

T.C.
İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ANABİLİM DALI

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENCES OF
SYRIAN IMMIGRANTS IN TURKEY:
THE CASE OF BAŞAKŞEHİR

ZEYNEP RANA KAVAKDAN

2504200063

TEZ DANIŞMANI

PROF. DR. NURCAN ÖZGÜR BAKLACIOĞLU

İSTANBUL – 2023

ABSTRACT

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENCES OF SYRIAN IMMIGRANTS IN TURKEY: THE CASE OF BAŞAKŞEHİR

ZEYNEP RANA KAVAKDAN

The Syrian migrants who arrived in Turkey as a result of the internal conflict in Syria have become integrated into the social structure and labor market. While the majority of Syrian migrants in the labor market work as employees, some of them are self-employed as entrepreneurs. This thesis seeks to answer the question of how the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants in Başakşehir are shaped. Along with this question, the study aims to uncover the challenges faced by Syrian entrepreneurs, the impact of surrounding factors, the role of capital types in starting businesses and overcoming difficulties, and the advantages and disadvantages of Başakşehir.

A qualitative research method is adopted in this study. Within this scope, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs in Başakşehir. The theoretical background combines the approaches of mixed embeddedness and forms of capital, shedding light on the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrants. This theoretical framework provides valuable insights into understanding the macro and micro structures that shape immigrant entrepreneurship. The findings reveal that the forms of capital and the opportunity structure play a significant role in Syrian migrants' entrepreneurship, the opportunity structure determines the mobilization of capital types and surrounding factors vary as well as capital types. The different legal statuses of Syrian migrants residing in Turkey shape the challenges they encounter, the opportunity structure, and their entrepreneurial experiences.

The problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs have been categorized and examined as legal, economic, and socio-cultural problems. Their economic, cultural, and social capital are influential in overcoming the challenges, and the capital types

interact with each other. While economic capital helps mitigate financial issues, cultural capital, such as entrepreneurial experience, professional competence, and language proficiency, and social capital shaped by close relatives and friends, are utilized by entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it has been concluded that Başakşehir district offers advantages for Syrian migrant entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Syrian immigrants, immigrant entrepreneurship, migration, forms of capital, opportunity structure, Başakşehir



ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DEKİ SURIYELİ GÖÇMENLERİN GİRİŞİMCİLİK DENEYİMLERİ: BAŞAKŞEHİR ÖRNEĞİ

ZEYNEP RANA KAVAKDAN

Suriye’de başlayan iç savaşla beraber Türkiye’ye gelen Suriyeli göçmenler toplumsal yapıya ve emek piyasasına dahil olmuşlardır. Emek piyasasındaki Suriyeli göçmenlerin çoğunluğu ücretli olarak çalışırken bir kısmı da girişimci olarak kendi kendini istihdam etmektedir. Bu tez Başakşehir örneğinde Suriyeli göçmenlerin girişimcilik tecrübeleri nasıl olduğu sorusuna cevap aramaktadır. Bu sorunun beraberinde Suriyeli girişimcilerin ne tür zorluklarla karşılaştıkları, çevreleyen faktörlerin etkisi, sermaye türlerinin işletme açmada ve zorlukları aşmada nasıl bir rol oynadığı ve Başakşehir’in avantaj ve dezavantajlarının ne olduğu ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır.

Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi benimsenmiştir. Bu kapsamda Başakşehir’de işletme sahibi Suriyeli göçmenlerle yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Teorik arka planda karma gömülmürlük ve sermaye türleri yaklaşımları bir araya getirilerek Suriyeli göçmenlerin girişimcilik tecrübeleri mercek altına alınmıştır. Bu teorik çerçeve, göçmen girişimciliğini şekillendiren makro ve mikro yapıların anlaşılmasına yönelik değerli bilgiler sağlamıştır. Elde edilen bulgular Suriyeli göçmenleri girişimci olmalarında sahip oldukları sermaye türleri ve fırsat yapısının etkili olduğunu, fırsat yapısının sermaye türlerinin mobilizasyonunu belirlediğini ve Suriyeli göçmenlerin sahip olduğu sermaye çeşitleri gibi çevreleyen faktörlerin de değişkenlik gösterdiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Suriyeli göçmenlerin farklı hukuki statülerde Türkiye’de ikamet etmeleri karşılaştıkları sorunları, fırsat yapısını ve girişimcilik deneyimlerini şekillendirmektedir.

Suriyeli göçmen girişimcilerin karşılaştığı sorunlar yasal, ekonomik ve sosyokültürel sorunlar olarak kategorileştirilerek incelenmiştir. Sahip oldukları ekonomik, kültürel ve sosyal sermaye Suriye göçmenlerin zorluklarla baş etmesinde etkilidir ve sermaye

türleri kendi içinde etkileşim halindedir. Ekonomik sermaye maddi sorunlara ortadan kaldırırken, girişimcilik tecrübesi, mesleki yetkinlik ve dil bilgisi gibi kültürel sermaye ve yakın akraba ve arkadaşların şekillendirdiği sosyal sermaye girişimciler tarafından kullanılmaktadır. Bunun yanında, Başakşehir ilçesinin Suriyeli göçmen girişimciler için avantajlarının ön planda olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suriyeli göçmenler, göçmen girişimciliği, göç, sermaye türleri, fırsat yapısı, Başakşehir



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since my high school years, migration and immigrants have become a part of my life. Witnessing the resilience and determination of individuals navigating the challenges of migration has been the driving force behind my passion for this field of study. It was a great opportunity to meet my advisor, Prof. Dr. Nurcan Özgür Baklacioğlu, during my graduate journey with this intention. First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor for being inspiring in this field, for listening to my ideas, and for always providing guidance.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all Syrian business owners who participated in this study. Their willingness to contribute their insights and experiences has been instrumental in shedding light on the multifaceted aspects of their entrepreneurial journeys. I learned something different from every person I met, and I hope this study contributes to sharing their stories.

I would like to thank my interpreter friends, Fatma Issa and Ayşe Rana Demirci, who did not leave me alone during the fieldwork. Their efforts and enthusiasm for this study were a source of motivation for me. Without their efforts, this research endeavor would have been significantly more challenging.

During this thesis work, there are many people who supported me, and although I cannot mention all of their names, I express my gratitude to all of them. To my mother, Asiye Kavakdan, my father, Murat Kavakdan, and my siblings Abdullah and Süeda, who have always been by my side with their love, material and moral support, I am grateful that they exist.

Lastly, I dedicate this thesis to the refugees whose struggles I support and my beloved grandmother, Tenzile Meryem Sancak.

Zeynep Rana KAVAKDAN

ISTANBUL - 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
ABSTRACT	ii
ÖZ.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF MAPS	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	
1.1. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH.....	4
1.2. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
1.2.1. Immigrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship.....	6
1.2.1. Syrian Entrepreneurs in Turkey	18
1.3. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	26
1.3.1. International Migration.....	26
1.3.2. Definitions	30
1.3.4. Theoretical framework	33
1.3.4.1. Migration Theories	33
1.3.4.2. Approaches to Migrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship	38
1.3.4.3. Theoretical Approach of the Research.....	44
1.4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY.....	48

1.4.1. Geographical Scope: Başakşehir.....	48
1.4.2. Methodology	50
CHAPTER II: PAVING THE WAY TO SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TURKEY	
2.1. MACRO STRUCTURE OF SYRIAN IMMIGRANTS.....	57
2.1.1. Syrians in Turkey	57
2.1.2. Legal Status	63
2.1.3. Participation in the Labor Market	65
2.2. MIGRATION TO TURKEY	72
2.3. TRANSITION TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND STARTING A BUSINESS.....	74
CHAPTER III: SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENCES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM BAŞAKŞEHİR	
3.1. SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BAŞAKŞEHİR	78
3.1.1. The Reasons for Choosing Başakşehir	78
3.1.2. Characteristics of Syrian Immigrant Enterprises	80
3.1.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Doing Business in Başakşehir	85
3.2. CHALLENGES FACED BY SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURS.....	87
3.2.1. Legal Challenges and Procedures	87
3.2.2. Economic Challenges	96
3.2.3. Socio-cultural Challenges.....	100
3.3. AN AMBIGUOUS FUTURE IN THE FACE OF REALITIES	109
CONCLUSION	112
REFERENCES	119
APPENDICES.....	135

LIST OF TABLES

	<i><u>Page</u></i>
Table 1.1.: Demographic Information of Participants.....	52
Table 3.1.: Business Partners and Employee Characteristics.....	83



LIST OF FIGURES

	<i>Page</i>
Figure 1.1.: Theoretical Framework.....	48
Figure 1.2.: Syrians Under Temporary Protection by Years.....	60
Figure 1.3.: Syrians Residing in Turkey.....	61
Figure 1.4.: Syrians Under Temporary Protection.....	62



LIST OF MAPS

Map 1.1.: Location of Başakşehir.....	50
--	----



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DGMM:	Directorate General of Migration Management
EU:	European Union
INGEV:	Human Development Foundation
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
İTO:	Istanbul Chamber of Commerce
TEPAV:	The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey
TOBB:	The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
UK:	United Kingdom
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USA:	United States of America
YUKK:	The Law on Foreigners and International Protection

INTRODUCTION

Syrian migrants have become a component of the Turkish economy and society by participating in the labor market and establishing their own businesses. This thesis aims to examine the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrants, focusing on the case of Başakşehir. Within this framework, it aims to explore the challenges faced by Syrian entrepreneurs in the process of starting and sustaining their businesses, the impact of the opportunity structure, the role of their economic, social, and cultural capital, and the advantages and disadvantages of the Başakşehir subprovince. This section will serve as an introduction to the study by providing background information, research questions, the significance and limitations of the research, and finally, an overview of the thesis structure.

Border-crossing movements have gained global significance in the post-Cold War era, with international migration being a prominent aspect of globalization. Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a variety of factors in the international context, leading to social, economic, and political consequences (Miller & Castles, 2008, p. 5). Wars, conflicts, revolutions, economic fluctuations, natural disasters, climate crises, and technological advancements are among the drivers of migration. As a result, migration has a long-standing historical significance. Its impacts extend beyond the migrants themselves, affecting the economies, politics, and societies of the destination countries. Migrants, who make the decision to leave their home countries and take on the risks associated with migration, contribute to society as dynamic and enterprising individuals (Koser, 2007, pp. 4-10). The economic participation of immigrants in the host society is a significant development for the process of integration. Migrants contribute to the labor market of their destination countries as both employees and business owners. Self-employment and entrepreneurship are exciting prospects and offer hope for individuals who may be disadvantaged in the labor market (Fong et al., 2007, p. 129).

The civil war that began in Syria in 2011 led to a large number of people joining the migration wave. As a result of the escalating conflicts and deteriorating security situation, 6.7 million people were displaced within the country, while 6.6 million

sought refuge in neighboring countries. Turkey hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees, followed by Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Germany (UNHCR, 2022; Statista, 2021). According to the latest data, 3,373,967 Syrian reside in Turkey under temporary protection. Additionally, 223,881 Syrian immigrants have acquired Turkish citizenship, and 92,825 individuals reside in Turkey with residence permits (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023b; Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2022). For the forcibly displaced Syrians arriving in Turkey, temporary accommodation centers were initially established. These centers were designed as temporary living spaces, but the prolonged nature of the displacement led individuals to gravitate towards cities with greater job and livelihood opportunities. Today, 1.68% of the general population continues to reside in temporary accommodation centers, while the majority of the population sustains their lives in varying densities across different cities throughout Turkey. The top five cities with the highest population density are Istanbul (15.71%), Gaziantep (13.13%), Şanlıurfa (10.04%), Hatay (9.45%) and Adana (7.19%) (Presidency General of Migration Management, 2023b). The integration of the majority of Syrian migrants residing in the city into the labor market and social life becomes inevitable.

