The Impact of Migration on Social Cohesion

Allport (1954) developed Contact Theory in his book, *The Nature of Prejudice*. This theory posits that increased interaction between groups can reduce prejudice and foster positive relationships. Bourdieu (1986) introduced the concept of social capital in the 1980s. He describes social capital as the resources accessible through social networks. In his work, *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu explored how social capital interacts with other forms of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic) and impacts social inequalities.

Jenson (1998) proposed a comprehensive framework for social cohesion, identifying five key dimensions: belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition, and legitimacy. This model has been influential in guiding empirical research and policy analysis. Chan et al. (2006) developed a three-dimensional model of social cohesion, focusing on social relations, identification with the social system, and orientation towards the common good. Their work emphasized the need to balance individual and collective interests.

John Berry's (1997) acculturation model outlines how migrants adapt to a new culture through assimilation, separation, integration, or marginalization. The integration pathway, involving the retention of original cultural identity while adopting the host culture, is most conducive to social cohesion.

Recent empirical research often utilizes large-scale surveys to measure social cohesion indicators, such as trust, civic participation, and social networks. The European

Social Survey (ESS) and the World Values Survey (WVS) are prominent examples. The European Social Survey (ESS) is a biennial, academically driven survey that measures the attitudes, beliefs, and behavior patterns of diverse populations in over 30 European countries. One of the critical areas of focus for the ESS is social cohesion. The survey provides insights into how various factors, including migration, influence social cohesion within and between European societies. This is critical for developing policies that foster integration and harmony in increasingly diverse communities. The ESS includes specific modules on migration, which examine attitudes toward immigrants, the experiences of migrants, and the impact of migration on host societies, facilitating cross-national comparisons and allowing researchers and policymakers to explore how different countries address similar social issues. Policymakers use ESS data to develop and evaluate policies in areas such as migration, education, employment, and health. The survey's findings help identify the needs and challenges faced by different demographic groups, enabling the formulation of targeted and effective policies.

The World Values Survey (WVS) is a global research project exploring people's values and beliefs, how they change over time, and their social and political impact. The WVS collects data on various indicators of social cohesion, such as trust in others, civic engagement, and perceptions of social inclusion and exclusion. This data is critical for assessing the levels of social cohesion within and between societies. The WVS measures interpersonal trust and trust in institutions, providing insights into the social capital of different societies. High levels of trust are associated with more cohesive communities, where people are more willing to cooperate and engage in collective actions.

Social Cohesion and Forced Displacement: A Synthesis of New Research aims to expand the understanding of how to minimize social conflict and foster social cohesion in situations involving forced displacement, including data from 26 background research on the subject, offering guidance on how development initiatives and policies might lessen social unrest, lessen inequality, and encourage social cohesion between and within displaced populations and host communities.

Ager and Strang (2008) have explored how migration impacts social cohesion, focusing on factors such as social inclusion, cultural diversity, and community relations. These studies often highlight the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating diverse populations into cohesive societies. Research has also examined policy approaches to fostering social cohesion in multicultural societies, emphasizing the importance of inclusive policies, social support systems, and community engagement.

According to Holtug (2021), a common worry is that immigration poses a threat to social cohesion and so to the social unity that underpins cooperation, stable democratic institutions, and a robust welfare state. At the heart of this worry is the suggestion that social cohesion requires a shared identity at the societal level. However, Holtug argues that the effects of immigration on social cohesion do not need to compromise social justice and that core principles of liberty and equality not only form the normative basis for just policies of immigration and integration but are also the values that, if shared, are most likely to produce the social cohesion among community members providing the social basis for implementing justice.

Holtug (2021) explains what social cohesion is and why it is crucial. He presents the case for thinking that trust and solidarity are especially important for egalitarian redistribution and considers different accounts of their sources. He also discusses how immigration and diversity might impact these dimensions of social cohesion and how various types of shared identities might promote or hinder them. Furthermore, he introduces the concept of a 'community conception', which is a set of values that define what it means to belong to a community and what obligations members have towards each other.

One implication of Holtug's analysis is that immigration can have both positive and negative effects on social cohesion, depending on the context and the policies adopted by the host society. For example, immigration can increase diversity, which can enrich the cultural and economic life of a society but also create challenges for communication and cooperation. Immigration can also stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation, which can boost the economic growth and competitiveness of a society but also generate inequalities and

conflicts. Therefore, it is essential to design policies that foster integration and inclusion, rather than exclusion and marginalization, of immigrants.

A possible way to do this is to promote a liberal egalitarian community conception, which values individual freedom and equal opportunity for all members of society, regardless of their origin, ethnicity, religion, or culture. Such a conception can accommodate diversity without compromising unity and can support both social cohesion and social justice. Moreover, it can encourage immigrants to establish businesses that contribute to the common good rather than exploit or harm others. It can also foster political participation and representation of immigrants rather than alienate or oppress them.

3. SYRIAN FORCED MIGRATION AND TÜRKİYE'S POLICY RESPONSES

3.1. Syrian Conflict and Syrian Migration Flow

The Syrian conflict, which began in 2011, resulted from a convergence of multiple factors, including political repression, economic challenges, social grievances, and external influences. The authoritarian governance and political repression during the Assad family's rule, starting with Hafez al-Assad in 1971 and continuing with his son Bashar al-Assad from 2000, has been marked by authoritarianism, lack of political freedom, and human rights abuses. The government's tight control over political expression, frequent use of arbitrary detention, torture, and suppression of dissent created a climate of fear and resentment (Heydemann,2013), Al-Ba'ath Party's dominance, coupled with the marginalization of opposition groups and lack of democratic processes, exacerbated public frustration (Hinnebusch, 2012). Syria's diverse population includes various religious and ethnic groups, such as Sunnis, Alawites, Christians, Kurds, and Druze.

The economic policies under Assad's rule led to significant disparities in wealth and development. Reforms aimed at liberalizing the economy often favored a small elite, increasing inequality and social discontent (De Châtel, 2014), high unemployment, especially among youth, and the lack of economic opportunities further fueled frustration, the global economic downturn in 2008 worsened these conditions, increasing poverty and hardship.

Another hidden factor is the environment and drought; from 2006 to 2010, Syria experienced one of its worst droughts in recorded history. This drought devastated agricultural production, particularly in the northeastern regions, forcing many farmers to abandon their land and migrate to urban areas (Kelley et al.,2015), the influx of internal migrants into cities strained resources and exacerbated existing social tensions. The government's failure to effectively respond to this crisis highlighted its inability to address critical issues, further undermining its legitimacy (De Châtel, 2014). Externally, the Arab Spring, which is a series of anti-government protests and uprisings across the Arab world beginning in late 2010, inspired Syrians to demand political reform and greater freedoms.

The initial protests in Syria, which started in March 2011, were met with violent repression by the government, leading to an escalation of conflict (Lynch, 2012).

While the regime's heavy-handed response, including the use of live ammunition against protesters, arrests, and torture, galvanized opposition and contributed to the militarization of the uprising (Phillips,2016), the Syrian regime's heavy-handed response to the initially peaceful protests played a crucial role in transforming the Syrian uprising into a protracted and extremely violent conflict, resulting in exacerbated humanitarian crisis, displacing millions of Syrians both internally and externally. The massive influx of refugees into neighboring countries created significant economic and social challenges for host nations (UNHCR, 2021).

The Syrian conflict has had devastating consequences for the country and the broader region, impacting millions of lives and creating complex challenges, the conflict has resulted in a severe humanitarian crisis, and millions of Syrians have been displaced, both internally and externally. As of 2021, there were approximately 6.7 million IDPs and 5.6 million Syrian refugees, primarily in neighboring countries like Türkiye, Lebanon, and Jordan (UNHCR, 2021).

The war has decimated Syria's economy, destroying infrastructure, homes, businesses, and public services. The World Bank estimated that the conflict had caused over $226 billion in economic losses by 2017 (World Bank, 2017), the destruction of healthcare facilities, schools, and other essential services has had long-term implications for the country's development and the well-being of its population, creating deep rifts within Syrian society. The polarization and mistrust among different Syrian categories pose significant challenges for reconciliation efforts, many Syrians, particularly children, have experienced substantial psychological trauma due to the violence and displacement. Addressing mental health needs will be crucial for the country's recovery (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015).

While on the regional and global level, the influx of refugees into neighboring countries has placed considerable strain on their resources and infrastructure, leading to social tensions and economic challenges. The international community has struggled to adequately support these host countries, resulting in significant humanitarian needs

(Betts&Collier, 2017). About 5 million Syrians have sought refuge in neighboring countries such as Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. These countries have borne the brunt of the refugee crisis, struggling to accommodate the influx of refugees (UNHCR, 2024). Europe has also seen a significant number of Syrian refugees, particularly during the peak of the migration crisis in 2015-2016. The arrival of refugees has posed challenges for European countries in terms of integration, security, and social cohesion (Betts&Collier, 2017). The forced migration of Syrians has created numerous challenges for the displaced populations and the host countries as well.

Displaced Syrians often face economic difficulties in host countries, including unemployment, exploitation, and lack of access to legal work opportunities. Many are forced to work in the informal sector, where they are vulnerable to exploitation and poor working conditions (ILO,2017), the loss of livelihoods and savings during the displacement journey has left many refugees in a precarious economic situation, reliant on humanitarian aid.

Host countries have faced considerable economic strain in accommodating large numbers of refugees. This includes the costs of providing healthcare, education, and social services, as well as the impact on labor markets and infrastructure (Betts&Collier, 2017), in countries like Lebanon and Jordan, the presence of a large refugee population has increased competition for jobs and resources, leading to economic pressures on local communities (ILO, 2017).

The arrival of refugees has sometimes led to social tensions and xenophobia in host communities. Refugees are often perceived as competitors for scarce resources and services, which can exacerbate existing social and economic divisions (Achilli, 2015), efforts to integrate refugees have varied, with some host countries implementing inclusive policies while others have faced challenges in promoting social cohesion (Betts&Collier, 2017), in some cases, it has led to increased scrutiny of asylum seekers and changes in migration policies (Hinnebusch&Zartman, 2016).

Türkiye was the first refugee to the Syrians who left as it does not require a visa for Syrians; also officially and publicly stood with Syrians against the authoritarian regime in Syria, adding that it has very similar cultural and religious components that are mutual

between both countries and on the top, considered as a safe environment in comparison to Lebanon where it is under the reach of regime militias and Jordan that allowed very few Syrians to enter Jordan while the Azraq camp was the new home for a massive amount of Syrians trapped with no in or out.

The Syrians Türkiye-in movement started with the first group of 252 Syrian refugees who arrived in Türkiye in April 2011 where in the same duration the first camp was established in Hatay, Türkiye soon announced it would pursue an open-door policy for the refugees, any Syrian who arrive in Türkiye by any means will be welcomed. The arrival of Syrians seeking international protection continued at unprecedented levels throughout 2014 (Erdogan, 2017). Türkiye carried out biometric registration for Syria refugees, identifying more than 1,55 million refugees by the end of 2014, doubling the 700,000 estimated number of Syrian refugees by the beginning of 2014 was, this number continues to grow abruptly reaching 2.5 million registered refugee by end of 2015 (Tumen,2023), while the Türkiye-out movement through crossing western lands and see borders increased drastically in 2015 with more than 850,000 reaching Greece lands through crossing Türkiye waters (IOM, 2015).