After the outbreak of the civil war in 2011, Syrian immigrants who came to Turkey have gradually integrated into the labor market along with their transition from camps to cities. This study aims to demonstrate the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrants in Turkey. The position of Syrian migrants in the Turkish labor market has been predominantly discussed in the literature within the context of migrant labor and the informal sector (Lordoğlu, 2015; Tumen, 2016; İçduygu & Diker, 2017). However, there have been limited studies focusing specifically on Syrian entrepreneurs (Kachkar, 2018; Karan, 2019; Özipek & Tanrikulu, 2022). Due to the scarcity of studies on Syrian entrepreneurs in the literature and the unexplored case of Başakşehir in Istanbul, this study will contribute to the existing literature. Within the theoretical framework, a combination of the approaches of mixed embeddedness and forms of capital, with reference to the work of Atasü-Topçuoğlu (2019), has been utilized to examine migrant entrepreneurship. This theoretical framework takes a distinct position in the existing literature. By adopting this integrated approach, the study provides a

comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, offering a perspective on the complex dynamics and factors influencing immigrant entrepreneurial experiences. Furthermore, the subprovince of Başakşehir deserves special attention due to its high population of migrants and the significant number of businesses established by immigrant entrepreneurs. The field research was conducted in the neighborhoods of Başakşehir and Kayabaşı, where similar socio-economic factors are present. The other regions of Başakşehir were not included in the scope of this study. As an exploratory study, this research does not test any specific hypotheses and does not aim to reach generalizable results.

The main question of this thesis is: How are the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants in the Başakşehir subprovince? In this context, it seeks answers to the following sub-questions:

- What are the difficulties encountered by Syrian entrepreneurs?
- What is the role of surrounding factors and capital types in starting a business and overcoming challenges?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a Syrian entrepreneur in Başakşehir?

This study consists of three main sections. The introduction section will provide an introduction to this thesis. The first section will focus on the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological framework. After presenting the purpose of the research and relevant literature, the conceptual framework will examine international migration and the definitions to be used. The theoretical framework will address migration theories, approaches to immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship, and the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Following an exploration on the scope and methodology of the study, the second and third sections will discuss the research findings. Finally, the conclusion section will present an overall evaluation of the research.

CHAPTER I: CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The civil war that started in Syria in 2011 caused 13 million people to migrate inside and outside the country. Its neighbouring country Turkey has accepted the incoming refugees. The Syrian refugees, who first settled in camps in the border regions, soon dispersed to the cities and turned into “urban refugees” (Erdoğan, 2017). In order to sustain their livelihoods, Syrians have become part of the labor market. While the majority of Syrian immigrants in the labor market are working in paid jobs, some of them have established their own businesses. The highest number of foreign companies in Turkey belong to Syrians (Ministry of Industry and Technology, 2020). The sustainability of these companies is important in terms of increasing both the social and economic cohesion of Syrians who have been living in Turkey for over a decade. Finding solutions to the challenges faced by Syrian business owners will facilitate the transformation of these businesses into long-term and future-oriented investments. These enterprises, which provide employment opportunities for themselves, members of their ethnic group, and the host community, have a positive impact on the economy. Moreover, the potential contribution of export-oriented companies for the Turkish economy should not be overlooked.

This research provides a perspective on Syrian immigrants who own businesses in Turkey through field research. In this framework, the study aims to reveal the challenges faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs, the surrounding factors, the role of opportunity structure and capital types in the process of becoming an entrepreneur, and the impact of the Başakşehir district. It provides micro-level insights into Syrian migrant entrepreneurs. Accordingly, the study aims to contribute to the generation of policies that address the problems encountered by Syrian migrants in the Turkish economy, promote the sustainability of their businesses, and serve as a source of information for the formulation of such policies. Additionally, this paper serves as an

example for similar micro-level studies in this field and aims to provide a resource for more comprehensive macro-level research as well.

The perspective that perceives migrants as constantly depleting Turkey's resources, taking away job opportunities from the host society, and being the source of economic problems contributes to the increase in hate speech and marginalization. This perception causes psychological and physical actions that are difficult to compensate. The research presented in this study specifically aims to present an argument against the negative perception of Syrian migrants that is currently prevalent in the media and politics. Through fieldwork, the study will demonstrate how Syrian entrepreneurs sustain their own lives and contribute to society by providing services in different fields, ranging from the service sector to education and technology. The objective of this study is to provide a different perspective on this negative perception by drawing from the experiences of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs.

Despite the increasing discourse by policymakers regarding the refoulement, the reality is that a social order with more than a decade of coexistence has been established. "Syrian migrants" are not a distant imagination; rather, they are people who are our neighbors, friends, relatives, or business owners whose services we avail. Considering the possibility of Syrian migrants, who predominantly live under temporary protection status, becoming permanent residents in Turkey, it is necessary to develop long-term policies. Policies that lack long-term vision and integration goals hinder the formation of a sense of belonging for individuals who have established lives in Turkey. When formulating policies for Syrian migrants, who are present in various aspects of social life and the labor market, intra-group differences should be taken into account. Within this framework, this study sheds light on the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrants and provides a glimpse into a small segment of the social structure. The next section will provide an overview of the literature on immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship and Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey.

1.2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1. Immigrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship

The economic participation of immigrants is an essential development for the integration process. Immigrants participate in the labor market of the countries they migrate to as both employees and business owners. The entrepreneurial activity of immigrants by establishing businesses has given birth to the concept of immigrant entrepreneurship. Self-employment and entrepreneurship are exciting prospects for people who are somehow disadvantaged in the labor market and offer hope for the future (Fong et al., 2007, p. 129). Immigrant entrepreneurship occurs when an immigrant starts a business in a new country to sustain their livelihood. Sinkovics and Reuber define immigrant entrepreneurship as the entrepreneurial activity of foreign-born individuals in a place other than their country of birth (Sinkovics & Reuber, 2021, p. 1). The term "immigrant entrepreneurs" does not refer to a single meaning. Using the term "immigrant entrepreneurship" in a homogeneous manner leads to incorrect assumptions. In the literature, immigrant entrepreneurship is divided into subcategories such as ethnic entrepreneurship, minority entrepreneurship, and refugee entrepreneurship (Sahin et al., 2014, p. 3). However, this study favors immigrant entrepreneurship as an umbrella concept, since it includes not only traditional elements belonging to a certain group, but also businesses that provide mainstream services (Rath & Schutjens, 2016, p. 97). Although the immigrant status of business owners covered by immigrant entrepreneurship have common denominators, their motivations, goals and ways of sustaining their ventures differ based on various factors such as social class, education level, culture, experience, age or gender.

Entrepreneurs generally exhibit common characteristics. They are dynamic, self-confident, innovative, managerial, risk-taking, and possess leadership qualities. While these characteristics are not exclusive to entrepreneurs, individuals with these qualities tend to be more inclined towards entrepreneurship (Chye Koh, 1996, p. 13). Immigrant entrepreneurship has been a separate title in the literature stems from their distinctive features from native entrepreneurs. The distinction comes primarily from the business management strategy, employees and customers. Some studies evaluate immigrant

businesses as relatively closed entities that operate within a less open community due to inadequate knowledge of the host country's language, culture, and preferences (Sahin et al., 2014, p. 4). On the other hand, other studies consider immigrant businesses as those that establish new networks between the country of origin and the host country, seize the opportunities and easily participate in the global economy through transnational networks (Vinogradov & Jørgensen, 2016, pp. 213-214). Various studies trying to explain immigrant entrepreneurship with structural, cultural and individual factors (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018). Immigrant entrepreneurship should be considered in an economic, cultural, political, spatial and temporal multidimensional framework.

Entrepreneurship is a way for immigrants to become self-sufficient. Factors such as unemployment, exclusion in the domestic market, and working under insecure and low-wage conditions drive immigrants to start their own businesses (Basu & Altinay, 2002, p. 372; Sahin et al., 2014, p. 3). Compared to native individuals in the host society, immigrants tend to take greater risks. It is not surprising that individuals who have taken the significant risk of leaving their own countries exhibit a higher propensity for risk-taking, which is a requirement for entrepreneurship (Sahin et al., 2014, p. 3; Bizri, 2017, pp. 3-4; Meister & Mauer, 2018, p. 1068). Psychological factors such as the desire for independence and taking control of one's own life stands out in the entrepreneurship of immigrants (Basu & Altinay, 2002, p. 388). These businesses are predominantly small and medium-sized enterprises. Although they initially offer services to their ethnic group, they can expand their customer base over time (Masurel et al., 2002, p. 240). Not every migrant business owner has the same motivation, success and consequences. Various studies have been conducted to explain these differences among immigrant groups, some of which focus on demographic factors such as education, access to resources, gender, and age (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018), while others explore these differences through cultural tendencies (Basu & Altinay, 2002).

Entrepreneurs need resources to realize an economic and social idea. Access to resources directly determines the success of the entrepreneur and their ability to overcome challenges. Immigrants utilize different types of capital in their

entrepreneurship, namely social capital, cultural/human capital, and economic capital (Kayalar & Yıldız, 2017, pp. 56-58). The social capital created by ethnic networks enhances the capacity of immigrant entrepreneurs (Light & Rosenstein, 1995, p. 166). Social capital plays a substantial role in reducing the impact of competition in the service sector. Informal support of family members and employment of co-ethnic workers are among the ways which immigrant entrepreneurs leverage their social networks. Ethnic entrepreneurs possess flexible, effective, and versatile social networks that enable them to access both capital and find employees. Information exchange takes place informally within the ethnic group. Even if the use of social networks has a positive effect on creating flexible working conditions, it does not create a positive effect on business value. The utilization of social capital varies based on social class, education, and work experience (Masurel et al., 2002, p. 243; Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, p. 5).

In terms of cultural capital, immigrant entrepreneurs possess different education levels and the capacity to evaluate resources. Structural factors influence their preferences, such as non-recognition of educational equivalence or professional qualifications in the host country, language barrier and differences in social positions. However, the strategic use of cultural capital, like creating a niche industry and acquiring new skills, demonstrates how immigrant entrepreneurs are perpetrators of tackling challenges and seizing opportunities. Access to economic capital is the result of the intersection of structural, social position-related, and entrepreneurial agency. When banks deny loans to immigrants, they rely on their social networks to obtain the necessary financial resources. However, access to economic resources differs according to the social class of the entrepreneur (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, pp. 5-6).