In 2016, and due to the security/social concerns and influx of refugees reaching EU countries, Türkiye signed an agreement with the EU and agreed to prevent unauthorized refugee crossings to Greece and to take back any refugees who illegally made that crossing, while in return, the European Union pledged, to provide 6 billion euros over the following three years in programmatic support for refugees in Türkiye (European Parliament, n.d.). Even though the number of people seeking refuge in Europe started to decline in 2017 due to the EU-Türkiye deal, following a period of explosive growth, Syrians remain the largest group of people living in EU countries under protected status, alongside Germany, other European countries such as Greece, Sweden, and Austria are considered the top destinations for Syrian refugees who escaped not just from Syria but also from different countries in the Middle East (Terry, 2021). According to the UNHCR data portal, there were more than 584,000 Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers living in Germany in 2017. In March 2017 witnessed the surpass of 5 million Syrians fleeing the war.

3.2. Legal Status of Syrians in Türkiye: Syrians under Temporary Protection

The number of Syrian refugees, reaching more than 3.5 million, caused a profound impact on the Turkish societal system, governmental procedures, and policies, and the perception of immigrants and cohesion in Turkish society; as a response, Türkiye has established systems to absorb this influx, and regulate the situation of newcomers, utilized the large-scale governmental aid organizations such as AFAD and Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay).

Syrians were received officially and popularly as guests, and humane quotes and terms were launched that carry the meanings of sympathy and welcome as "*brothers, one nation, brothers, the persecuted, the vulnerable refugees, fleeing from Assad's oppression, supporting the oppressed.*" With the expansion of the Syrian presence in 2012, the Turkish government began granting refugees coming from Syria the establishment of temporary protection to regulate the status of Syrians and provided several facilities to allow refugee children to complete their education by establishing parallel education to teach in Arabic under the supervision of the Turkish Ministry of Education, and allowed refugees children's to enroll in official Turkish schools after the laws were allowing only to children of official residents in Türkiye to enroll the official's school (Mustafa et al., 2020). The Turkish government also issued special regulations to allow Syrian refugees to enter the formal labor market and overlooked a large number of Syrians working informally.

The massive waves of immigrants arriving in Türkiye have driven state officials to present special provisions of law to regulate the presence of immigrants who crossed the borders illegally in most cases and assist the integration and assimilation processes in the community. Most of these laws and regulations hold economic components that aim to integrate newcomers into the host society by providing settlement and opportunities to enhance their livelihood and social status and make them contributors to the economic welfare, or at least contaminate the social economic consequences of migrants.

The main change was establishing the **Temporary Protection Regulation** on October 22, 2014; the Temporary Protection Regulation was issued after many consultancies and planning from the Turkish Ministry of interior about other migration cases in different

countries that witnessed such cases. It is mainly given to the Syrian migrants who came to Türkiye. Temporary protection proceedings are for foreigners who have been forced to flee their countries, have not been able to return to their countries, have arrived at the borders, or have crossed the borders on a large scale as per (Zeldin, 2016). Those with temporary protection cards can secure access and open bank accounts to electricity, water, communications services, and access to the labor market via work permits (World Bank, 2015) and benefit from free health and education services.

The Administration of the Law Related to Foreigners and Refugees entered into force in April 2014, where DGMM headed by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, became the only institution responsible for asylum matters, later on in 2021, and to ensure more mainstreaming of immigration aspects into governmental policies, the from the “Directorate General” status to the “Presidency” status and in this context, it has become linked to Presidency structure (Presidential Decree No. 85 published in the Official Gazette dated 29 October 2021 and numbered 31643). Türkiye still maintains the 1951 Convention geographical limitation, but this Law provides asylum seekers and refugees with protection and support regardless of their country.

Laws established to deal with the waves of those seeking refuge in Türkiye have also increased the intensity of immigration, especially after the U.S. withdrew from Iraq in 2011 and from Afghanistan in 2021, which increased the waves of asylum seekers and immigrants who want to settle in another country, Afghani and Iraqis are from the top three nationalities seeking international protection in Türkiye (DGMM Statistics of end 2023). These laws encouraged an escalation of entry as a push and pull factor, networks were established to ease movement, whether legally or illegally, to reunify with family members and find better jobs.

Türkiye has primarily been regarded as an emigration country and an asylum seekers' source country for a lengthy period. However, Türkiye has seen a change in migration patterns regarding irregular migrants of labor, transit migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and regular migrants as the new century began. In the past two decades, Türkiye has developed into a 'transit country' because of "intensive migratory flows" and has shifted from an emigration country to an immigrant nation. In comparison, the U.S., for example, has also

been considered a destination for migration since the mid-twentieth century. It is a preferred destination for those who seek political asylum, especially from countries counted as communist or have human rights dilemmas in addition to political opposition to established regimes. In addition, the economic situation drives immigrants from developing countries to search for financial stability and better rewards and search for the future through education and gaining citizenship (Fandl, 2016). Reflected in numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau. N.d. 2018 American Community Survey (ACS), Immigrants make up 17 percent of the U.S. workforce, almost 14 percent of the U.S. population, and their U.S.-born children comprise around 28 percent of U.S. inhabitants.

Türkiye has established new laws or explicitly modified them for refugees that are aligned with international protocols and regulations where they are part of those mechanisms. The main difference between Türkiye policy and other countries that faced mass waves of immigrants in a relatively short time and expanded over the years is that different countries like the U.S. had established legal frameworks including legislation, budget, quotas, legal entry visas for immigration built in the state system as immigrants recipient country since the mid of last century.

Even though Türkiye welcomed refugees, it did not establish similar mechanisms that made the state a resettlement country. The primary example is that the U.S. identifies itself explicitly as an immigrant's destination through the present regulations dedicated to encouraging and regulating legal immigration through certain entry visa types such as professional skilled workers, investment, and family reunification.

Massive waves of Syrian refugees have altered the immigration framework in Türkiye and provoked changes in both legislation and administration approaches for refugees. The decision to grant exceptional Turkish citizenship to Syrians did not exist before the Syrian refugee crisis, where the laws back then were limited to granting citizenship to a small number of instances. The number of Syrian citizens present in Türkiye exceeded three million Syrian citizens, most of whom are refugees under the Temporary Protection Law as per DGMM Statistics 27-June-2024; a clear intention has emerged to grant citizenship to a number of Syrians on Turkish soil resettle in Türkiye. At this stage, the Turkish government

initially focused on granting citizenship to university graduates and those who have high degrees, in addition to the businessmen who contribute positively to the Turkish economy. The Turkish authorities took the initiative and chose many difficult-to-predict files; the latest figures declared by the Turkish Minister of Internal Affairs show that 237 thousand 995 Syrians were granted Turkish citizenship (Statement made by the Minister of Interior Ali Yerlikaya on November 9, 2023). This reflects Türkiye's desire to attract refugees and immigrants with financial capabilities and scientific and professional competencies (Akcapar&Şimşek, 2018).

Since 2016 and later, Turkish policy towards Syrian refugees - who have been for over five years with no intention to return – has changed from temporary hosting to integration and long-term investment in the Syrian refugees.

Regardless of the massive development in immigration regulations in Türkiye and their official and public welcoming of Syrian refugees, the migration of refugees between 2015 and 2017 was for temporary crossing to the EU countries as a final destination, making Türkiye the second departure front to third settlement destination. Official statistics reveal that more than 800,000 Syrians arrived at Europe between 2015 and 2017 (Eurostat Database, n.d.).

This development has led to the EU deal and further transformed the refugee response in Türkiye from only the state itself to broader international mechanisms on the country level and international entities such as UNHCR and IOM, including direct support and funds to assist Türkiye in hosting the 4 million refugees and close gaps both economically and legally in attempt to seize the Syrians immigration to Europe.

Table 1-Laws and Regulations related to integration and normalization of immigrants in Türkiye

Country	Legal residency	Livelihood support	Health Services	Education	Naturalization
Türkiye	Temporary Protection Regulation on October 22, 2014, it is mainly given to the Syrian migrants who came to Türkiye. Not been able to return to their countries and have arrived at the borders or crossed the borders on a large scale to seek urgent and temporary protection.	The Turkish government issued International Employment Law No. 6735 in 2016, which allowed the issuance of work permits for foreigners according to a selective standard based on scientific and professional competence. The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) program of cash assistance is Funded by the European Union.	Syrians under temporary protection benefit from governmental health services and insurance (SGK)	Education services were regulated in Article 28 of the Temporary Protection Law and were defined here as a right for all residents in Türkiye	Exceptional Citizenship Law to grant Syrian Turkish citizenship based on specific criteria

From 2011 to 2016, Türkiye followed an "open door policy" with Syrians fleeing the war in their country by allowing those who were fleeing the war in Syria to enter Türkiye even if they did not possess identity papers and passports. In addition, Türkiye allowed entry to Syrians who had passports from airports and border crossings without a visa. Until 2016, Türkiye hosted more than 2.7 million Syrian citizens on its territory, meaning that more than 70% of the Syrian refugees residing in Türkiye arrived in Türkiye during the period in which the Turkish government followed this policy. The most pull factors that motivated Syrians to flee toward Türkiye were that Türkiye provided health, education, and food services to 270,000 Syrian citizens hosted in 26 temporary shelters distributed over ten provinces and provided them with opportunities to benefit from psychological support and vocational education, and social activities. Syrians residing outside the shelters enjoy temporary protection and benefit from free health and education services (World Bank, 2015).

In 2016, after signing the immigration agreement with the European Union, the Turkish government began to regulate the entry of Syrians. Although the government did not permanently close the open-door policy, visas were imposed on Syrians wishing to enter Turkish territory. In addition, the entry of refugees across the borders was restricted through illegal infiltration; Türkiye built a wall and impelled a visa for Syrians abroad (İçduygu&Aksel, 2013).

3.3.Socioeconomic Profiles of Syrian Immigration Waves

By observing the migration pattern in the Syrian to Türkiye, immigrants can be classified under two main categories of forced migration and impelled migration. Accordingly, these two types are defined as follows (Samha,1989):

- Forced migration: where the immigrant cannot decide whether to emigrate or not, he is forced to immigrate and has no role in making the decision.
- Impelled migration: where the immigrant person has some rights or can make a decision or timing of emigration, and in all cases, the migration process is driven by state or community institutions.

In comparison with the first and second waves of Syrian migration to Türkiye, in the first wave between 2011 and 2012, Syrian migrants also flee due to their political attitude

against the regime in Syria, then in the second wave from 2012 to 2014 due to the military escalation in the rebel areas.

The majority of Syrians who fled their areas were opposition politicians, activists, businessmen, elites in general, the middle class in the first wave, and then people from rural areas or urban areas far from capital areas in the second wave. Both waves are considered as forced migration, as the people have to flee to save their lives or lost their homes and properties. In both cases, the migration was driven by political motives, as the majority of immigrants were from the opposition or couldn't cohabitate with the political regime.