Immigrant entrepreneurship has the potential to benefit both the host country and the source country. Immigrant entrepreneurs can stabilize the country's labor market by assisting new immigrants in their integration, reducing unemployment by creating job opportunities for immigrants, and providing solutions to social problems. Hence, they make a socio-economic contribution to the host country. Immigrant entrepreneurship has been a counterbalance to the structural employment problem in many industrial states. Through their transnational connections, their businesses can gain easier access

to the international market. Furthermore, entrepreneurship fosters the production of knowledge, cultural diversity, and enhances welfare (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009, p. 377; Nişancı, 2015, pp. 2-4; Sinkovics & Reuber, 2021, pp. 1-2). Since immigrants are included in both cultures, they have the potential to do business such as tourism and trade between their source country and the host country. Immigrant entrepreneurs can create new market trends with their specific cultural products (food, clothing, music, etc.). One of their most significant contributions is providing employment opportunities for the younger members of the immigrant community and alleviating unemployment. In this context, they can stimulate the market. The most significant problem related to immigrant businesses arises from their informal nature, particularly in the initial stages. This situation marginalizes employees and makes immigrant businesses targets of discrimination within society. Therefore, formalizing these businesses and providing the necessary permits is essential for them to reach their full potential and ensure their sustainability (Masurel et al., 2002, pp. 240-241).

Studies on the migrant's participation in the economy primarily focuses on the challenges faced by migrant workers, their impact on the host country and the benefits they obtained. However, there is relatively less research on immigrant entrepreneurship (Sinkovics & Reuber, 2021, p. 2). Immigrant entrepreneurship literature has emerged in the USA in the 1970s (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009, p. 378), and studies on this subject has expanded with the rise of international migration. Research topics in immigrant entrepreneurship include the reasons, driving forces, motivational factors, success levels, structural and individual factors, the influence of culture, characteristics of successful ventures, and the social and economic outcomes of immigrant entrepreneurship.

Wilson and Portes' study on how accepting the immigrants are in the local market challenges the assumption of classical assimilation theories, which suggest that immigrants will gradually ascend from the bottom and integrate into the host society. Instead, they argue that immigrant entrepreneurs are in a secondary position at the edge of the labor market and closed economies are formed within their immigrant society, called enclave economy (Wilson & Portes, 1980). Aldrich and Waldinger evaluate ethnic businesses in terms of access to opportunities, group characteristics, and

emerging strategies (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990). Basu covers the reasons for entrepreneurship, support mechanisms and business success of Asian small businesses in the UK. The study concludes that different ethnic groups have different motivating factors for becoming entrepreneurs, with Indians having fewer reasons to start businesses compared to Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Basu, 1998, p. 323). In a more comprehensive study, Basu and Altinay examine the relevance of culture and immigrant entrepreneurship through ethnic minorities (Indian, East African Asian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Turkish and Turkish Cypriot) in London. According to their findings, the motivations, financial support, and family influence in the establishment of different ethnic businesses differ, with some ethnic groups showing a stronger interaction between culture and entrepreneurship compared to others (Basu & Altinay, 2002, p. 371).

Masurel et al. examine the motivation and success performance of immigrant entrepreneurs by focusing on three ethnic groups in Amsterdam. Accordingly, the conditions for success vary between ethnic groups and the success of the business is directly related to the informal networks owned by the entrepreneurs (Masurel et al., 2002). In their study, Andersson and Wadensjö deal with the entrepreneurship of immigrants in Denmark and Switzerland as a means of self-employment against unemployment. They analyzed the representation of immigrant entrepreneurs, the characteristics and earnings of entrepreneurial immigrants, comparing immigrants with native populations in the two countries. According to their results, immigrant entrepreneurs are more represented in their numbers and influence, they earn less income compared to wage workers, particularly in Switzerland, highlighting their entrepreneurial endeavors as a response to employment challenges (Andersson & Wadensjö, 2004). Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp (2009) conducted a study on the characteristics of immigrant entrepreneurs in Europe, revealing that the characteristics and driving forces for entrepreneurship differ between Northern and Southern Europe. They attributed this variation to differences in migration experiences, geographical characteristics, restrictive policies, and labor markets (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009). Nişancı (2015) explains the entrepreneurial activities of Turks in Pittsburgh with motivation theories. Eraydin and colleagues compared the cities of Izmir and

Antwerp and examined the impact of different types of diversity on the economic performance of ventures. They found that the success of immigrant entrepreneurs is not only related to their skills and abilities but also to the social capital they possess, which enables them to integrate into the economy without relying heavily on formal structures (Eraydin et al., 2010). Although the theories and approaches developed to explain migrant entrepreneurship are generally suitable for explaining refugee entrepreneurship, refugee entrepreneurship necessitates a more specific study due to the different reasons for migration, their status in the country and the pre-migration preparation process.

Since refugee entrepreneurs are in a different and disadvantaged position compared to other immigrants due to their reason for migration, modes of movement, and the lack of preparedness, and being forced to migrate, special attention is required to understand their characteristics (Desai et al., 2020, p. 934; Sinkovics & Reuber, 2021, p. 3). In comparison with immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship, “refugee entrepreneurship” is a relatively recent phenomenon (Gold, 1988; Gold & College, 1992; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008; Fong et al., 2007; Bizri, 2017). Historically, refugee entrepreneurship has been studied within the framework of immigrant entrepreneurship, with little emphasis on distinguishing between immigrants and refugees (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008; Bizri, 2017). Additionally, refugee entrepreneurship has received less attention within topics that examine the economic behavior of refugees, in contrast to issues such as refugee workers and their impact on host society (Desai et al., 2020, p. 934). Research in this field has shown a significant increase since 2014, corresponding to the rise in refugee mobility, with approximately half of the studies published after 2010 (Heilbrunn, & Iannone, 2020, p. 5). Current studies in this area emphasize that the distinction between refugees and immigrants is important to understand the antecedents, conditions and consequences of entrepreneurship. They enhance existing knowledge and insight, showing that refugee entrepreneurship is not a heroic feat (Heilbrunn, & Iannone, 2020, p. 2).

Although the Syrian immigrants, the focus of this study, are not legally in refugee status in Turkey, they are under the heading of refugee entrepreneurship considering the reasons and conditions of migration of the majority of them. There are studies in

the literature that deal with Syrian entrepreneurs under refugee entrepreneurship (Bizri, 2017; Refai et al., 2018; Zamanti-Nayır, 2019; Karan, 2019, 2020; Almohammad et al., 2021). However, field observations have indicated that not every Syrian business owner in Turkey directly came from Syria or resides under temporary protection status. Therefore, this study does not confine Syrian entrepreneurs under the definition of refugee entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, since the majority of Syrians residing in Turkey are under temporary protection, it would be a deficiency for this study not to touch upon the literature on refugee entrepreneurs.

Studies in the field of refugee entrepreneurship focus on the characteristics of refugee entrepreneurship (Gold, 1988; Fong et al., 2007; Lyon et al., 2007; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008), the differences between refugee and immigrant entrepreneurship (Gold, 1988; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008), the problems faced by refugee entrepreneurs (Gold, 1988; Fong et al., 2007; Lyon et al., 2007; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008; Bizri, 2017), the entrepreneurial intentions of refugees and training programs targeting refugees (Gold, 1988; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008), host country policies (Lyon et al., 2007; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008) and the effects of refugee entrepreneurship (Gold, 1988; Lyon et al., 2007; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008; Heilbrunn, & Iannone, 2020, pp. 17-18).

Although there are common characteristics underlying entrepreneurship and migration, refugee entrepreneurs have different characteristics and motivations that set them apart from other immigrants (Gold & College, 1992; Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, 2008; Bizri, 2017). According to the literature on refugee entrepreneurs, unlike other immigrant entrepreneurs, refugees have limited access to economic, cultural, human and social capital due to the unplanned migration and they lack the financial savings to start a venture (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, p. 515; Lyon et al., 2007, p. 364). Most refugees are unable to access credit from banks, and some are even unable to open a personal bank account (Lyon et al., 2007, p. 369). Refugees face various difficulties in adapting to the society in terms of living and working (Lyon et al., 2007, p. 363). Finding decent work in the labor market is more difficult than for them compared to other immigrants (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008, p. 895). Country-specific legal regulations and structural discriminations make it harder participating in the labor

market (Heilbrunn & Iannone, 2019, p. 3). Due to forced migration, they lack pre-migration preparations, limited knowledge about the language, culture, and institutional structure of the host country (Gold, 1988, p. 412). The language barrier is one of the leading problems (Lyon et al., 2007, p. 370). They have problems accessing other opportunities and social relations due to not knowing the language. Compared to immigrants, their social networks in the host country are more limited (Gold, 1988, p. 412). Refugees are more likely to have psychological trauma due to the reasons for migration, which also affects their economic behavior. Their ties with the country of origin are limited or nonexistent (Gold, 1988, p. 413), and they generally do not return (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008, p. 897). It is more likely that they arrived without documents such as proof of qualifications, diplomas, and licenses (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008, p. 898). Since they come from different cultures, lack of familiarity with the institutional structure of the host country creates a disadvantage (Lyon et al., 2007, p. 364). They are vulnerable to discrimination in the host country, and their legal protections are dependent on their refugee status. However, refugees, unlike other immigrants, can benefit from various services in the host country that facilitate the integration process, such as free language courses (Gold, 1988, p. 413).

According to a study based on data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, refugees are more inclined to become entrepreneurs than locals. The same study infers that refugees are more inclined to be entrepreneurs among other immigrants (Heilbrunn, & Iannone, 2020, p. 3). The basic personal motivation for owning a business is the desire to improve their living standards, to be independent and to be included in the new society. Lack of mobility in the labor market is a driving force for being an entrepreneur. Access to capital (economic, social and cultural) facilitates entrepreneurial activities (Heilbrunn & Iannone, 2019, p. 7). The state of the market and the opportunity structure can affect individuals' self-employment. Owning a business may appear advantageous in an environment where members of the same or similar culture reside, as it fosters the formation of social capital (Fong et al., 2007, pp. 129-130). According to Gold, refugees prefer to own small businesses in order to work more flexibly and independently, limit their relations with foreign cultures, create job opportunities for their immediate circle, and benefit from relations and

opportunities within the refugee community (Gold, 1988, p. 434). Owning a business provides an alternative to low-paying and insecure jobs. Some studies have found that refugees in paid employment earn more than those who are self-employed. However, there is general acceptance that self-employment by refugees is an opportunity. Refugee entrepreneurship facilitates social cohesion processes and stimulates overall entrepreneurship in the host country (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008, p. 896). While refugee entrepreneurship provides profit and social cohesion at the micro level, it contributes to the development of local refugee communities at the meso-level, so that, it influences at the macro level. Therefore, supporting the increase and maintenance of refugee entrepreneurship has a positive impact on the national economy (Heilbrunn & Iannone, 2019, p. 7).

Although refugee entrepreneurship promises to be a bridge that will increase economic participation, income level and integration into the host society, there is a risk of pushing refugees to the margins of the labor market, only within their ethnic group and informal precarious working environments (Desai et al., 2020, p. 936). Since refugee entrepreneurs do not migrate with an economic aim, the opened business may not have a stable career goal (Meister & Mauer, 2018, p. 1070). Unlike opportunity-based initiatives, since necessity-based initiatives are not likely to contribute to the economic growth of society, the expected benefits of refugee entrepreneurship cannot be realized (Bizri, 2017, p. 4). The uncertainty created by the refugee status can impede business growth (Lyon et al., 2007, p. 370). When considering refugee entrepreneurs as a distinct group among migrant entrepreneurs, it should be noted that refugee entrepreneurs are not a homogeneous group within themselves, and there are differences in terms of characteristics such as education level, age, gender and previous experience (Desai et al., 2020, p. 937). Refugee entrepreneurs rarely return to their country of origin, so host countries need to develop sustainable policies for refugee entrepreneurship (Bizri, 2017, p. 4).

Gold and College examine the dimensions of job success among Soviet Jewish and Vietnamese refugees in the United States compared to other immigrant and ethnic groups, focusing on the impact of self-employment on the economic integration of refugees in the USA. Using the ethnic economic enclave model, their study reveals

that refugee business owners have certain similarities with other immigrant entrepreneurs but also significant differences that cannot be overlooked. Refugees are provided with economic, organizational, and support opportunities that are not available to native-born individuals or other immigrant groups, which is crucial considering their mode of entry into the country. Their social networks are smaller compared to other immigrant groups. Due to their forced migration, they lack economic and cultural capital. These factors incentivize refugees to engage in small business ventures, but despite notable economic and social advancements, refugee enterprises generally remain small-scale (Gold & College, 1992).

Wauters and Lambrecht's study on refugee entrepreneurship in Belgium suggests that refugees and economic migrants have different motivations for engaging in entrepreneurship. Refugees face several factors resulting from the fundamental difference in leaving their home countries, such as limited social networks, the absence of opportunities for return or network formation, experiencing more adverse events affecting their psychological well-being, unprepared arrival in a new country, inability to bring their economic and cultural capital, and lower prospects of finding suitable employment in the host country. This study highlights that the desire for faster integration into the host society is a fundamental motivation behind refugee entrepreneurship. According to the findings, when demographic characteristics are taken into account, male refugees with previous business ownership and a family history of business ownership are more likely to be entrepreneurs. Another finding from the study suggests that refugee entrepreneurs earn less compared to native-born entrepreneurs (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006).

Fong et al. conducted interviews with refugee entrepreneurs, service providers, consultants and community organizations in different states of the USA to reveal the successes and challenges faced by refugee entrepreneurship. Micro-level findings on an individual basis indicate that the success of a refugee's initiative depends on personal characteristics, family-society relationship, previous experience, having a clear purpose, language and communication skills, and possession of capital. Macro-level findings obtained at the community level suggest that the success of a refugee initiative is related to access to human and economic resources, strategic partnerships,

cultural and language competence, external support and consultancy, clear goals, and favorable conditions contribute to the success of a refugee enterprise. Micro-level findings also reveal challenges faced by refugee entrepreneurs, such as language and communication barriers, limited access to resources, lack of support mechanisms, information gaps, competitiveness, pressure factors, economic illiteracy, cultural issues, and industry demands. Macro-level findings identify challenges such as language barriers, undesirable external factors like the host country's economy or politics, lack of humanitarian and economic resources, different priorities, community and mainstream resources, and risk-taking capacity (Fong et al., 2007).

Lyon et al. (2007) addressed the contributions and challenges of refugee entrepreneurship in impoverished urban areas. Through interviews and focus group studies with refugee entrepreneurs in the UK, they found that owning a business enhances the economic and social integration of refugees and improves the skills of business owners and employees. However, the precise contribution of refugee businesses to the local economy remains unclear, and it is necessary to place more emphasis on the impact of relevant stakeholders on economic development and social integration. Refugee entrepreneurs encounter problems such as limited access to economic resources, lack of market knowledge for developing business strategies, and the uncertainties associated with being a refugee (Lyon et al., 2007). In a study by Wauters and Lambrecht (2008) that examined the challenges faced by refugee entrepreneurs in Belgium, they adapted models developed for ethnic business development to analyze the problems faced by refugee entrepreneurs within the theoretical framework of opportunity structure, group characteristics, and institutional and social environments. They found that refugee entrepreneurs differ from migrant entrepreneurs in terms of access to entrepreneurship and social networks. The motivation for refugee entrepreneurship is often driven by a negative motivation to survive rather than seizing market opportunities. According to the data, refugees tend to prefer entering business sectors that are easy to enter and are already successful among other refugees, which reduces their chances of success (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008).

In their study on the relationship between social capital and the labor market, Cheung and Phillimore concluded that a person's length of residence and language proficiency expand their social capital. Additionally, initial communication with religious or co-ethnic groups upon arrival increases the likelihood of finding accommodation and employment. While having social networks alone does not guarantee access to employment, the absence of social connections makes it more challenging to access job opportunities. Social capital does not directly influence the stability or quality of employment; however, factors such as language proficiency, pre-migration skills, occupational quality, and length of residence play significant roles. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of integration requires considering multiple indicators and their relationships beyond the link between social capital and employment (Cheung & Phillimore, 2013).

In his study, which focused on a Syrian refugee entrepreneur who settled in Lebanon with a single case analysis, Bizri highlighted the significance of social capital in the success and sustainability of refugee businesses by leveraging the multidimensional structure of social capital (Bizri, 2017). Meister and Mauer examined the impact of incubators on entrepreneurial activities and the embeddedness of refugee entrepreneurs in the host country. They concluded that entrepreneurial activity is more successful when incubators play an active role in social networking, seizing opportunities, and increasing stakeholder engagement. Refugee entrepreneurs are expected to increase their social embeddedness in the host country and be more successful in their business through incubators (Meister & Mauer, 2018). Refai et al. attempted to explain the role of context in either supporting or hindering entrepreneurial activities by examining Syrian refugees living in and outside camps in Jordan. They found that the unstable environment created by multiple factors influences refugees' perspectives and their inclination toward entrepreneurship. Syrian refugees strive to cope with the challenges of their social living conditions by establishing survivalist businesses (Refai et al., 2018). Based on their study with Palestinian refugee entrepreneurs living in Lebanon, Shepherd et al. concluded that entrepreneurship fosters resilience in the face of long-term difficulties (Shepherd et al., 2019).

Heilbrunn and Iannone systematically reviewed the literature on refugee entrepreneurship and found that although the number of studies in this field has increased in the past decade, there is limited mutual dialogue and discussion among researchers. This lack of interaction often leads to neglecting certain topics that could be addressed in the field. Most studies have focused on exploratory, descriptive, and qualitative methods, utilizing theories from various disciplines to highlight how refugee entrepreneurship differs from other forms of entrepreneurship. Comparisons between immigrant entrepreneurship and refugee entrepreneurship are rare. The topics most frequently discussed are the challenges faced by refugees, policies, and their impact on integration. However, there is a lack of emphasis on the refugees' backgrounds and biographical narratives. Another gap in the literature is the lack of attention to country-specific demand factors concerning opportunity structure, market conditions, and regulators. (Heilbrunn & Iannone, 2020).

The increase in forced migration on a global scale in the last ten years has also affected academic studies in this field. Although the refugee entrepreneurship literature is a relatively new field, studies in this area are increasing. Research in refugee entrepreneurship is predominantly based on fieldwork. It should be noted that the refugee entrepreneurs under study exhibit social, demographic, economic, and cultural diversity, and each country where the research is conducted has its own dynamics. Moreover, each study brings a different perspective, providing an opportunity to examine refugee entrepreneurship from a broader perspective. While the adopted theoretical frameworks and contexts may vary across studies, the overlapping points reveal patterns. The next section will discuss the literature focusing on Syrian entrepreneurs who own businesses in Turkey.

1.2.1. Syrian Entrepreneurs in Turkey

For many years, the words migration and Turkey have been associated with Turkish migrant workers living in Europe (Pusch, 2010, p. 75). Since the 1990s, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, international migration to Turkey has increased. Additionally, crises occurring in neighboring and nearby countries have further contributed to the influx of migrants to Turkey, making it both a transit and destination

country. International migrants arriving in Turkey have become part of both the formal and informal labor force (Lordoğlu, 2010, pp. 92-93). With the onset of the Syrian crisis in 2011, Turkey has become the country with the highest number of refugees in the world. People who have arrived in Turkey through forced migration are participating in the labor market to sustain their livelihoods. The majority of Syrian migrant workers are engaged in paid employment. However, there are also Syrians who contribute to the labor force by establishing their own businesses. Syrian entrepreneurs have the potential to make a significant contribution to the Turkish economy, as they create new employment opportunities and express a desire to invest more in Turkey (INGEV, 2017). Among foreign direct investments operating in Turkey, Syrian-owned enterprises constitute the highest number. According to official records, there are 13,908 Syrian-owned businesses nationwide in Turkey (Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Turkey, 2020). It is estimated that this figure nearly doubles when unregistered businesses are included (Özipek & Tanrıkulu, 2022, p. 69).

Although there have been studies on migrant entrepreneurship in Turkey, research on refugee entrepreneurship is a relatively new field that emerged a few years after Syrians migrated to Turkey (Demir, 2018, p. 126). Syrian entrepreneurs have been examined in the literature within the framework of migrant entrepreneurship (Özkul & Dengiz, 2018; Duman & Özdemirci, 2020; Koyuncu, 2020; Parin & Kılıç, 2021; Kul-Parlak & Uludağ-Güler, 2022), refugee entrepreneurship (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2018; Demir, 2018; Deniz & Reyhanoğlu, 2018; Kachkar, 2018; Shneikat & Alrawadieh, 2019; Akyiğit, 2021; Almohammad et al., 2021; Chang, 2021), ethnic entrepreneurship (Akyiğit & Baki, 2021), diaspora entrepreneurship (Kayalar & Yıldız, 2018), and refugee/immigrant entrepreneurship (Karan, 2019; Karan et al., 2020). These studies, primarily based on data collected through fieldwork and employing qualitative research methods, have explored the process of Syrian migrants becoming entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial dynamics, types of capital, push-pull factors, the influence of social capital, challenges they face, and areas that require improvement. The literature has revealed that each city, district, and neighborhood has its unique dynamics, while also highlighting commonalities among them.

Various reports published by organizations and institutions contribute to the academic literature. TEPAV (The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey) has shared assessments of the monthly number of companies established with Syrian capital from 2017 to 2020 with the public. Additionally, they have published a report based on survey data from 400 participants, which examines the impact of Syrian small and medium-sized enterprises and non-refugee small and medium-sized enterprises on each other and their perspectives on one another (Güven et al., 2018). The booklet "Potential Enhancement Areas for Companies Established by Syrians," prepared jointly by INGEV (Human Development Foundation) and the Istanbul Policy Center, provides solution proposals for identified problems (INGEV, 2017). Building Markets, an organization dedicated to supporting local entrepreneurship, has a significant publication volume on Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey. Their research focuses on specific topics such as Syrian microenterprises, women entrepreneurs, exporters, high-value sectors, Turkey-Syria business partnerships, the impact of Covid-19, the effect on economic integration, and regional studies. Finally, the report "Syrian Entrepreneurs in Istanbul," published by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (İTO), examines what immigrant entrepreneurs are doing, how they manage the process, and the impact they create (Özipek & Tanrıkulu, 2022).