During the third wave of Syrian migration to Türkiye, these migrants were not limited to those fleeing the areas experiencing clashes and military actions, and they even included relatively safe zones. Still, the high unemployment rates, high cost of living, and compulsory conscription prompted additional numbers of Syrians to seek refuge in Türkiye, either for stability and work or as a temporary stop for immigration to Europe. The displacement of this wave was to some extent, facilitated by the Syrian regime to get rid of people who put pressure on the government because of the declined economic and security situation and to export the crises of refugees to neighboring countries and European countries.

Table 2-Syrian immigration Waves

Wave	Syrians	Settlement	Theme
2011 to 2012	a limited wave of displacement began in rural regions that witnessed clashes, in addition to the flee of some activists residing in cities that witnessed demonstrations as a result of the security raids and enforced disappearances	where they were received and housed in refugee camps, and all health and educational services were provided Along with border cities and Istanbul	Forced migration started in the stable areas due to fear, moving assets Micro theory interprets this wave
2012 to 2014	Türkiye began witnessing the first time waves of a mass exodus of a large number of Syrians who cross the border daily. As a result, Türkiye had to stop receiving refugees in camps	Immigrants joined their families, relatives, and friends	Network theme started to be present, heavily enforced due to mass destruction and evacuation Meso and Macro theories
2015 – 2018	fleeing the areas experiencing clashes and military actions, and even included relatively safe zones, but the high rates of unemployment, the high cost of living, and compulsory conscription prompted additional numbers of Syrians to seek refuge in Türkiye either for stability and work or as a temporary stop for immigration to Europe, illegal infiltration from boarders due to visa requirements	Immigrants joined their families, relatives, and friends	Network theme clearly appear Macro as this wave was mostly taking Türkiye as the temporary point to reach the EU for asylum

3.4.Integration Policies of Türkiye towards Syrians Migrants

Türkiye has witnessed previous mass in-migration in the past centuries, the arrival of 350,000 Greek Muslims in 1923 and the 340,000 from Turks ethnicity who were expelled by Bulgaria in 1989, more than a million people immigrated to Türkiye, primarily from the Balkans but also from Caucasus and Central Asia, but the Syrian migration waves were beyond the established structures and frameworks available at the time of migration waves, The arrival of Syrians seeking international protection continued at unprecedented levels.

In 2018, Türkiye adopted the National Strategy and Action Plan on Harmonization to enhance the integration of refugees, including Syrians, into Turkish society. This comprehensive policy framework addresses various aspects of integration, such as education, employment, social inclusion, and legal rights. The plan aims to foster social cohesion, ensure equitable access to services, and promote self-sufficiency among refugees.

The Components of the National Strategy and Action Plan focused on four components: Education, Employment, Social Inclusion, and Legal Rights. The plan emphasizes the importance of integrating refugee children into the Turkish education system. This includes facilitating enrollment in public schools and providing additional support to ensure their educational success, initiatives under this plan include expanding Turkish language courses, establishing TECs for those needing extra support, and providing teacher training to handle diverse classrooms (UNICEF, 2020). Efforts to improve the quality of education for refugee children include curriculum adjustments, psychosocial support, and extracurricular activities designed to aid integration, and particular focus is given to reducing dropout rates and ensuring that all children, regardless of their background, receive a quality education that can lead to future opportunities.

On the economic integration and employment side, the plan aims to increase access to formal employment for refugees, economic self-sufficiency through microfinance, business grants, and support for SMEs owned by refugees, collaboration with the private sector and international organizations to create job opportunities and foster an inclusive labor market, by simplifying the process of obtaining work permits and raising awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring refugees (Tumen,2016), encouraging and creating

initiatives include vocational training programs tailored to the needs of the Turkish labor market, entrepreneurship support, and incentives for businesses that hire refugees.

To foster social cohesion, the plan supported initiatives that encourage interaction between refugees and host communities. Community centers, cultural exchange programs, and joint social activities are vital components of this effort (Kaya& Kıraç, 2016). Public awareness campaigns aim to counteract xenophobia and promote positive narratives about refugees' contributions to society.

Language acquisition is critical for integration, and the plan includes extensive Turkish language courses for adults and children, these courses are offered through public education centers and community organizations, and the cultural orientation programs help refugees understand Turkish customs, laws, and social norms, aiding their adaptation to their new environment (Erdoğan et al., 2021).

In addition, the plan ensures that refugees have access to legal support to understand and exercise their rights. Legal aid services were provided to help refugees navigate the Turkish legal system, including issues related to residence permits, work permits, and access to public services (İçduygu & Diker, 2017). The strategy included measures to protect refugees from discrimination and abuse. This involves monitoring and reporting mechanisms to address violations of refugees' rights and ensuring that refugees are treated equitably in all aspects of public life (Kirişci & Salooja, 2014).

Social cohesion refers to the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a community. It is essential for maintaining peace, stability, and prosperity within societies. Various factors contribute to social cohesion, ensuring that individuals feel connected and committed to their community. These factors can be broadly categorized into social, economic, political, and cultural domains.

Active participation in community activities fosters a sense of belonging and ownership among community members, building inclusive social networks of friendships, and neighborhood connections, can provide emotional support and foster trust among individuals that bridge different social groups, can reduce prejudices, and promote mutual understanding (Granovetter, 1973).

Economic factors also play a vital role, and a stable and prosperous economy provides the foundation for social cohesion. Economic stability reduces uncertainty and promotes confidence in the future, and access to decent employment opportunities is vital for social cohesion.

Employment not only provides financial stability but also fosters a sense of purpose and belonging, inclusive labor markets that accommodate diverse groups, including minorities and marginalized communities, contribute to social cohesion (OECD, 2011).

Common cultural norms and values give community members a foundation for communication and collaboration. Promoting intercultural communication and understanding aids in the development of a cohesive society that appreciates and respects many cultures and traditions. This includes respect for variety, tolerance, and mutual respect.

The portrayal of Syrian refugees in Turkish media significantly influences public perceptions and social cohesion. Positive representations that highlight the contributions of Syrians to Turkish society can enhance social cohesion, whereas negative stereotypes can exacerbate tensions (Sunata&Yıldız, 2018).

Jane Jenson's dimensions are evident in the integration efforts for Syrians in Türkiye, and Kirişci (2014) shows that fostering a sense of belonging among Syrian refugees involves inclusive community practices and policies that make refugees feel like they are part of the larger society. İçduygu and Diker (2017) indicate that inclusion in education and labor markets is critical for integration. According to Erdoğan (2019), participatory approaches in local governance have been shown to improve integration outcomes. Acknowledging and valuing the cultural contributions of Syrians can reduce xenophobia and enhance social cohesion, as discussed by Kaya and Kıraç (2016), in addition to building trust in institutions through fair and transparent policies is essential, as noted by Ager and Strang (2008).

The Turkish government's temporary protection status provides essential services to Syrian refugees but falls short of offering long-term stability. Policies that grant more permanent legal status and rights, such as citizenship or long-term residency, could significantly enhance social cohesion (İcduygu & Diker, 2017). Integration is a long-term

process of change for refugees to adapt to the host country, which relates to the circumstances of the actual involvement of refugees in all aspects of the permanent country of asylum.

It is essential to highlight the rights and values of refugees and the level of belonging to the host country to understand the integration process and the rights of refugees, including employment, social welfare, education, and housing, treated equally with the native citizens of the country in front of the law. This involved links with family-committed friendships and a sense of respect and shared values. Ager and Strang (2008) indicates that such shared values did not deny diversity, difference, and individual identity within a particular group but provided a broader context for a sense of belonging.

The understanding and definition of immigrant integration and, thus, the application of refugee integration programs differ according to factors and conditions associated with migration and the perception of the decision-maker and the host society about the process of integrating migrants into the host society. For example, determining the legal status of immigrants plays an essential role in the integration process. In Türkiye, fleeing Syrians are not referred to from the war in Syria as "refugees"; still, they are considered residents under "temporary protection." Likewise, Cuban immigrants who arrived on the United States' shores due to the deteriorating economic and political situation are referred to as political later economic immigrants. In both cases, the laws do not allow illegal immigrants who do not have "refugee" status to enter the labor market officially, highlighting the vital role of social networks and social capital in integrating refugees into the labor market and accessing resources. Moreover, the legal status determination of refugees affects not only their integration into the labor market but also their access to health, education, and housing.

According to Ager and Strang (2008), the integration of migrants will include ten areas that can be classified under four major categories:

- Marks and Means, which include Employment, Housing, Education, Health
- Social connection, which includes: Social bridge, Social bounds, and Social links.
- Facilitators, which include: Language and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability.

- Foundation, which includes Rights and Citizenship.

The state response of Türkiye was different in approach and aspects towards integration; nevertheless, they are interrelated with state policy towards refugees and political culture.

There are still many obstacles to the full participation of Syrians in the formal economy, according to Şimşek (2020), elaborating that becoming an entrepreneur in Türkiye, which is different compared to European countries, is an encouraging path because integration into the Turkish labor market through entrepreneurship and investment is available through laws that facilitate the establishment of companies and encourage investment in specific sectors. Türkiye applies the self-sufficiency model for refugees.

According to Şimşek (2020), the integration of refugees is also linked to access to fundamental rights. He argues that given the situation of Syrian refugees in Türkiye, the refugees who have resources and a profession have stable lives and reasonable access to housing, education, and health, moreover, they tend to settle in Türkiye and may seek to obtain citizenship, and also possible to be selected to be apply for citizenship.

TEPAV revealed that Syrians in Türkiye had established more than 10 thousand companies as of September 2018; 60% of these companies are Syrian, while 40% of them are partnerships between Syrians and other nationalities. On the other hand, the unemployed Syrians who don't have resources have lacked access to housing and education, although they still have good access to the health care system; thus, most Syrians from this segment didn't consider Türkiye as a destination settlement. They were looking to move to Europe, which has policies focusing on functional dimensions of assimilation by providing access to the labor market, health, and education, as the lack of access to fundamental rights contributes to social exclusion. On the other hand, employment is considered one of the most critical pillars of refugee integration, including feeling safe, planning, economic independence, self-respect, well-being, and survival, as it is the means of obtaining basic needs.

3.5.Previous Studies on Integration of Syrian Refugees in Türkiye

İçduygu (2015) examines the situation earlier, focusing on the long-term prospects and immediate needs of Syrian refugees while İçduygu and Diker (2017) explores the multifaceted challenges and potential opportunities for Syrian migrants to integrate into Turkish society. Both studies offer valuable insights but differ in their approaches, findings, and recommendations.