Deniz and Reyhanoğlu examined the reasons for the entrepreneurship of Syrians in Turkey using the theory of push-pull factors. According to the study, entrepreneurial experience inherited from the family, being one's own boss, respectability, increasing the level of economic well-being, business expansion, desire to turn differences into opportunities, and the use of social networks are identified as pull factors, while factors such as language barriers, discrimination, harsh working conditions, and low wages are identified as push factors towards entrepreneurship (Deniz & Reyhanoğlu, 2018). Demir focuses on the problems faced by Syrian entrepreneurs and the opportunities they can access in the Turkish market. Accordingly, Syrian entrepreneurs face the problems of high costs, lack of knowledge about commercial and tax law, and lack of supportive practices of the state and civil society. However, the large social presence of Syrians, ease of registration, and the government's flexible approach to regulations create opportunities for Syrian entrepreneurs (Demir, 2018). Based on a survey

conducted with 400 Syrian migrants in Hatay, Özkul and Dengiz identified factors such as past experience, experience inherited from the family, marital status, duration of residence, and monthly income as factors influencing entrepreneurial activities. They pointed out that Syrian migrant entrepreneurship does not provide innovative socio-economic contributions but has a mitigating effect on economic pressures in the region and throughout Turkey (Özkul & Dengiz, 2018).

According to Kachkar's findings on entrepreneurial activities of Syrian refugees living in camps, the majority of refugees express a desire to engage in economic activities, with 82% of the participants stating that they are ready to open micro-enterprises to sustain their livelihoods. Programs facilitating economic activities in camps will remove barriers to refugee entrepreneurship (Kachkar, 2018). Kayalar and Yıldız approached Syrian migrants' entrepreneurship within the context of diaspora entrepreneurship and evaluated it as an example of the classic diaspora approach (Kayalar & Yıldız, 2018). Shneikat and Alrawadieh focus on refugee entrepreneurs in the service sector, which is preferred due to its low capital requirements, easy accessibility, and viability (Shneikat & Alrawadieh, 2019). A field study conducted in the Fatih and Esenyurt districts of Istanbul reveals the existence of ethnic clustering in areas heavily populated by Syrians, the reasons behind concentration in specific regions, and the motivations for entrepreneurship (Kul-Parlak & Uludağ-Güler, 2022).

The field study conducted in the districts of Samandağ, Antakya, Reyhanlı, Kırıkhan, and Defne in Hatay province focuses on how different local dynamics, social, cultural, and demographic factors influence the experiences of Syrian small-scale entrepreneurs. According to the study, generalizations made about Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey lead to inaccurate results, as dynamics that vary even among neighborhoods within the same district affect the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrants (Karan et al., 2020). Akyiğit examines the place-belonging relationship, which is an important step in the integration process, by focusing on the question of how Syrian business owners establish a relationship of belonging through symbols. Business owners open themselves to the world with the items and symbols they use in the place. Accordingly, the most important issue that increased the belonging of Syrian business owners to the place was traditional and cultural affinity, especially religion.

Besides, the study indicates that business owners try to transcend symbolic borders by using the symbols of nationalism adopted in Turkey (Akyiğit, 2021).

Koyuncu attempts to explain the impact of the economy on social acceptance through Syrian entrepreneurs in Konya. Syrian entrepreneurs prevent the emergence of social unrest through their economic activities and carry significant potential (Koyuncu, 2020). Chang's study focuses on the impact of wealthy refugee businessmen on the economy and how they cope with challenges. The study aims to demonstrate that not all Syrian refugees who migrate to Turkey are economically weak and vulnerable, and that refugee entrepreneurs contribute to the host country's economy. While being economically privileged does not imply the absence of social and political problems, it enables the capacity to deal with legal and social challenges in general. With its emphasis on economic capital, the study offers a different perspective from the literature that generally emphasizes social capital (Chang, 2021).

Duman and Özdemirci examine the individual factors, group characteristics, and opportunity structures that influence entrepreneurial strategies of Syrian immigrants within the framework of Waldinger, Aldrich, and Ward's "Interaction Model." They conclude that factors such as group characteristics, opportunities, and individual characteristics have varying degrees of impact on immigrant entrepreneurship (Duman & Özdemirci, 2020). Almohammad et al. analyze the entrepreneurial activities of Syrian refugees in Turkey using the planned behavior theory to confirm the assumption that the determinants of refugee entrepreneurship differ from other types of entrepreneurship. They add the refugee status in addition to the determinants of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Their findings indicate that the only variable with a positive impact on refugee entrepreneurship is perceived behavioral control, while the positive effects of other variables could not be established (Almohammad et al., 2021).

Atasü-Topçuoğlu approaches refugee entrepreneurship using Bourdieu's concept of forms of capital and Kloosterman's proposition of opportunity structure. Through a Bourdieusian lens, the study analyzes how cultural, social, economic, and symbolic capital are utilized by Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey and their relationship with

integration. It sheds light on the significance of the informal economy and reveals the strategies employed for starting and sustaining businesses. Findings from in-depth interviews conducted in Hatay, Gaziantep, and Istanbul indicate that owning an informal business does not have a positive impact on integration; rather, it merely provides a survivalist job opportunity. Differences in the opportunity structures at the meso-level of each city affect the entry of informal sector businesses into the formal system (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2019). Karan uses Bourdieu's multi-layered theoretical model of relational concepts to make sense of the dynamics of refugee trades in an inclusive way. While the concept of “field” enables the discussion of security issues by focusing on the global political economy, sectoral and legal regulations and other competing actors in Turkey. The concept of “habitus” facilitates the understanding of how migrant entrepreneurs perceive social structures and how they relate their experiences in the place they come from to their lives in Turkey. "Forms of capital" explains how immigrants produce solutions to the problems they encounter (Karan, 2019).

According to Akyiğit and Baki, migration networks shape the migration movement. Social capital is a significant factor in migration decision-making and involvement in ethnic economies after migration. However, while social capital has positive aspects that support adaptation, it also has a negative effect leading to inwardness and reduced interaction with individuals outside their social networks (Akyiğit & Baki, 2021). Parin and Kılıç's field study in the Esenyurt district of Istanbul focuses on the role of different forms of capital in Syrian migrants' entrepreneurship. Economic capital is identified as the most crucial form of capital in business establishment, and the value of other forms of capital depends on their conversion into economic capital. Social capital plays a significant role in establishing a relationship with the locality. It provides guidance on where, in which sector, and through which procedures the business should be established. Additionally, entrepreneurs without economic capital often rely on their social networks when starting a business. The transferability of cultural capital is not always easy. Therefore, some migrants end up working in jobs below their qualifications. However, cultural capital provides the necessary cultural accumulation to participate in the ethnic economy (Parin & Kılıç, 2022).

Reports on the situation of Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey focus on the problems they face, facilitating factors, and areas that need improvement, based on field studies. The motivation for becoming an entrepreneur by establishing a business in Turkey is based on various interrelated reasons such as having a better life, achieving success, being independent, and earning money (Çaha et al., 2021). According to research conducted in 2017, the ease of doing business and the level of economic development in Turkey facilitate business ownership (Building Markets, 2017). In addition, the high number of immigrants from Syria and other Arabic-speaking countries, experience, knowledge of Turkish, family support and easy access to workers are facilitating in establishing a business (Özipek & Tanrikulu, 2022, p. 115). Only between 2014 and 2016, the proportion of businesses opened by Syrians increased by 168% (Mahia et al., 2019, p. 8). Syrian entrepreneurs have the potential to alleviate economic pressure through self-employment and creating employment opportunities. The positive impact of Syrian entrepreneurs, which currently employs 7% of Syrians under temporary protection, on the economy is undeniable. In addition, 55% of the enterprises work for export. If the problems they encounter while opening and running a business are eliminated, this potential can grow even more (Güven et al., 2018; Oğuz et al., 2020, p. 50).

Syrian entrepreneurs face various challenges, including limited access to financial resources, insufficient knowledge of regulations and legislation, language barriers, travel restrictions, work permits, employment quotas, high taxes, difficulties in opening bank accounts and transferring money, diploma equivalency issues, limited access to trainings, inconsistencies between legislation and practice, the inadequacy of consultancy services for willing business owners, fluctuating exchange rates, inability to acquire property, inability to benefit from incentives, and intense competition (ILO, 2016; Building Markets, 2017, 2018a; Güven et al., 2018). These challenges are felt to different degrees in each sector and based on the capacity of the businesses. Syrian entrepreneurs can minimize the problems they encounter by forming partnerships with Turks. Turkish businesses can also increase their export capacity by leveraging the advantages of Syrian businesses. Syrian businesses contribute to increasing exports to the MENA region and create new sectors and products that are not present in the Turkish market. Additionally, Syrian entrepreneurs have revitalized sectors that were

declining in Turkey, such as shoe production in Gaziantep. Establishing Syrian-Turkish partnerships will have a positive impact not only on the Turkish economy but also on the regional economy (Building Markets, 2018b, 2021).

The majority of businesses opened by Syrian entrepreneurs are micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees. They are usually involved in non-information-intensive and low-tech traditional service sectors such as wholesale/retail trade, the food industry, and low-tech production stages. Their preference for these sectors is based on past experience, know-how, and the social capital formed in these fields. According to data obtained from field studies, Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey have a higher level of education compared to their counterparts (Güven et al., 2018; Building Markets, 2022). Syrian businesses predominantly employ Syrian workers, but the implementation of employment quotas pushes many employers and employees into the informal sector (Building Markets & INGEV, 2020). Female employment in these businesses is very low, and Syrian women entrepreneurs have a very small share in the entrepreneurship sector. This is in line with the rate of participation of Syrian women in the economy before migration (Building Markets, 2020).

Reports provide solutions and recommendations for the challenges faced by Syrian businesses. According to these reports, it is suggested that Syrian businesses should be encouraged to formalize their operations, employment quotas should be lifted, access to permits and visas should be facilitated, freedom of movement should be ensured, access to banks should be granted, barriers to money transfers should be removed, awareness regarding incentives and opportunities offered to small and medium-sized enterprises should be increased, Turkish language and vocational training programs and Arabic-language informational resources should be expanded, procedures should be simplified for small businesses, following the example of the experience in Gaziantep, a dedicated desk for Syrian businesses should be established within the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) and other local chambers of commerce, and long-term sustainability guarantees should be provided to businesses (INGEV, 2017; Building Markets, 2017, 2018, 2020; Güven et al., 2018). Implementation of these improvements would not only enable existing businesses to

make long-term plans but also serve as an incentive for new investors and entrepreneurs.

1.3. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.3.1. International Migration

Although transboundary movements have existed for a long time, human mobility gained a global dimension after the Cold War and its political, economic and social consequences became more visible. There are hardly any people who have not been affected by migration in any way (Miller & Castles, 2008, pp. 5-11). International migration has become one of the most evident manifestations of globalization (Betts, 2008). Increased cross-border connections and interactions have led to greater movement of information, culture, goods, and people across borders. The rising demand for labor by multinational corporations, increased economic integration, changing geopolitical and security issues, enhanced information sharing among states, individuals' multiple connections to different countries and the social, cultural, and economic transfers between them, facilitated communication and transportation through technological advancements, as well as political and economic turmoil and movements resulting from climate change, all influence international migration (Martin, 2015, p. 66).