İçduygu (2015) focuses on the overall situation of Syrian refugees, examining the initial response, immediate needs, and long-term prospects. It provides a broader overview of the refugee crisis and its implications for Türkiye. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data (e.g., statistics on refugee demographics and distribution) with qualitative insights from interviews and policy reviews. It provides a comprehensive overview of the refugee situation and Türkiye's response. Key findings show the initial difficulties in managing a large influx of refugees, including inadequate housing, healthcare, and education facilities. It emphasizes the strain on local resources and the need for a coordinated response from the Turkish government and international community, suggesting that the long-term integration of Syrian refugees could benefit Türkiye economically and culturally if appropriately managed. It underscores the importance of developing comprehensive integration policies and involving local communities in the process. The recommendations focus on immediate needs, such as improving housing and healthcare, as well as long-term strategies for education and employment integration. The study calls for more robust legal frameworks to support refugees' rights and integration.

While İçduygu and Diker (2017), in their study, aims to identify specific challenges and opportunities that Syrian refugees face in Türkiye, focusing on integration processes, it emphasizes the socioeconomic and cultural aspects of integration and uses a qualitative approach, including interviews and case studies, to delve into the personal experiences of Syrian refugees and their interactions with Turkish society. It also incorporates policy analysis to understand the effectiveness of integration measures. Key findings identify significant language barriers, employment, education, and social integration challenges. Refugees often face discrimination and have limited access to social services and economic

opportunities. The lack of Turkish language skills is a significant hurdle in accessing jobs and education, and despite the challenges, the study points to opportunities such as community initiatives, NGO support, and government programs aimed at improving language skills and job training. The potential for social cohesion is highlighted if policies focus on inclusive integration. The study recommends enhancing language education, expanding access to employment, improving social services, and combating discrimination. They advocate for more vital collaboration between government, NGOs, and international organizations.

İçduygu (2015) provides a foundational understanding of the Syrian refugee crisis in its earlier stages, highlighting urgent needs and long-term challenges while İçduygu and Diker (2017) builds on this by examining the ongoing integration process and identifying specific barriers and opportunities that have emerged over time. While both studies cover a range of issues, the 2015 study has a broader scope, addressing immediate humanitarian needs and long-term prospects. The 2017 study is more focused on integration, offering detailed insights into the socio-economic and cultural challenges faced by refugees. Both studies underscore the importance of comprehensive and inclusive policies for successful integration. The 2015 study emphasizes the need for immediate and long-term planning, whereas the 2017 study provides more detailed recommendations on improving specific aspects of integration, such as language acquisition and employment support.

Erdoğan et al. (2021), in their study, explores how Turkish municipalities manage the integration of Syrian refugees in urban areas. The study examines the transition from a state of detachment, where refugees are seen as separate from the local community, to harmonization, where integration efforts aim to create cohesive urban environments. The study employed a qualitative research approach, including interviews with municipal officials, analysis of municipal policies, and case studies of different Turkish cities hosting Syrian refugees. This method provides an in-depth understanding of the municipal response to the refugee crisis and the effectiveness of various integration strategies. Key findings show that municipalities are at the forefront of providing essential services to Syrian refugees, including housing, healthcare, education, and social services. These services are crucial for meeting the immediate needs of refugees and facilitating their long-term integration. On the

level of policy implementation, municipalities must implement national policies at the local level, adapting them to fit the specific needs of their urban populations. This local adaptation is essential for effective integration.

Erdoğan (2021) suggests three integration strategies: educational programs, employment support and social cohesion projects. In Educational Programs, municipalities offer language courses and educational programs to help Syrian children and adults integrate into the Turkish education system. These programs are vital for overcoming language barriers and enhancing social cohesion. In Employment Support, initiatives to support refugee employment include job training programs, partnerships with local businesses, and efforts to recognize and utilize the skills of Syrian refugees. Employment is seen as a critical factor in successful integration. In Social Cohesion Projects, municipalities organize cultural and social events to foster interaction between refugees and local residents. These initiatives aim to reduce prejudice and promote mutual understanding.

Constraints to apply those strategies can be identified as municipalities face financial and logistical challenges in meeting the needs of a growing refugee population. Limited resources can hinder the effectiveness of integration programs. There are instances of social tension and prejudice against Syrian refugees, which can impede integration efforts. Municipalities must navigate these challenges carefully to promote harmony. Consistent national policies and a lack of clear guidelines can create difficulties for municipalities in planning and executing integration strategies. The study suggests that enhanced coordination between national and local governments can improve the effectiveness of integration policies. Sharing best practices and resources among municipalities can also enhance their capacity to support refugees. Securing additional funding from national and international sources is vital to help municipalities address resource constraints and expand their integration programs; more significant involvement of local communities in integration efforts can reduce social tensions and foster a more inclusive environment.

Özden (2013) emphasizes the crucial role of providing economic opportunities for Syrian refugees in reducing inequality and enhancing social cohesion within Turkish society. This focus on economic integration is central to improving the overall well-being of refugees

and fostering harmonious relationships between them and local communities. The study underscores the importance of economic opportunities for Syrian refugees as a means to reduce inequality and enhance social cohesion in Türkiye. By addressing the challenges to economic integration and implementing supportive policies, Turkish society can better integrate refugees, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious environment. The study's insights highlight the need for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to economic integration that benefits both refugees and the host community.

Economic integration is a key factor, Özden (2013) highlights that access to stable employment and the ability to generate income are fundamental to reducing economic disparities between Syrian refugees and the host population. Employment provides refugees with financial independence and stability, which are critical for their integration, noting the importance of recognizing and utilizing the skills and qualifications that Syrian refugees bring. Facilitating the transfer of these skills into the Turkish job market can help refugees find jobs that match their expertise, leading to better economic outcomes and more efficient use of human capital.

The study explores also challenges in economic integration; informal employment is a crucial challenge as many Syrian refugees end up in informal employment due to legal and bureaucratic barriers. These jobs are often low-paying, unstable, and lack social security benefits, perpetuating economic vulnerability and inequality. Legal obstacles, such as difficulties in obtaining work permits and recognizing foreign qualifications, hinder refugees' ability to enter the formal labor market. This exclusion from formal employment sectors exacerbates economic inequality.

According to Özden (2013), refugees often face discrimination in the job market, which limits their employment opportunities. Prejudice from employers and colleagues can create hostile work environments, further impeding integration efforts. Providing economic opportunities for refugees contributes to reduction in inequality and enhancing social cohesion; providing Syrian refugees with economic opportunities can significantly reduce income inequality. When refugees are able to earn a stable income, they can better support themselves and their families, reducing their dependence on aid and social services.

Economic stability for refugees fosters social cohesion by alleviating tensions between refugees and local communities. When refugees contribute economically, they are seen as valuable members of society, which can improve perceptions and reduce xenophobic attitudes. Access to economic opportunities empowers refugees, giving them a sense of agency and control over their lives. This empowerment can lead to increased participation in community activities and greater social integration.

Therefore, Özden (2013) recommends policy measures to simplify the process of obtaining work permits and recognizing foreign qualifications. Streamlined procedures can help refugees access formal employment more easily. Encouraging and supporting entrepreneurial activities among refugees can create new economic opportunities. Providing access to microfinance, business training, and mentorship programs can help refugees start and sustain their own businesses. Creating Public-Private Partnerships between government agencies, NGOs, and private-sector companies can create targeted employment programs for refugees. These partnerships can offer job placements, vocational training, and apprenticeships tailored to refugees' skills and the needs of the local economy and must be accompanied by anti-discrimination measures; implementing and enforcing anti-discrimination laws in the workplace can protect refugees from prejudicial treatment and ensure equal employment opportunities.

Akgündüz and Torun (2018) published as a GLO discussion paper, explores the economic impact of the Syrian refugee influx into Türkiye, with a focus on the skill mix of refugees and the capital intensity of the industries they join. The paper provides an empirical analysis of how the integration of over two and a half million Syrian refugees has influenced Türkiye's labor market dynamics. The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the skill mix and capital intensity of Syrian refugees' employment in Türkiye. The findings highlight the challenges and opportunities associated with the economic integration of refugees, emphasizing the need for targeted policies to optimize their contributions to the labor market. By addressing barriers to employment and enhancing skill utilization, Türkiye can better integrate Syrian refugees, benefiting both the refugees and the host country's economy.

The study aims to examine the skill composition of Syrian refugees, analyze the educational and professional background of the refugee population, and assess the impact on the Turkish labor market through Investigation of the effects of refugee labor on local employment, wages, and industry sectors, in addition to Analyzing the capital intensity of refugee employment: Determine the types of jobs and industries where refugees are employed, focusing on the capital intensity of these positions. The study utilized a framework combining Quantitative Data Analysis through Examination of large datasets from Turkish labor force surveys, administrative records, and refugee registration data to assess the skill levels and employment patterns of Syrian refugees and employed Econometric Models by Application of econometric techniques to measure the impact of refugee labor on local employment and wages, controlling for various socio-economic factors (Akgündüz and Torun, 2018).

The study portrays a skill mix of Syrian refugees; refugees possess educational diversity, Syrian refugees display a wide range of educational backgrounds. A significant portion has low levels of formal education, while a smaller segment possesses higher education and professional qualifications, focusing on Skill Utilization as Many highly skilled refugees are underemployed in low-skill jobs due to barriers such as language proficiency, recognition of credentials and limited job opportunities in their fields of expertise (Akgündüz and Torun, 2018).

Exploring the Impact on the Turkish Labor Market, the study finds that employment Patterns of Syrian refugees predominantly occupy low-skill, labor-intensive jobs in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and informal markets. These sectors have seen an influx of refugee labor due to lower entry barriers and immediate demand for labor. The study finds a mixed impact on wages. While there is some evidence of wage suppression in low-skill jobs due to increased labor supply, the overall effect on the labor market is complex and varies by region and industry; the study also identifies areas where refugees complement the local labor force, filling labor shortages and supporting economic activity, although there is limited but notable displacement of native low-skilled workers, particularly in regions with high concentrations of refugees. However, the majority of Syrian refugees are employed in low-capital-intensity sectors, which require minimal investment in technology or infrastructure.

These jobs are typically labor-intensive and low-paying. Refugees with higher education and professional skills face significant challenges in accessing high-capital-intensity jobs. Language barriers, legal restrictions, and non-recognition of qualifications limit their opportunities in more advanced sectors (Akgündüz and Torun, 2018).

This study has shed light on the public policy recommendations from the early stages as it concluded the last most significant influx of refugees. These changes need to be initiated to ensure a reduced negative impact on society in the long term; the authors categorized it into three categories (Akgündüz and Torun, 2018):

1. **Enhancing Skill Utilization**: Implementing policies to recognize and validate Syrian refugees' educational and professional qualifications, allowing them to find employment commensurate with their skills, and providing targeted language and vocational training programs to improve refugees' employability and integration into the formal labor market.
2. **Supporting Economic Integration**: Develop initiatives to facilitate the transition of refugees from informal to formal employment, ensuring better job security and social benefits, along with offering incentives for businesses to hire refugees, such as tax reductions, cost support, and access to microfinance for refugee entrepreneurs.
3. **Mitigating Negative Labor Market Effects**: through implementing targeted support programs in regions with high concentrations of refugees to mitigate potential negative impacts on local labor markets and enhance social cohesion.
4. **Inclusive Policies**: Promote inclusive labor market policies that protect both native and refugee workers, fostering a fair and competitive employment environment.