An international migrant refers to an individual who resides in a country other than their country of origin for a specific or indefinite period of time. While some studies suggest that a person must reside in a country for at least three months to be considered a migrant (Faist, 2003, p. 42), the general consensus in the literature is that an international migrant is someone who resides in a country other than their country of origin for at least one year (Koser, 2007, p. 4). The number of international migrants and their proportion in the global population has been increasing each year. Due to triggering and facilitating factors, international human mobility has become a continuous phenomenon. According to 2020 data, the number of international migrants is 280,598,105, accounting for 3.6% of the world population. Refugees and

asylum seekers constitute 12% of international migrants with 33 807 795 (UN DESA, 2021). Both sending and receiving states incorporate migration movements into their economic policies. The labor force of migrants has accelerated the industrialization process of capitalist economies, consequently increasing the distance between core and peripheral countries (Abadan-Unat, 2002). Developing countries that are sources of migration are aware of the advantages of emigration, such as reducing unemployment within the country and the contributions that remittances from migrants will make to the national economy (Portes & DeWind, 2007, 6). Following World War II, bilateral agreements, multilateral agreements, and international institutions emerged in the field of migration to develop policies and manage processes. States have started to seek ways to minimize costs and maximize benefits in migration management. In other words, states play a significant role in initiating, shaping, and controlling migration movements (Miller & Castles, 2008, p. 34). Therefore, it has become difficult for states to control their borders due to the combination of factors such as immigrant networks, the migration industry and the demand for workers.

One facilitator of international migration is the migration industry. Migration is ensured systematically and regularly through travel agencies, immigration lawyers, employment agencies, intermediaries, and immigration departments of states. Each state wants to regulate what goes on within its borders and who comes from outside, so that takes some measures to restrict immigration. States perceive international migrants as an unwanted problem, fearing that they will bring about changes in the host society during their stay (Portes & DeWind, 2007, p. 6). The efforts of states to limit international migration increase irregular migration (Castles, 2004, p. 852). Measures such as tightened passport controls, increased visa requirements, and enhanced border security push migrants towards illegal pathways, creating a humanitarian crisis. While human smugglers provide precarious and dangerous transportation in exchange for high amounts, human traffickers take away the freedom of immigrants by force or deception and make them vulnerable to all kinds of exploitation such as body labor, prostitution or organ mafia (İçduygu & Toktas, 2002, p. 28). Although the collaborations to combat human smuggling and trafficking in the field of global migration, stringent border security measures often drive migrants

towards illegal pathways. Undocumented migrants hold significant importance in the global migration agenda. Preventing irregular migration is a central aspect of bilateral, regional, and international agreements. Particularly with the increase in forced migration movements, tightened migration policies reduce many undocumented immigrants to illegal/irregular immigrant status, depriving them of their right to migrate (Düvell, 2011, pp. 79-80).

Migration is divided into two groups as internal migration and external migration (international migration), depending on whether the destination is within or beyond national borders. Internal migration refers to the movement of people within a country from one place to another due to social, economic, or political reasons. Internal migration is more integrated with the industrialization phenomenon, including "internally displaced people" who have to change their places due to internal turmoil (IOM, 2019b, pp. 108-109). On the other hand, external/international migration is the movement of people from the country where they were born and have social ties to another country for social, economic or political reasons. Although there are studies in the literature that divide international migration into two groups as voluntary/economic migration and forced migration on the basis of reasons for migration (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2006, p. 510; Nişancı, 2015, p. 5), the transitivity and uncertainty between these two groups make it difficult to make a sharp distinction (Betts, 2010, pp. 363-364). According to Hammerstad, most migration decisions are made out of necessity rather than choice. The phenomenon of migration is a set of intertwined reasons, so it is difficult to put immigrants into sharp categories (Hammerstad, 2017, p. 200). Economic migration focuses solely on explaining migration motives through economic motivations, disregarding other contributing factors and puts the rights of migrants in the background (IOM, 2019b, p. 61). Considering the distinction between forced and voluntary migration as a graduated measure from 'voluntary' to 'compulsory' makes the issue more explicit. Even though they are used interchangeably, forced migration and involuntary migration do not have the same meaning as well as labor migration and voluntary migration (Faist, 2003, pp. 49-50).

Forced migration has become an integral part of world politics with the articulation of protracted wars, unstable economic and political events and environmental factors associated with climate change. Modern wars directly impact the lives of civilians, as evidenced by the fact that out of the 50 million casualties in World War II, 40 million were civilians (Özgür-Baklacioğlu, 2017, p. 2). In the 20th century, following the World Wars and civil wars, the phenomenon of mass migration entered the agenda of world politics. Mass migration gained momentum in the 21st century, due to escalating internal turmoil in the Middle East region, especially with the outbreak of conflicts during the Arab Spring (Hammerstad, 2017, pp. 201-202). Migration, as a collective action, affects society in both the source country and the destination country (Miller & Castles, 2008, p. 29). Integration of migrants into the host society and their impact on the host country are central topics in migration studies. Integration can be examined in terms of economic and social aspects. Economic integration often precedes social integration since migrants must work to sustain their livelihoods. Social integration is a long-term process that requires learning the language of the host community and social connections between refugees and local people (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022, p. 2461).

In summary, migration is a multifaceted phenomenon with social, economic, and political ramifications that are influenced by various factors within an international context (Miller & Castles, 2008, p. 5). Wars, conflicts, revolutions, economic expansions/collapses, natural disasters, climate crises and technological developments are among the causes of migration. Therefore, migration is a phenomenon that has a place throughout history and maintains its importance. The effects of migration extend beyond the migrants themselves and impact the economy, politics, and society of the destination countries. Migrants who decide to leave their country to take risks and make a new start are channeled into society as a vibrant and entrepreneurial vein (Koser, 2007, pp. 4-10). Migration is an interdisciplinary field because it is a complex process that affects every aspect of society. Each discipline aims to contribute to the understanding of international migration and the solution of the problems encountered by addressing a different dimension of the migration process (Miller & Castles, 2008,

p. 30). The next section will cover definitions and backgrounds on terms to be used in this study.

1.3.2. Definitions

The concept of “migrant”¹ is defined within the framework of variable characteristics such as foreign nationality, born outside the country, duration of stay or different race. Different definitions of migrants have different effects on the data. The impact of this conceptual confusion on current politics is undeniable (Anderson & Blinder, 2019). For example, the situation of an Algerian-French citizen residing in France for years is different from that of an Iraqi refugee due to war or a Belgian residing in France without any visa obligations, and the politics conducted through them are different. Despite the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines a migrant as a person who moves outside or inside the borders of the country s/he lives in, regardless of his legal status, length of stay, and whether it is voluntary or compulsory. “Immigrant” is an umbrella term covering sub-categories such as temporary, permanent, voluntary and compulsory (IOM, 2019b, p. 132).

The term "refugee" refers to migrants who are forced to leave their country of residence due to compelling reasons. Those who are displaced within the country due to force majeure are evaluated in a different category as internally displaced persons but there are compelling reasons behind both definitions. The Balkan Wars, the First World War, and subsequent regional wars at the beginning of the 20th century forced many people to leave their homes and abandon their countries. Founded in 1920, the League of Nations gathered the work carried out on refugees. The Convention on the Legal Situation of Refugees, adopted in 1933, guaranteed the civil and economic rights of refugees and was the first multilateral treaty to provide international protection to refugees (Büyükçalık, 2015, pp. 12-17). Despite the limited participation of states in the treaties and conventions established by the League of Nations due to reservations, it laid the groundwork for future steps (Ergüven & Öztunalı, 2013, p. 1015).

¹ The terms “migrant” and “immigrant” has been used interchangeably in this study.

The United Nations, established after the Second World War, adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, which recognizes human rights and freedoms, including the right to asylum. The International Refugee Organization was established in 1948 to register, resettle and return post-war refugees and operated until 1951. In July 1951, the United Nations Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees was adopted with the full participation of the member states and formed the cornerstone of refugee law. According to the Convention, a refugee is defined as “a person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion as a result of events that took place in Europe before 1 January 1951, and who therefore leaves his country and cannot return because of his fear, or person who does not want to return” (UNHCR, 1951). The time and geographical location criteria in the definition were removed in the 1967 Protocol on the Legal Status of Refugees and reached a universal scope. Turkey became a party to the UN Refugee Convention in 1961 (Law No. 359). Although the 1967 Additional Protocol removed the time and geographical limitation, Turkey only removed the time restriction and maintains its geographical limitation by preserving the phrase "events occurring in Europe".

Asylum seekers and refugees are the same in terms of their way of migration and reasons but there is a difference in status between them. It is the responsibility of states to determine the refugee status of individuals who have made an international protection claim (UNHCR, 2015). Not every asylum seeker can be considered a refugee, but every refugee is also an asylum seeker. The rights afforded to individuals recognized as asylum seekers are limited compared to those granted to refugees. Turkey adopted the 1994 Regulation on the Procedures and Principles to be Applied to Individual Foreigners Who Have Taken Asylum in Turkey or Requested a Residence Permit from Turkey to Take Asylum and to Foreigners Who Came to Our Border for Collective Asylum and Potential Population Movements. According to this regulation, an asylum seeker is

“A foreigner who is outside their country of nationality and unable to avail themselves of the protection of that country due to a well-founded fear of being subjected to persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, or who, having no nationality and being outside the country

of their previous habitual residence, is unwilling to return to that country or unable to return due to such fear” (Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Applicable to Individual Foreigners, 1994).

This regulation established the procedures and principles to be applied to foreigners who take refuge in Turkey from outside Europe or who request a residence permit from Turkey to take refuge in another country. In 2005, the National Action Plan was put into effect to align Turkey's immigration legislation and system with the European Union (EU) acquis. The National Action Plan addressed issues such as integration, institutionalization, legislative change and the development of a long-term asylum policy (Bayındır Goularas & Sunata, 2015, pp. 20-22).

Turkey's efforts to legislate and institutionalize its migration management began as part of the EU accession process before the Syrian crisis emerged. However, with the mass immigration from Syria in April 2011, it became imperative to make legal arrangements (Erdoğan, 2020, p. 5). In October 2011, according to the announcement made by the Ministry of Interior, Turkey granted temporary protection status to registered Syrians, ensuring non-refoulement and meeting their urgent needs (Orhan & Senyücel-Gündoğar, 2015, pp. 12-13). Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection (YUKK), which came into force in April 2013, regulates the entry and exit of foreigners to Turkey, the scope of the protection and the procedures and principles regarding its implementation (art. 1). With this law, the General Directorate of Migration Management affiliated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs was established. In 2021, the status of the institution was transferred from the General Directorate to the Presidency. The Temporary Protection Regulation, which entered into force in October 2014 pursuant to Article 91 of the YUKK, regulates the procedures and principles of the temporary protection status provided to foreigners who come to Turkey with mass migration and whose international protection request is not evaluated individually (art. 1).

With the YUKK, the definitions of conditional refugee, secondary protection and temporary protection have entered Turkey's migration legislation. International protection includes refugees, conditional refugees and persons in subsidiary protection status. The definition of refugee has not changed as it was adopted in 1961. Conditional

refugee is the status given to people who come from outside Europe and have the same reasons and fears as refugees and they stay in Turkey until they are resettled in a third country (art. 62). Subsidiary protection is the status provided to persons who, despite not meeting the criteria for becoming a refugee or conditional refugee, face persecution and life-threatening situations if they return to their country of origin (art. 63). The next section will discuss the relevant theoretical framework.