Parent (2018) highlights the complex interplay between cultural values and risk perceptions regarding Syrian refugees in Izmir, Türkiye. Economic, security and cultural risks are prominent concerns shaped significantly by individuals' cultural worldviews. Addressing these perceptions through targeted policies and community initiatives is crucial for enhancing social cohesion and supporting the successful integration of Syrian refugees in Türkiye. The study explored perceived risks associated with Syrian Refugees sampling Izmir province; the economic risks were the highest that could cause social disturbance and rapture

social cohesion for the newcomers, concluding that Syrian refugees are economic threats, believing that they compete for jobs and depress wages, particularly in low-skilled labor markets, with a widespread perception that refugees disproportionately benefit from government assistance, which could otherwise aid local citizens, also focusing on Cultural Risks where Cultural differences are perceived as threats to social harmony. Respondents expressed concerns about the erosion of Turkish cultural values and identity due to the presence of a large refugee population.

This study is aligned with (Akgündüz& Torun, 2018) in terms of policy recommendations and the impact of economic/employment factors impact on social cohesion, with additional aspects of the host society; both have focused on Promoting Economic Opportunities through Job Creation Programs that Implement initiatives to create jobs for both Turkish citizens and refugees to reduce economic competition and tensions, and support the formal integration of refugees into the labor market through vocational training and recognition of their skills. The study proposes enhancing social integration to minimize risks of alleviating social tensions through developing programs that promote cultural exchange and understanding between Turkish citizens and Syrian refugees, fostering mutual respect and social cohesion, and encouraging community-based activities involving refugees and locals to build trust and cooperation.

3.6. Previous Studies on the Linkage of Public Policy, Immigrant Business Establishment, and Social Cohesion: The Case of Türkiye

Since the early stages of the Syrian refugee influx in Türkiye, research has triggered the need for harmonization between public policies and refugee integration in the community, underpinning the need for collective efforts and alignment between several layers of political, communal, and economic aspects to avoid and lessen and negative impact from the waves of asylum seekers who waved into the community with large portions and mainly settled in southern provinces that are close to Syrian boarders and in Istanbul.

Kirişci and Salooja's research (2014) was one of the first studies that explored Türkiye's response to the influx of Syrian refugees and the broader implications for policy, social cohesion, and economic integration. The study critically examines the shift needed

from emergency relief to long-term integration strategies, emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive public policies to address these challenges. According to Kirişçi and Salooja, Syrian entrepreneurs have established businesses in Türkiye, contributing to the economy and creating employment opportunities for both Syrians and Turks. These businesses often serve as cultural bridges and enhance social cohesion by integrating Syrian refugees into the local economy.

Türkiye's open-door policy and humanitarian commitment were not designed for long-term integration, which created gaps in sustainable support for refugees and challenges on several layers. On the legal side, the temporary nature of the protection status granted to Syrians limited their legal rights and access to formal employment, accompanied by the lack of targeted economic policies as the existing regulatory framework often creates barriers for refugees to establish businesses legally and limit the support for refugee entrepreneurship and integration into the labor market (Şimşek, 2020), challenges such bureaucratic hurdles, limited access to credit, and insufficient business support services has hindered the potential positive economic impacts, such as job creation and economic diversification, benefiting both refugees and the host community, Social Services and Education was initially overwhelmed by the sheer number of refugees, leading to inadequate coverage, while the provision of education and social services is essential for integration, but the gap in relevant public policies and alignment created tension and competition for resources as per Kirişci (2014).

Tumen (2016) underline the importance of comprehensive and well-designed public policies to harness the economic potential of refugees and promote sustainable growth in host countries. The study underscores the importance of policies that facilitate the economic and social integration of refugees. The study finds that the influx of Syrian refugees has a mixed impact on the labor market, observing an increase in the number of new businesses, particularly SMEs, in regions with higher concentrations of refugees. Syrian refugees often engage in entrepreneurial activities. Contributing to local business dynamism is evidence that the economic activity stimulated by refugee entrepreneurship and increased labor supply contributes to regional economic growth. This positive effect is more pronounced in areas with effective integration policies and support mechanisms.

On the public interest side, hosting a large number of refugees leads to increased public spending on services such as healthcare, education, and social assistance; the pressure on public services can lead to short-term challenges, but over time, improved integration and efficient resource allocation can alleviate these pressures. While this poses a fiscal challenge, the study notes that international aid and government support help mitigate the financial burden and underscores the importance of policies that facilitate the economic and social integration of refugees (Tumen, 2016).

Some studies (Ozden et al.,2018; Erdogan, 2019; İcduygu& Sert, 2019) provide a comprehensive approach to the integration of Syrian refugees in Türkiye, focusing on economic and social dimensions, emphasizing the critical role of public policy in facilitating successful integration.

Public policy emerges as a central theme in all three studies, underscoring the need for comprehensive strategies that address both economic and social aspects of integration. Ozden et al. (2018) advocate for legal reforms, access to financial services, and support for entrepreneurship, arguing that these measures will foster both economic integration and social cohesion. The importance of policies that support economic opportunities and social cohesion was emphasized by Erdogan (2019), arguing that policies designed to enhance economic opportunities for refugees will play a vital role in integration into the local economy and society, resulting in promoting harmonious relations. A similar finding was highlighted by İcduygu and Sert (2019), examining the role of local and national policies in facilitating integration, stressing that comprehensive policies addressing education, employment, and social services are essential for holistic integration, and advocating for coordinated efforts between government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations.

Ozden et al. (2018) delved into the economic integration of refugees, stressing the necessity of coherent public policies that remove legal barriers, open up employment opportunities, and support refugee entrepreneurship. They argue that policies simplifying business registration and providing financial support are crucial for enabling refugees to contribute economically. The same economic integration aspect was recommended by Erdogan (2019), highlighting that economic opportunities—such as access to the labor

market and entrepreneurial support—are vital for refugees' integration, focusing on the need for targeted policies to support refugee-owned businesses, that also aligned with İcduygu and Sert (2019) that emphasized the importance of local government involvement and international support in providing resources necessary for refugee economic integration, that can only be done through supporting by access to education, vocational training, and employment opportunities.

While economic integration is a shared focus, all three studies also emphasize the importance of economic integration on social cohesion. Ozden et al. (2018) highlight the interconnectedness of economic integration and social cohesion, suggesting that policies promoting economic self-sufficiency also reduce social tensions by decreasing economic competition.

The importance of mutual understanding and interaction between refugees and host communities, primarily through economic activities, was the focus of Erdogan (2019); he points out that community engagement, cultural orientation programs, and anti-discrimination measures are crucial for enhancing social cohesion. Social dynamics of refugee integration are vital; initiatives promoting social interaction, such as community events and joint projects, are essential for fostering trust and cooperation between refugees and the local population.

Although every study has a different focus, they all agree that a combination of social and economic methods backed by solid-state policies is necessary for the successful integration of Syrian refugees in Türkiye. They draw attention to the necessity of access to work, legal changes, and encouragement of entrepreneurship in order to guarantee financial independence, which in return will have a positive impact on lowering tensions and advancing peaceful relations, while this approach depends heavily on developing social cohesion via community involvement, cultural orientation, and anti-discrimination policies, demonstrating the complexity of integrating refugees and the value of a comprehensive strategy that takes into account both the social and economic aspects.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1.Scope of the study

Türkiye was the sanctuary of immigrants who fled their conflict due to conflict and oppression, but the unprecedented waves of around 4 million Syrians settled in Türkiye have affected the Turkish communities and created tension in many instances due to the unpreparedness of communities to accommodate this large number of immigrants. This research will focus on Syrians who established business activities in Gaziantep and seek to understand how businesses established by newcomers can affect social cohesion.

4.2.Research Design

The research utilized quantitative research methodology through relational statistical approach in analyzing the relationships between various interconnected factors that affect social cohesion.

Given that the aim of this research is to inform on proposed approaches to strengthen social cohesion interventions in migrant settings and its focus on a single issue within a bounded system, all collected information and data were used to construct a holistic view of the social cohesion situation that is affected by multiple factors.

Primary data will be collected through utilizing Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) as an instrument for data collection through an online survey, the instrument was adapted to the studied context. The survey was distributed to Syrian migrants targeting Syrian entrepreneurs in Gaziantep through known entrepreneurship and business entities such as Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce through Syrian Table, dedicated to supporting Syrian-led businesses in Gaziantep and supporting their integration& facilitation of businesses in the Turkish market, in addition to Building Markets organization/Türkiye Branch that support refugee-led SMEs in the Southern Region of Türkiye and focuses on increasing their visibility and integrating them with host communities by facilitating their access to partnerships, supply chains, and capital.

Secondary data will be collected through academic literature review, official reports from reputable organizations, including research centers in universities, data and statistics from government agencies, United Nations agencies and global institutions such as The World Bank, policy analysis, think tanks, and case studies to build the theoretical framework.

Fundamental theories, concepts, and frameworks are applied to reflect theoretical aspects of findings from the data analysis and to develop conclusions about how studied factors can inform frameworks and strategies at different levels.

Results relevant to the academic research and recommendations will be discussed to ultimately help build and foster bonds between Syrian migrants and the local Turkish communities and contribute to producing qualitative knowledge to bridge social cohesion studies and social contact studies.

4.3.Population and Sampling

The sample size is 270, according to Krejcie and Morgan Table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), calculated at confidence level of 90%, based on proportion of Syrians under temporary protection living in Gaziantep= 429,954 (19.8% of Gaziantep population) as per June 2024 statistics by Presidency of Migration Management (Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı) to the total number of Gaziantep Province of 2,164,134 as per Gaziantep population according to TÜİK 2023 statistics (accessed 22 June 2024), noting that the number of business activities registered in Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce according to the 2023 annual report is 2,610.

The data for the study was collected from 304 Syrians. Voluntariness was a criterion for participation in the study. It was determined that most of the volunteer participants were from Gaziantep.

304 valid questionnaires collected at the end of data collection.

4.4.Research Period

The data collection was carried out between 24 June 2024 - 24 August 2024.

4.5.Research Limits

Due to resource constraints and context limitations related to data, as according to researcher knowledge, there are no adequate statistics on the number of businesses established by NGOs programs and the sensitivity of social cohesion, data will be collected through an anonymized questionnaire (online) secondary data resources such as published official documents and statistics, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports, and research published by recognized institutions.

Primary data collection focus will be mainly on businesses established in southern provinces in Türkiye as they host a considerable number of Syrian refugees in (Gaziantep) due to the significant commercial activities and initiatives for startups and entrepreneurial projects, there are 3,084 owned by non-Turkish citizens in Gaziantep, 85% of them are owned by Syrian refugees.

4.6.Data Collection

The survey was designed through online forms, included informed consent that was obtained from the sample population, and explicitly explained the purpose of the research and data processing objective. Participation was entirely voluntary, and no personal identification data were collected. The survey contained three parts: the survey purpose and informed consent, the second part included demographical data, and the third part included 21 questions of the SCAS-R scale.

4.7.Instrument

The Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) was created by Colleen Ward and Antony Kennedy (1999) and revised by Jessie Wilson (2013). A sample group of 424 Syrian Migrants (18 years and older) living in Gaziantep province of Türkiye from different neighborhoods, economic status, and socio-demographic backgrounds, and the scale is examined via commonly used validity and reliability analysis methods. It is obtained that the Cronbach's Alpha of the items is higher than 0.7, and the corrected item-total correlations are above the threshold value (0.2) in item analysis, nearly 69% of the total variance is

explained by 5 factors in Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and the Goodness of Fit Indexes ($\chi 2/sd = 1.521$, CFI = 0.958, and SRMR = 0.048) are within the good/acceptable range in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). It has been understood that the SCAS-R is a valid and reliable scale for Arabic culture according to (Keser, A., Yalçin, Ö., & Gökmen, Y, 2023). SCAS-R items are based on a Likert scale of 1 (= Not at all competent) to 5 (= Extremely competent).

4.8.Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) application version 29.0.2.0, Chi-Square test is used to explore the relationship between the variables and test hypothesis.

The confidence level used in the study is 90%, if p value =< 0.05, we can say that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two studied variables, if p value > 0.05, then there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables and then not correlated.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1.Descriptive Statistics of the Sample:

The research consisted of a total of 304 Syrian participants. Frequency and percentage analysis data regarding participants' demographic information are given below.

Table 3-Current Place of Living and Working

	Gaziantep	Hatay	Istanbul	Şanlıurfa	Kilis	Grand Total
N	263	14	18	8	1	304
%	86.5%	4.6%	5.9%	2.6%	0.4%	100%

The survey was directed to Syrian entrepreneurs living in Gaziantep, however, there were participants from other provinces as the survey was distributed through an organization that supports Syrian entrepreneurs in provinces other than Gaziantep, the majority of participants were from Gaziantep 86.5% consisting of 263 participants, the second was Istanbul with 18 participants, the third was Hatay with 14 participants, the fourth was Şanlıurfa with 8 participants, and the fifth was Kilis with only 1 participant. These provinces are also the places where Syrians live most densely.

Table 4: Number of years of residence in the current location

	Less than one year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-9 years	More than 10 years	Grand Total
N	9	23	52	116	104	304
%	3%	7.6%	17%	38.2%	34.2%	100%

The majority of the respondents have spent over seven years in Türkiye, 34,2% of the respondents have been living in their current location for more than ten years, and 38.2% have been living for more than seven years (see Table 4), and this is consistent with the second and third wave of migrants who settled in Türkiye between 2012 and 2018, especially in the southern provinces.

Table 5: Age in Years

	18- 24	25-34	35-44	Older than 44	Grand Total
N	22	109	131	42	304
%	7.2%	35.9%	43.1%	13.8%	100%

The majority of respondents are in the productive age of work, respondents aged between 25-34 are 35.9% and between 35-44 years old are 43.1% (see Table 5), which can be related as matching the average to the age of Syrian entrepreneurs in Türkiye of 43.4% (Almohammad et al., 2021).

Table 6: Sex of the respondents

	Female	Male	Grand Total
N	118	186	304
%	38.8%	61.2%	100%

Two-thirds of the respondents were males (61.2%), while 38.8% were females (see Table 6), which indicated a relatively high participation of women in the business sector and willingness to be an active part of the community.

Table 7: Marital Status

	Married	Single	Widow	Grand Total
N	242	51	11	304
%	79.6%	16.8%	3.6%	100%

The majority of participants (79.6%) are married, only 16.8% are single, and 3.6% are widowed (see Table 7).

Table 8: Education

	Illiterate	Literate	High School	Bachelor Degree	Master degree and above	Grand Total
N	1	13	57	157	76	304
%	0.3%	4.3%	18.8%	51.6%	25%	100%

The most common level of education is a Bachelor's degree (51.6%), and the sample shows a high level of education qualifications among participants as 25% have a master's degree or higher certificate, and only 1 participant is illiterate (see Table 8).

Table 9: Turkish Language Proficiency

	I don't know at all	Beginner	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced	Grand Total
N	15	71	97	73	48	304
%	4.9%	23.4%	31.9%	24%	15.8%	100%

Most respondents (35%) have intermediate proficiency (see Table 9), and participants are able to understand core concepts, can form basic sentences, and can speak and write clearly regarding familiar topics, this indicates the perception of the language importance for the migrants and their pursuance to have language capabilities with the host community.

Table 10: Working Status

	I have my own project/ business	I work for the government sector	I work for the private sector	I work with NGOs/CSOs	Iam not working in the time being	Grand Total
N	152	1	36	70	45	304
%	50%	0.3%	11.9%	23.1%	14.8%	100%

Most respondents (50%) have their own projects/businesses, while 35% work in other sectors such as private business, NGOs and charities, while 9% are currently unemployed (see Table 10).

Table 11: Do you have Turkish friends/coworkers?

	No	Yes
N	101	203
%	33.2%	66.8%

Most respondents (66.8%) have Turkish friends or coworkers, which indicates the level of integration within the sample, it also can be aligned with the level of Turkish language in Table 8, where almost 70% of the sample have intermediate proficiency level and above (see Table 11).

Table 12: Monthly Income in Turkish Lira

	Less than 39,000 TL per month	Between 39,001 - 53,999 TL per month	Between 54,000- 68,999 TL per month	Between 69,000- 83,999 TL per month	84,000 - 98,999 Turkish TL per month	More than 99,000 TL per month	Grand Total
N	153	57	34	20	12	28	304
%	50.3%	18.8%	11.2%	6.6%	3.9%	9.2%	100%

Almost half of the sample indicated having an income of less than 39,000 TL per month, 18.8% earn Between 39,001 and 53,999 TL per month, and less than 10% earn more than 99,000 TL per month (see Table 12).

Table 13: Challenges to Social Cohesion

	Adapting to the culture, customs and traditions of Turkish society	Discrimination in all its forms	Fear and feeling of insecurity	Laws and Regulations	The ability to communicate and deliver ideas	Grand Total
N	7	59	125	51	62	304
%	2.3%	19.4%	41.1%	16.8%	20.4%	100%

"Fear and feeling of insecurity" was the most cited challenge by 41.1% of participants, the ability to communicate and deliver ideas came in second place and was reported by 20.4% of participants, while Discrimination in all its forms was the in third place by 19,4% of participants, Laws and Regulations were equally in fourth place in Challenges to Social Cohesion and reported by 16.8% (see Table 13).

5.2.Relationship between Establishing Entrepreneurship/a Business and Social Cohesion

The primary independent variable in the survey was the working status, when tested on SPSS, surprisingly, there was no overall significant relationship between establishing a business and social cohesion, there were only six statistically significant relationships between the type of work and parts of social cohesion that are directly linked to the business as an activity, which are revolving around the essential business requirement of building relations and effective communication.

Table 14: Chi-Square Tests for Building and maintaining relationships/SCAS-R Scale question 1

Crosstab

Count

		1- Building and maintaining relationships					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	5	18	37	59	33	152
	I work for the private sector	1	3	9	9	14	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	4	15	20	25	6	70
	I work for the government sector	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Iam not working in the time being	1	5	19	9	11	45
Total		11	41	86	102	64	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.781[a]	16	.034
Likelihood Ratio	27.798	16	.033
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.359	1	.125
N of Valid Cases	304		

One of the main aspects of business is building and maintaining relationships as a core driver and necessity for business continuity, and discovering the community and services, navigating the way through as services in the surrounding area is one of the main factors for business continuity, therefore there is a strong significant association between both variables, as the business is subject to ecological Adaptation which this question measures.

The Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests show a p-value of 0.034 and 0.033, respectively. Since these p-values are below the commonly used significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no association between working status and competency in building and maintaining relationships. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between these variables. Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) show a wide range of competencies in building and maintaining relationships, with a notable number being "Mostly competent" (59) and "Fairly competent" (37). This group is the largest and displays higher competence in building relationships. Private Sector Workers are generally less competent in building relationships compared to entrepreneurs, with most being "Fairly competent" or "Extremely competent" (14). NGOs/CSOs Workers have a relatively even distribution with higher competency levels, especially "Fairly competent" (20) and "Mostly competent" (25). Only one participant of Government Sector Workers, who is minimally competent in building relationships, suggesting a limited sample size for this category. Unemployed display varied competencies with a reasonable number being "Fairly competent" (19). The p-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association test is 0.125, which is above the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that there is no significant linear trend between working status and the level of competence in building relationships.

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests for Maintaining my hobbies and interests/SCAS-R Scale question 4

Crosstab

Count

		4- Maintaining my hobbies and interests					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	8	38	37	43	26	152
	I work for the private sector	1	7	12	4	12	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	2	30	21	14	3	70
	I work for the government sector	0	0	1	0	0	1

	Iam not working in the time being	6	11	9	12	7	45
Total		17	86	80	73	48	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	35.410[a]	16	.003
Likelihood Ratio	34.961	16	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.572	1	.059
N of Valid Cases	304		

While there was strong significant relationship between establishing a business and maintaining hobbies & interests potential relationships, which indicates the strong community involvement as part also form building relations and networks. Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) show a diverse range of competencies, with the highest number being "Somewhat competent" (38) and "Mostly competent" (43). This group exhibits a balanced distribution of competency levels. Private Sector Workers have lower overall competency in maintaining hobbies and interests, with a notable number being "Not at all competent" (1) and "Somewhat competent" (7). NGOs/CSOs Workers show a higher number of "Somewhat competent" (30) and "Fairly competent" (21). Their roles might allow for a better balance between work and personal interests compared to other sectors. Only one participant of Government Sector Workers is minimally competent. The small sample size limits the ability to draw significant conclusions from this group. Unemployed display a moderate range of competencies, with a significant number being "Somewhat competent" (11) and "Not at all competent" (6). The p-value for the Pearson Chi-Square test is 0.003, which is less than the common significance level of 0.05.

This indicates that there is a statistically significant association between working status and competence in maintaining hobbies and interests. In other words, the competence levels in maintaining hobbies and interests are not evenly distributed across different working statuses. The p-value for the Likelihood Ratio test is 0.004, which also suggests a significant association between working status and competence levels. This test supports the finding of the Pearson Chi-Square test. The p-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association test is 0.059,

which is slightly above the 0.05 threshold. This result is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level but is close, suggesting that there might be a trend or some linear association, though it is not strong enough to be considered statistically significant in this context.

Table 16: Chi-Square Tests for Working effectively with other students/work colleagues/SCAS-R Scale question 7

Crosstab

Count

		7- Working effectively with other students/work colleagues					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	4	7	38	50	53	152
	I work for the private sector	0	2	6	6	22	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	2	4	15	36	13	70
	I work for the government sector	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Iam not working in the time being	3	3	15	15	9	45
Total		9	16	74	108	97	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.875[a]	16	.008
Likelihood Ratio	32.829	16	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.917	1	.015
N of Valid Cases	304		

Testing reveals that business is strongly associated with working effectively with other students and work colleagues, and contributing factor to social cohesion if the working environment includes both migrants and host community members. Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) exhibit a broad range of competencies, with a substantial number being "Mostly competent" (50) and "Extremely competent" (53). This group shows high

effectiveness in working with others, likely due to the nature of their entrepreneurial roles which demand strong collaborative skills. Private Sector Workers show lower levels of competency overall, with most being "Extremely competent" (22) but fewer in the "Fairly competent" or higher categories. This may reflect a less collaborative environment or fewer opportunities for developing these skills. NGOs/CSOs Workers display a higher level of competency with a notable number being "Mostly competent" (36) and "Fairly competent" (15). Only one participant of Government Sector Workers is minimally competent. The very small sample size limits the interpretation of this group. Unemployed have a varied range of competencies, with many being "Fairly competent" (15) and "Mostly competent" (15).

The Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests both have p-values of 0.008. These p-values are below the common significance level of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between working status and competency in working effectively with colleagues or other students. The Linear-by-Linear Association test has a p-value of 0.015, which also indicates a significant linear trend. This suggests that there may be a systematic relationship between working status and competency in this area.

Table 17: Chi-Square Tests for Obtaining community services I require/SCAS-R Scale question 8

Crosstab

Count

		8- Obtaining community services I require					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	13	29	58	37	15	152
	I work for the private sector	2	3	10	12	9	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	4	12	39	12	3	70
	I work for the government sector	0	1	0	0	0	1
	I am not working in the time being	7	8	11	14	5	45
Total		26	53	118	75	32	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.295[a]	16	.009
Likelihood Ratio	29.734	16	.019
Linear-by-Linear Association	.357	1	.550
N of Valid Cases	304		

And seems evident the establishing a business an essential driver to discover the community and services, navigating the way through to obtain needed services in the surrounding are one of the main factors for business continuity, therefore there is a strong significant association between both variables. Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) show a diverse range of competencies, with a notable number being "Fairly competent" (58) and "Somewhat competent" (29). This suggests that entrepreneurs generally feel moderately capable in accessing community services, although a significant proportion still faces challenges. Private Sector Workers exhibit lower competencies overall, with most being "Somewhat competent" (3) and "Fairly competent" (10). Their relatively lower levels of competency in obtaining community services might reflect less engagement or more difficulties in accessing these services. NGO/CSO Workers show a moderate level of competency, with a significant number being "Fairly competent" (39) and "Somewhat competent" (12). Only one participant in the category of Government Sector Workers, so the data is not robust enough to draw significant conclusions. Unemployed display a range of competencies, with many being "Not at all competent" (7) and "Somewhat competent" (8).

The Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests have p-values of 0.009 and 0.019, respectively. Both p-values are below the common significance threshold of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between working status and competency in obtaining community services. The Linear-by-Linear Association test has a p-value of 0.550, which is above the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that there isn't a significant linear trend between working status and obtaining community services.

Table 18: Chi-Square Tests for Gaining feedback from other students/work colleagues to help improve my performance/SCAS-R Scale question 12

Crosstab

Count

		12- Gaining feedback from other students/work colleagues to help improve my performance					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	1	11	39	51	50	152
	I work for the private sector	0	2	5	8	21	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	1	6	17	34	12	70
	I work for the government sector	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Iam not working in the time being	0	3	17	14	11	45
Total		2	22	78	108	94	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.292[a]	16	.038
Likelihood Ratio	26.983	16	.042
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.287	1	.130
N of Valid Cases	304		

It was found that establishing business is essential to receive opinions and different point of views especially on improving implanted practices, and this aspect is linked to working effectively with other as above which show the consistency and affirmation that working with others and getting feedback are interlinked and pave the way for social cohesion. Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) show a high level of competency in gaining feedback, with a notable number being "Mostly competent" (51) and "Extremely competent" (50). This is expected, as entrepreneurs often actively seek feedback to refine their business strategies and improve performance. Private Sector Workers exhibit moderate

competency, with many being "Extremely competent" (21) but fewer in the "Fairly competent" and "Mostly competent" categories. NGO/CSO Workers display a moderate level of competency, with a good number being "Fairly competent" (17) and "Mostly competent" (34). Their roles often involve collaborative work and feedback is an essential part of their activities. Only one participant in the category of Government Sector Workers, so the data is not substantial enough to draw reliable conclusions. Unemployed Individuals show varied levels of competency, with a mix of "Fairly competent" (17) and "Mostly competent" (14). The Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests both have p-values of 0.038 and 0.042, respectively.

These p-values are below the common significance threshold of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between working status and competency in gaining feedback. The Likelihood Ratio test, which is an alternative to the Pearson Chi-Square test, also shows a significant result with a p-value of 0.042, supporting the same conclusion that there is a significant association between working status and competency levels. The Linear-by-Linear Association test has a p-value of 0.130, which is above the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that there is no significant linear trend between working status and competency in gaining feedback.

Table 19: Chi-Square Tests for Expressing my ideas to other students/work colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner/SCAS-R Scale question 17

Crosstab

Count

		17- Expressing my ideas to other students/work colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner.					
		Not at all competent	Somewhat competent	Fairly competent	Mostly competent	Extremely competent	Total
Working Status	I have my own project/business	4	8	44	57	39	152
	I work for the private sector	1	4	3	11	17	36
	I work with NGOs/CSOs	2	7	19	26	16	70
	I work for the government sector	0	0	1	0	0	1

	Iam not working in the time being	3	5	18	15	4	45
Total		10	24	85	109	76	304

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.002[a]	16	.041
Likelihood Ratio	28.376	16	.028
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.579	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	304		

The factor of expressing my ideas to other colleagues in a culturally appropriate was also found to be of statistically significant and linked with social cohesion and show strong bond with all significantly positive factors discussed above, and suggesting the communication with different layers of the surrounding community such as immediate working environment and the outer layers boosts the social cohesion in positive way.

Entrepreneurs (I have my own project/business) demonstrate a range of competencies, with a notable number being "Mostly competent" (57) and "Fairly competent" (44). This reflects their likely exposure to diverse cultural contexts and the need to communicate effectively in various settings. Private Sector Workers show lower levels of competency overall, with a significant number being "Extremely competent" (17) but fewer in the "Fairly competent" and "Mostly competent" categories. This may be due to less frequent or less diverse interactions compared to other working statuses. NGO/CSO Workers display moderate levels of competency, with many being "Mostly competent" (26) and "Fairly competent" (19). Their roles often involve frequent and varied interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds, contributing to their competency. Only one participant in the category of Government Sector Workers, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from this data point. Unemployed Individuals show varied competencies, with a mix of "Fairly competent" (18) and "Mostly competent" (15).

The Pearson Chi-Square test and Likelihood Ratio tests have p-values of 0.041 and 0.028, respectively. Both p-values are below the 0.05 significance threshold, indicating a statistically significant relationship between working status and competency in expressing

ideas culturally appropriately. The Linear-by-Linear Association test has a p-value of 0.003, which is also significant. This suggests there is a significant linear trend in the relationship between working status and the ability to express ideas appropriately.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis aims to analyze the contribution of establishing a business to social cohesion and how this possible relation is shaped or affected by several interrelated factors. The analysis of the survey data from 304 Syrian participants residing in Türkiye provides valuable insights into the demographic profile and social dynamics of this group, particularly focusing on their working status and its implications for social cohesion.

It can be argued that many studies recommended establishing work opportunities and enhancing the accessibility of establishing business as a gateway to social cohesion, the proposed assumption of a positive relation between establishing a business and social cohesion was found to be correlated partially and not on all components of social cohesion, those who have established business before in their country begore seeking asylum, possess innovation spirit, and understanding of entrepreneurship barriers are those most likely to continue their journey in entrepreneurship, as the majority of participants are from Gaziantep (86.5%), with smaller representations from other provinces, reflecting the survey's focus on this major hub for Syrian entrepreneurs. This distribution indicates Gaziantep's significant role as a center for Syrian business activity.

The age distribution shows a predominance of individuals in the productive work age (25-44 years), which is typical for entrepreneurial ventures. Gender representation reveals a notable involvement of women in the business sector, although men are still the majority.

A substantial proportion of respondents have lived in Türkiye for over seven years, which aligns with migration patterns observed between 2012 and 2018. This long-term residency suggests a relatively stable population with established community ties.

A high percentage of participants are married, with a significant portion holding at least a bachelor's degree. This high educational attainment highlights the potential for skilled entrepreneurial activity within the community.

Length of stay that indicates social& financial stability, along with educational level, Syrian refugees with financial means are better able to manage the hurdles of temporary

protection status in Türkiye, start enterprises, and achieve social and economic stability. In contrast, unskilled and economically disadvantaged refugees confront more integration difficulties; economic resources not only assist entry to the labor market and housing, but also help to build social bridges with members of the receiving country. This integration is more accessible to individuals who can invest in Türkiye's economy.

The majority of respondents have at least intermediate proficiency in Turkish, underscoring the importance of language skills for integration and effective communication within the host community, which could be interpreted as evidence that Syrian migrants who recognize language as an integration and facilitation factor in the community, and this factor should be invested to strengthen social cohesion. Proficiency in the host community's language enables refugees to communicate effectively, support their daily interactions, accessing services, build relationships, and integrate more smoothly into the host society by facilitating better understanding and participation in community activities, where language proficiency can increase trust and develop a sense of belonging feelings with feelings of safety within the community.

Entrepreneurs, who represent half of the sample, show varied competencies in key areas related to social cohesion. They exhibit notable proficiency in building and maintaining relationships, working effectively with others, and gaining feedback. This suggests that entrepreneurship plays a critical role in fostering social cohesion by facilitating interaction and integration within the community, the results indicate that establishing work opportunities and enhancing the accessibility of establishing business can be a gateway to social cohesion, while, language creates an enabling environment for bonding and communication, and it is a vital part of social cohesion.

Entrepreneurs score higher in competencies related to building relationships compared to those in other working statuses. This is likely due to the networking and relationship-building inherent in running a business. In contrast, those working in the private sector and NGOs/CSOs also display significant competencies but at different levels.

The primary challenges to social cohesion include fear and insecurity, communication barriers, and discrimination. These challenges are echoed in the competencies related to

obtaining community services and expressing ideas appropriately. The data suggest that addressing these challenges is crucial for enhancing social cohesion among Syrian migrants.

The significant association between working status and various aspects of social cohesion, such as relationship-building and cultural communication, highlights the role of employment and entrepreneurial activity in integrating Syrian migrants into Turkish society.

The strong performance of entrepreneurs in areas related to social cohesion suggests that fostering entrepreneurial opportunities could be a key strategy for enhancing community integration and reducing social barriers.

Overall, this analysis underscores the importance of entrepreneurial activity in supporting social cohesion among Syrian migrants in Türkiye. It highlights the need for continued support for entrepreneurs and targeted interventions to address the challenges faced by the community in achieving full integration and social cohesion.

Recommendations:

1. Implement Comprehensive Culture Focused Language Education Programs

Government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations should work together to establish comprehensive language education programs for refugees. Language proficiency facilitates effective communication and integration into society, enabling better access to services, education, and employment.

These programs should include Intensive Language Courses that are Tailored to different proficiency levels and available at various times to accommodate work and family schedules and focus on Cultural Orientation that Integrates language learning with cultural education to foster a deeper understanding of social norms and values for both communities.