1.3.4. Theoretical framework

1.3.4.1. Migration Theories

There is no comprehensive "grand" theory that encompasses migration in all its aspects. To be inclusive in a complex and heterogeneous field like migration, a large theory would have to overlook many nuanced details. Instead, conducting research in the field of migration using mid-range theories tends to be more explanatory (Portes & DeWind, 2007, 4-5). The migration theories that emerged in the 20th century conceptualize causal processes at different levels of analysis, and there is fluidity between these theories (Massey et al., 1993, p. 433). Many migration theories explain migration based on market forces (Castles, 2007, 31). Neoclassical economic theories and the segmented labor market theory explain migration from a predominantly economic perspective, while new economic theory, world systems theory, cumulative causation theory, and migration systems theory address it from a socio-economic perspective. Network theory and institutional theory evaluate migration from a sociological perspective. This section presents a brief review of migration theories.

The macro theory of neoclassical economics, which is the oldest and most widely accepted in the field of migration, explains migration with the disparities created by the supply/demand imbalance between geographical regions. At the macro level, the unequal distribution of labor and capital triggers migration. In economies with a surplus of labor, workers earn low wages, while in countries with limited labor supply, they earn higher wages. Therefore, there is a movement of migration from countries with low economies and labor surplus to countries with advanced economies and labor demand. According to this theory, the labor market is the primary motivation for migration. The migration of workers depends on wage differentials and employment

opportunities between countries. According to this approach, international migration will eliminate inequality between countries in the long run. When the employment conditions are equalized and the wage gap is eliminated, there will be no international migration (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 433–434; Bean & Brown, 2015, p. 70).

In the micro theory of neoclassical economics, individuals make rational decisions by calculating cost-benefit ratios, choosing to migrate to another country when the benefits outweigh the costs. The basis of the migration decision is employment and income differentials between countries, and international migration is the sum of individual benefit-cost calculations. If the conditions in the destination country are attractive, expenses such as travel, language learning or adaptation to the new society will not affect the decision to migrate (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 434-435). Neoclassical economic theories, also known as push-pull theories, posit that there are factors that push people to emigrate from their place of birth and factors that attract them to the destination country. Factors such as low levels of well-being, political repression and turmoil, and limited economic opportunities act as push factors, while factors such as high levels of well-being, labor demand, and political freedoms act as pull factors. However, this theory reduces migration to an individual dimension, considering an individual's migration solely as a result of rational cost-benefit calculations. Criticisms have been raised against neoclassical theories for their rational, individualistic, and ahistorical perspective, which falls short in explaining international migration. According to neoclassical economic theories, individuals belonging to the poorer segments of society should be the ones migrating, but studies show that migrants tend to come from the middle class (Miller & Castles, 2008, pp. 31-33).

According to the new economic theory, the decision to migrate is not an individual decision but a decision made collectively by the "household" or a broader community in relation to each other. Such decisions help reduce risks and maximize income. The source of income is crucial for the new economic theory. Remittances sent by individuals who migrate from their households are considered as a new source of income and can be used for consumption or investment. In this way, households play an intermediary role between the local economy and international migration. According to this theory, there is no need for wage differentials between countries for

international migration; households can engage in migration to reduce various risks. Even if wage equality is achieved, migration can continue if there is imbalance in different markets. Policies that affect income distribution can influence the perception of poverty among households and change their decision to migrate. However, different income groups will have different expectations, so income increase does not have the same effect (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 436-440; Bean & Brown, 2015, pp. 70-71).

The segmented labor market theory argues that the cause of international migration lies not in unemployment or low-wage employment in sending countries, but in the demand for low-wage labor in receiving industrialized states. The view that the main source of migration is the labor demand of the modern industrial society distinguishes this theory from neoclassical and new economic theories. The labor market is divided into two parts based on the capital/labor difference: native workers and immigrant workers. Capital owners invest in areas with continuous demand for native workers. The rights acquired by native workers through union membership provide them protection against arbitrary practices by employers. Jobs performed by capital-intensive workers require skills and knowledge. Jobs in the labor-intensive sector formed by immigrant workers do not require specific skills. Immigrant workers employed in fluctuating demand areas may suddenly lose their jobs due to the lack of insurance against employers. According to this theory, even if the number of immigrant workers decreases in a segmented labor market, there are social and institutional mechanisms that will result in a decrease in wages as the number increases. Immigrants have become an integral part of modern industrial societies (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 440-444; Bean & Brown, 2015, pp. 71-72).

According to the world systems theory, the main reason for international migration is not the dual market structure, wage and employment conditions between states, but the growth and expansion of the world market. The economic order in the world, which is divided into two the center and the periphery, is interdependent.² While this

² According to Wallerstein's world systems theory, the world is divided into two the center and the periphery. Accordingly, while core countries define capitalist developed countries, peripheral countries refer to underdeveloped or developing countries dependent on capitalist countries. See. Wallerstein, I. 1974. *The Modern World System, Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press.

dependency was created through colonialism in the past, the capitalist economy provides it in the modern world. According to this approach, international migration serves as a kind of colonialism that facilitates the exploitation of the labor of immigrants in the receiving countries. Capitalist companies, similar to colonial states in the past, seek raw materials, labor, and consumer markets by going to peripheral countries to generate more profit. By interacting with peripheral countries and using their resources and labor force, the center capitalist states increase their influence in these countries. For example, with mechanization in agriculture, the need for traditional agricultural workers decreases, and the demand for low-wage female labor in newly established factories leads to a decrease in male employment. According to this approach, international migration is inevitable in the environment created by the capitalist order. Migration movements between former colonized countries and colonizing countries are more frequent due to previously established cultural, economic, and social ties (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 444-448; Çağlayan, 2006, pp. 78-81).

According to the network theory, social networks such as family, kinship or friendship among immigrants encourage international migration. Immigrants participate in social networks created by former immigrants in the destination country. These networks create an interaction between the sending and the receiving countries. Through to such connections, the new migrant has the social capital to obtain information on issues such as the migration process or finding a job. The reduction of risks and costs by social network relationships facilitates the migration process, serves as a source of information, and ensures the continuation of international migration. Although factors such as wage differentials, job opportunities, and welfare levels continue to exist as causes of migration, migration networks alone sustain the continuity of migration (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 448-450). Migration networks are institutionalized over time and the representation of the countries of origin of the migrant community increases. As it can be understood from the example of Turkish immigrants in Germany, the social network was initially founded on basic problems such as accommodation, work and language problems, but over time, the situation of the diaspora community began to affect the relations between the two countries. While social networks have a

facilitating effect on adaptation to the host country, in some cases, it may have a delaying effect on the migrant's interaction with the host community. (Çağlayan, 2006, pp. 85-87).

As international migration increased, institutionalization in this area also increased. The institutional theory explains immigration through legal and illegal facilitators that enable immigrants to reach the destination country. Institutionalization adds continuity to international migration. While human rights associations provide legal support such as legal advice, illegal organizations engage in activities such as providing counterfeit documents and visas. Once international migration is institutionalized, it becomes difficult for states to develop mechanisms to control migration (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 450-451).

The cumulative causation theory claims that every migration brings change to the receiving society. International migration is a uniquely cumulative social process. Migrants create changes in the income distribution, production structure and capital distribution in the host country. For example, sectors with a high concentration of immigrants begin to be characterized as immigrant jobs. Jobs labeled as migrant jobs turn into low-prestige jobs in the eyes of the host society, and for these sectors to work, migration must continue. (Massey et al., 1993, pp. 451-454).

According to the migration systems theory, the international migration system is shaped by a few core country regions that receive immigrants and countries that send large numbers of immigrants. Migration systems are dynamic structures, countries can join or leave the system (Massey et al., 1993, p. 454). Migration systems arise for political and economic reasons, and geographic proximity does not matter. For instance, migration from Syria to Turkey and Lebanon is influenced by geographical proximity, while migration from India and Pakistan to the United Kingdom is categorized as politically motivated based on colonial history, and migration from the Philippines to Bahrain is categorized as economically motivated. According to this theory, migration occurs as a result of the interaction of macro and micro factors. Macro structures constitute the world economic market, the laws, institutions and practices of the immigrant-receiving and immigrant-sending countries, while micro

structures encompass personal relationships such as family, kinship, and friendship, as well as the solidarity that occurs within these relationships. By encompassing both macro and micro structures, the theory of migration systems establishes a connection between world systems theory, which focuses on macro structures, and the network relations theory, which focuses on micro structures (Çağlayan, 2006, pp. 82-84; Miller & Castles, 2008, pp. 36-37).

There are various reasons why individuals decide to live somewhere other than their country of birth. The categorizations such as "economic immigrant", "refugee", and "asylum", which are gathered under the umbrella of "immigrant", have lost their clarity. For example, an asylum seeker escaping from war may determine his or her migration route with economic motivations, or an economic immigrant may migrate to a country with political freedoms. Since an individual migrant may have multiple reasons for migrating, it is not possible for a single theory to comprehensively explain international migration. The dimensions of migration being addressed, the motivation of the migrant to migrate, and the level of analysis create differences between theories. Some theories emphasize individual motivations, while others attribute migration to structural causes. The theoretical diversity that offers different options to explain international migration constitutes richness to this field. The next section discusses the theories used to explain migrant and refugee entrepreneurship.

1.3.4.2. Approaches to Migrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship primarily relates to seizing opportunities. There are numerous definitions of entrepreneurship. Bygrave and Hofer (1991) define an entrepreneur as 'someone who perceives an opportunity and creates an organization to pursue it.' Additionally, an entrepreneur should be risk-taking, resilient to uncertainties, managerial, innovative, and resourceful (Gedeon, 2010, pp. 20-21). Entrepreneurship, by its nature, is a structure dependent on transient fluid factors. These factors are multidimensional and vary based on external factors, market needs, and the entrepreneur's resources and capabilities (Goldsby & Mathews, 2015, pp. 2-3). New theories have been developed to explain immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship, and theories from different disciplines have been applied in this field. The theories

developed and applied to explain immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship, ranging from sociology to economics, psychology to business, aim to capture systematic and recurring situations to make this phenomenon understandable. Accordingly, this section will discuss the theories used in the literature on immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship.

According to the cultural theory, certain ethnic groups have cultural characteristics that facilitate their entrepreneurial ventures. These groups value being small business owners as prestigious and valuable. They have access to resources that will increase capital, establish family businesses, and provide economic solidarity. The theory is divided into two parts, orthodox and reactive cultural theories. According to orthodox cultural theory, some groups, such as Jews and Chinese, have an innate business owner mentality. The reactive culture theory suggests that facilitators support small business owners who emerge from minority situations. The cultural theory is mostly applied to immigrants who engage in entrepreneurship voluntarily rather than out of necessity. These immigrants are individuals who could normally find employment in the market but choose to open small businesses. Therefore, this theory falls short in explaining the situation of immigrants who become entrepreneurs due to compelling reasons (Gold, 1988, pp. 415-417).

The disadvantage theory attributes refugee entrepreneurship to reasons such as the inability to find suitable employment, language barriers, lack of valid certifications and diplomas, and discrimination. There is no tangible evidence that small business ownership is a solution to unemployment. Since owning a business requires capital, knowledge and skills, few entrepreneurs become successful business owners. Being a business owner is not a solution to unemployment, but it can be an alternative to underemployment. Refugees are driven to become entrepreneurs because they are employed in jobs that are below their capacities. Immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs open businesses for reasons such as getting rid of the disadvantageous situation of working in the labor market, limiting their relations with unfamiliar cultures, providing jobs to their relatives, being in a more comfortable communication and opportunity environment within the refugee community (Gold, 1988, pp. 417-420).