This should be adopted by all levels, especially the municipality due to its proximity to both refugees and the host community in terms of services and daily interaction, providing constant and sustainable accessible language learning resources is essential.

Learning resources are widely accessible to all refugees and migrants. Access to resources such as online courses, mobile apps, and libraries with multilingual materials can help learners improve their language skills independently and at their own pace.

Offering language courses that focus on industry-specific terminology and communication skills can be another access gate, since it will link language with work/business opportunities and will drive and impose language learning.

The language barrier can extend to the second and third generation of refugees, learning and advancing language can develop a sense of belonging that is conveyed to children through the perception of family attitude, which was recognized through interaction between refugees and their children who can speak the Turkish language in a very good way and developed connections to the Turkish society while their family did not.

Promote community-based language learning initiatives to enhance social bonds between refugees and host community members. Community-based programs, such as language exchange groups and conversation clubs, provide informal and supportive environments for learning and practicing the language, thereby promoting social cohesion and mutual understanding.

Through the study, it was found that 66% of the sample having Turkish friends/co-workers and over the same percentage speak Turkish, therefore community events that bring the two communities together and remove the communication barrier will support the social cohesion in a very positive way.

This could be done through volunteer-led Language exchange programs, which encourage local volunteers to participate in language exchange activities with refugees associated with cultural and social Events where both refugees and host community members can interact and practice the language together.

2. Re-shaping public policies to be more inclusive, socioeconomic, and refugee-focused:

There should be agreement on conceptualization of social cohesion and policy objectives among policy makers, policy practitioners, and the public, it is also crucial to build these policies towards strengthening socio-interactional frames by focusing on the role of social interactions and understanding inter-group contacts at the community level, with practical measures with an impact on long-term policy and societal processes in forced migration contexts (Özçürümez et al., 2020).

Prior to recent years, Türkiye's policy for Syrian refugees was marked by openness and significant humanitarian aid; however, challenges from the political, social, and economic spheres have caused a shift in favor of more restrictive measures. Syrian refugee integration is still a complicated subject that calls for well-balanced policies that take into account the needs of the refugees as well as the worries of the host society.

The main underlying cause of unparallel integration polices on several levels and components, is the perception of temporary status, Syrian migrants are guests and will leave one day to their country, this idea is gendering the integration policies and practices (Danış & Dikmen, 2022).

Refugee crises are long-term events in nature, refugees are more likely to remain in their host countries, host countries should recognize that refugee crises are not temporary and plan integration policies accordingly, delays can lead to costly consequences. It took Türkiye and the EU over four years to realize that the Syrian refugee crisis was not temporary, resulting in delayed integration efforts, early action helps address refugees' needs more effectively and reduces disparities between refugees and hosting society (Tumen, 2023). Therefore, there is an immense need to revise and simplify legislative frameworks to rectify voids and irregularities in refugee protection and entitlements, establish governmental-led community engagement, cultural exchange events, and community participation programs to foster understanding and lessen prejudice, start initiatives to dispel unfavorable preconceptions and increase public knowledge of the benefits that refugees make to society.

Establishing long-term residency programs accessible to refugees, as opposed to temporary protection, is crucial. The Türkiye-EU Agreement in 2016 marked a pivotal moment, confirming the permanent presence of refugees in Türkiye and prompting the EU

to provide financial support to mitigate integration challenges. Türkiye, leveraging its advanced state capacity and migration experience, has made significant progress in areas like health and education for Syrian refugees, outpacing neighboring countries such as Jordan and Lebanon. However, due to high anti-refugee sentiment. The ongoing political and economic crisis in Türkiye has further strained its capacity for acceptance and integration. The integration process faces numerous and serious challenges, exacerbated by the EU's security-focused migration policies and Türkiye's use of refugees as political leverage (Danış & Dikmen, 2022).

In addition, adopting policies that support their integration into the labor market and encourage their entrepreneurial activities, Türkiye can further enhance these economic benefits, enhancing the labor integration of Syrian refugees and facilitating their entrepreneurial initiatives could yield even more significant economic benefits, proper management and promotion of these contributions could turn the presence of Syrian migrants into an economic advantage rather than a burden through medium- and long-term planning to maximize the positive economic impacts and mitigate potential social tensions (Mahia et al., 2019).

Promoting labor integration and small business startup can alleviate pressure on public services and institutions, reducing competition between migrants and host communities, developing integration policies overall and the labor integration is crucial necessity, it is estimate that by Syrian migrants will contribute 4% of Türkiye GDP in 2028 (Mahia et al., 2019).

3. Further Research:

To improve cohesion between asylum seekers and the local community, comprehensive social policies are needed, involving coordination among public, local, and non-governmental organizations, NGOs play a crucial role in reducing prejudice and fostering harmony, focus on highlighting commonalities between asylum seekers and the local community, fostering communication through funded events in shared neighborhoods. These activities should be designed to benefit participants and reduce negative emotions, with an

emphasis on creating understanding through personal interactions and shared experiences (Aygüler et al., 2020).

The integration process is dynamic and long-term, requiring collaboration from both parties. The integration process has never had a static structure. Immigrants must be provided with social, cultural, economic, and political opportunity to integrate. Employment is the foundation of the integration process and key to immigrants' inclusion in society. The two most important aspects of the integration process appear to be integration into the labor market and integration into the educational system (Çavlin, 2023).

Social Cohesion is a broad concept and includes variables that are interdependent, further research should be carried out to explore factors that are linked directly and strongly to social cohesion and avoid the limitations of this research, for example, education level was found to be affecting social cohesion in a different way than language and work type, therefore enabling unhindered access to all levels of education on both vocational and non-vocational way could have direct positive effect on social cohesion, even though Türkiye is enabling access to Education for refugees from the beginning, it should be accompanied by enhancing legal environment and remove bureaucratic obstacles that could be created to the education management system characteristics and regular changes in legal requirements, refugee referenceable governmental bodies.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX-1: Hasan Kalyoncu University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Board Decision (Hasan Kalyoncu Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu Kararı)

ANNEX-2: SCAS-R (Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale)

ANNEX-1: “The Impact of Syrian Migrant Entrepreneurs on Social Cohesion: The Case of Gaziantep” başlıklı bu araştırma, Hasan Kalyoncu Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu’nun 09.07.2024 tarihli toplantısında (Toplantı No: 2024-24) E-97105791-050.04-60862 sayılı kararıyla uygun bulunmuştur.

Appendice A. Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale **SCAS-R** in English

Living in a different culture often involves learning new skills and behaviours. Thinking about life in [*country*], please rate your competence at each the following behaviours (1 = Not at all competent; 5 = Extremely competent).

	Not at all Competent				Extremely Competent
1. Building and maintaining relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Managing my academic/work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Interacting at social events.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Maintaining my hobbies and interests.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Adapting to the noise level in my neighbourhood.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's gestures and facial expressions.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Working effectively with other students/work colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Obtaining community services I require.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Adapting to the population density.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Understanding and speaking [*host language*].	1	2	3	4	5
11. Varying the rate of my speaking in a culturally appropriate manner.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Gaining feedback from other students/work colleagues to help improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Attending or participating in community activities.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Finding my way around.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Interacting with members of the opposite sex.	1	2	3	4	5

17.	Expressing my ideas to other students/work colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Dealing with the bureaucracy.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Adapting to the pace of life.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Reading and writing [*host language*].	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Changing my behaviour to suit social norms, rules, attitudes, beliefs, and customs.	1	2	3	4	5

Source: (SCAS-R) Socio-cultural Adaptation Scale, that was created by Ward, C. and Kennedy, A. (1999). The measurement of sociocultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 23(4), 659-677, and revised by Wilson, J. (2013). *Exploring the past, present and future of cultural competency research: The revision and expansion of the sociocultural adaptation construct*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

Appendice B. Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale **SCAS-R** in Arabic

مقياس التكييف الاجتماعي والثقافي المنقح

غالباً ما يدفع البشر في عيشهم مع ثقافاتٍ مختلفة إلى تعلُّم مهاراتٍ وسلوكياتٍ جديدة. نحن في هذا الاستبيان نحرص أن نستمع إلى تقييم تجربتك الشخصية في التكيّف الاجتماعي في تركيا، عن حياتك في مدينتك التي تُقيم فيها.

يرجى تقييم كفاءتك وانسجامك في كل من السلوكيات الاجتماعية التالية بإعطاء علامة محددة، علماً بأن العلامات تصاعدية:

1= لا أستطيع على الاطلاق. **2**= بالكاد أستطيع. **3**= أستطيع.
4= أستطيع غالباً. **5**= أستطيع دائما وبقوة.

1	أستطيع بناء العلاقات الاجتماعية والحفاظ عليها.	1	2	3	4	5
2	أستطيع إدارة وتنظيم مهامي وترتيب أولوياتي العلمية او المهنية بشكل جيد.	1	2	3	4	5
3	أتفاعل في المناسبات الاجتماعية واندمج معها.	1	2	3	4	5
4	أستطيع الحفاظ على اهتماماتي وهواياتي وممارستها بشكل مستمر.	1	2	3	4	5
5	أستطيع التكيف مع مستوى الضوضاء في الحي.	1	2	3	4	5
6	أستطيع التفسير والرد على ايماءات الاخرين وتعابير وجوههم بدقة.	1	2	3	4	5
7	العمل بفعالية مع الطلاب الآخرين / زملاء العمل.	1	2	3	4	5

8	أستطيع الحصول على الخدمات الاجتماعية التي أطلبها.	1	2	3	4	5
9	أستطيع التكيف مع الكثافة السكانية.	1	2	3	4	5
10	أستطيع فهم وتحدث اللغة التركية.	1	2	3	4	5
11	أستطيع التحكم بنبرة حديثي بطريقة مناسبة ثقافياً.	1	2	3	4	5
12	استمع الى اراء وتعليقات الطلاب الآخرين / زملاء العمل للمساعدة في تطوير أدائي.	1	2	3	4	5
13	أستطيع تفسير مشاعر الاخرين بدقة واتفاعل معهم بناءً على تلك المشاعر.	1	2	3	4	5
14	احضر واشارك في أنشطة المجتمع.	1	2	3	4	5
15	أستطيع إيجاد الأماكن التي احتاجها في المدينة التي اقطن بها.	1	2	3	4	5
16	أستطيع التفاعل مع افراد الجنس الآخر.	1	2	3	4	5
17	أستطيع التعبير عن أفكاري للطلاب الآخرين / زملاء العمل بطريقة مناسبة ثقافياً.	1	2	3	4	5
18	التعامل مع العمليات البيروقراطية	1	2	3	4	5
19	أستطيع التكيف مع وتيرة الحياة وتغيراتها.	1	2	3	4	5
20	أستطيع القراءة والكتابة باللغة التركية.	1	2	3	4	5
21	أستطيع تغيير سلوكي ليتناسب مع القواعد الاجتماعية، والمواقف، والمعتقدات، والعادات المحلية.	1	2	3	4	5

RESUME

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PROFESSION
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Arabic (Mother tongue), English (Fluent), Turkish (Fair).