The theory of middleman minorities argues that migrant entrepreneurs act as intermediaries between the local community and the migrant community, as well as between producer and consumer. Middleman minorities have no concern for social status, so they can engage in trade with anyone. Due to their foreign status, they are perceived as "neutral" in the market and serve as a buffer for societal anger towards elites. In short, the intermediary minority group represents the middle class that fills the status gap between economic elites and the masses. They access economic capital, knowledge, jobs, and housing through their ethnic networks. Certain ethnic groups tend to concentrate in similar occupations in every country they migrate to (e.g., Turks, Armenians, Jews). Typically, middleman minority businesses are family-owned, with employees consisting of loyal family members and acquaintances who work long hours for low wages. A horizontal ethnic business network is seen among the middleman minorities that feeds each other, for example, the ethnic grocer's wholesaler is of the same ethnicity (Bonacich, 1973, pp. 583-586). The theory has been criticized for its ahistorical approach, failure to provide practical evidence for the argument that temporarily migrated immigrants would become business owners rather than employees, and its inability to distinguish intermediary minorities from other modern capitalists based on their unique economic characteristics (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990, pp. 125-126). Although middleman minorities can be used to explain the social role and characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurs, they are insufficient to explain why immigrants become intermediaries and how they become business owners (Karan, 2019, p. 255).

According to the structural theory, immigrants are influenced by and act according to changing economic, political, and social structures. This approach focuses on external factors such as structural opportunities and barriers that affect immigrant entrepreneurship. It examines government policies, economic and legal structures, discrimination, and xenophobia as external factors that drive immigrants to become entrepreneurs. Reasons such as inability to find paid employment or low wages, discrimination, and language barriers push immigrants to become entrepreneurs. Additionally, opportunities in the local economic structure also encourage immigrant entrepreneurship. The businesses opened by immigrants and the products they offer

are a result of existing demand, whether it originates from ethnic or non-ethnic markets. For instance, when the government fails to provide adequate childcare services, the childcare sector becomes a business area (Alstatt & Brettel, 2007, pp. 383-384; Karan, 2019, pp. 260-261). Ethnic grocery stores, restaurants, and other businesses selling ethnic products in areas with a high immigrant population are another example of immigrant entrepreneurship driven by demand.

The interaction model suggests that ethnic entrepreneurship cannot be attributed to a single factor but is based on the complex interaction between opportunity structure, group characteristics, and strategies. Ethnic and general market conditions, access to business opportunities, legal frameworks, and institutional regulations form the opportunity structure. Group characteristics include immigrants' skills, concentration in specific areas, ethnic social networks, organizational capacity, and the resources owned by the ethnic group, aiming to understand why certain ethnic groups are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship than others. Strategies emerge as a result of the interaction between the opportunity structure and group characteristics. The resources owned by the ethnic group can expand the opportunity structure. Government policies can either expand or restrict the opportunity structure based on their regulations (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990, pp. 114-124; Volery, 2007, pp. 34-35).

The mixed embeddedness theory criticizes the interaction model for its inadequacy in explaining and differentiating immigrant entrepreneurship. Local economic structure and legal-institutional regulations directly influence entrepreneurial activities, particularly for immigrants. After considering market conditions, market needs, government policies, and competitive environments, immigrants can form ethnic strategies beyond individual and group factors. According to this theory, relationships and economic activities are embedded in institutional structures. Mixed embeddedness focuses on the relationship between ethnic networks and market structure, emphasizing the importance of regulatory structures and market dynamics. This theory neglects the effects of macro structures on immigrant entrepreneurship, such as the impact of changes in global politics and economics on immigrant entrepreneurs (Volery, 2007, p. 35; Karan, 2019, p. 262; Duman & Özdemirci, 2020, p 633).

Another approach used to explain immigrant entrepreneurship is ethnic enclave economies. According to this approach, ethnic enclave economies emerge in areas where immigrants, particularly those of a common ethnic background, reside in high concentrations. Immigrant entrepreneurs in ethnic enclave economies rely on the capital of their ethnic group in the local settlement, including financial resources, social networks, knowledge, and human resources. Ethnic enclaves require, firstly, immigrants with capital and entrepreneurial aspirations, and secondly, a permanent migration for its clustered workforce. In regions where ethnic enclave economies are formed, employment and settlement of newly arrived immigrants are much easier compared to other places. Problems such as the low-paying employment of immigrants, the language barrier and exclusion push them into the enclave economy, which leads to the development of immigrant entrepreneurship. While the employment of newcomers by enclave entrepreneurs may appear beneficial, enclave employment is susceptible to exploitation. Workers in these businesses may be required to work long hours for insecure and low wages (Wilson & Portes, 1980; Drori & Lerner, 2002, pp. 137-140).

Planned behavior theory, which is an extension of reasoned action theory, is another theory used to explain the motivation behind entrepreneurial behavior. Some people are more inclined to be entrepreneurs than others. Planned behavior theory attempts to explain entrepreneurial intention and motive. It focuses on the intention stage before entrepreneurial behavior is put into practice. Intentions plan behavior as they affect future decisions, attitudes and the way opportunities are evaluated. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control variables are used to explain behavior. When considering immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs, it is possible to make a more accurate inference by adding a variable about their immigration status (Ajzen, 1991; Almohammad et al., 2021).

The forms of capital approach is used to understand the extent to which various resources individuals possess influence entrepreneurial behavior, how they create opportunities, and how the capital manifests itself in three main forms: economic capital, which includes assets that can be directly converted into money; cultural capital, which encompasses achievements such as diplomas, skills, and language

proficiency; and social capital, which refers to the relationships and connections between people. The forms of capital approach aims to show how differences in opportunities are assessed among different cases (Bourdieu, 1986). According to Bourdieu's conceptualization, forms of capital interact with each other, affect each other, and change according to time and space. Capital types are in a structure that transforms into each other. While the literature has predominantly focused on social capital, examining other forms of capital would provide deeper insights into the structure of immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, pp. 4-5).

Although it is possible to consider refugee entrepreneurship as a sub-title of migrant entrepreneurship and to explain it in the light of the theories mentioned above, highlighting the features that distinguish the two groups will help explain refugee entrepreneurship. The difference in the reason for migration affects the tendency to become an entrepreneur. Refugees may have conditions that make them unwilling to leave their countries under normal circumstances, such as having a profession that does not have a place in the host society. As refugees do not arrive through established networks and predefined connections, their access to facilitative factors during the migration process, such as kinship ties and familiar surroundings, is more limited. Due to the lack of opportunities for preparation before arrival, they face greater challenges in achieving economic and social integration. Additionally, refugees are often more traumatized compared to migrants due to their experiences. Inability to return to their home countries and the inability to utilize connections there further deepen their disadvantaged situations. However, refugees may benefit from certain rights that are not available to other immigrants, such as vocational training, language courses, financial aid, and housing services (Gold, 1992, pp. 177-178).

Theories help explain phenomena in a systematic and generalizable way. It is not possible for a single theory to explain every aspect of migrant and refugee entrepreneurship. Theories developed in different disciplines provide various insights into understanding refugee and migrant entrepreneurship. Since migration is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon in itself, this situation is reflected in the activities of immigrants. The theories used to explain immigrant and refugee

entrepreneurship vary depending on the dimension, group, and perspective under evaluation. The next section discusses the theoretical framework used to explain the entrepreneurial behavior of Syrian immigrants in Başakşehir.

1.3.4.3. Theoretical Approach of the Research

This research presents an analytical framework that brings together the forms of capital and the mixed embeddedness approach. In reference to the theoretical framework utilized by Atasü-Topçuoğlu (2019) to evaluate the use of capital and its impact on integration within the informal economy, it has been determined that employing both approaches simultaneously would provide a comprehensive understanding of immigrant entrepreneurship. The concept of forms-of-capital focuses on the resources of the individual and contributes to our understanding of the migrant entrepreneur's mobility possibilities. The opportunities that personal resources provide for the immigrant entrepreneur are also affected by the legal, political, social and economic structure of the destination country. The mixed embeddedness approach focuses on the market, national institutions, legal regulations for investing, and the impact of the host country's social, political and economic structure on the opportunity structure. While considering migrant entrepreneurship with a mixed-embedded approach alone is not sufficient to understand different entrepreneurial experiences in the same opportunity structure, evaluating it solely through the forms of capital approach ignores the structural framework. The forms of capital approach shows what resources Syrian immigrants benefit from when initiating and maintaining a venture and the function of capital in minimizing the difficulties encountered. The main attention of capital types on the micro structure, the entrepreneur; on the other hand, mixed embeddedness targets market conditions, market needs, government policies, and competitive environment that make up the macro-level opportunity structure. Therefore, considering these two approaches together provides a comprehensive analytical framework to disclose immigrant entrepreneurship.

Capital is labor acquired in materialized or externalized form. The distribution of capital represents the intrinsic structure of the real world and access to capital types determines the chances of success (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 15). Capital is the resources that

individuals use to realize their strategies, maintain and improve their positions in the field (Tatli et al., 2014, p. 626). According to Bourdieu's forms of capital approach, capital acquired, accumulated, and used for investment by individuals and groups manifests itself not only in economic form but also in social and cultural forms (Sunanta, 2022, p. 215). Economic capital is money or capital that can be directly converted into money; cultural capital is skills and qualifications like education and experience; and social capital is capital that consists of social networks and relationships (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 16). Immaterial types such as social and cultural capital can be transformed into a material type of capital such as economy (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 16). There is an interdependent relationship between different capitals and capitals can transform into each other. Nevertheless, capital depends on the context in which it is located, and may differ in time and space. Bourdieu's conceptualization allows the calculation of the social embeddedness of different capitals (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, p. 5).

This study utilizes the forms of capital approach (Bourdieu, 1986; Nee & Sanders, 2001; Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018) to understand which types of capital immigrants have while starting and maintaining enterprises, how they mobilize these resources, and what is the impact of capital on finding solutions to the challenges they encounter. In the literature, structuralist and culturalist approaches that focus on structural factors do not take into account the role of the decision-making individual, that is, the agent (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, p. 4). The approach shows how the social context in which different entrepreneurs operate are important in immigrant entrepreneurship. The forms of capital illustrates the wide range of resources mobilized by migrant entrepreneurs. While having one type of capital is dependent on the other type, in another cases, the lack of a type of capital leads to using other types (Cederberg & Villares-Varela, 2018, p. 13-14).

The forms of capital approach provides a basis for analyzing the interaction between entrepreneurs and their social environments; it helps to explain the differentiation of the opportunity structure in terms of groups and cases (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2019, p. 201). While considering the types of capital in the context of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs, economic capital includes ready cash, tangible assets and access to

them; cultural capital, in institutionalized form, educational qualifications, diplomas and certificates, and in embodied form, professional knowledge, experience, know-how, entrepreneurial skills, aesthetic taste, language and information about local culture. Social capital includes connections that will provide access to resources, social ties consisting of family, friends and acquaintances and membership in formal/informal networks (Tatli et al., 2014, p. 626; Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2019, p. 201). Social capital is generally a kind of key capital that provides access to other types rather than being a tangible capital on its own (Ram et al., 2008, p. 429). Although the literature has predominantly focused on social capital (Ram et al, 2008), incorporating other types of capital will provide broader insights (Cederberg, 2008, p. 5).

Forms of capital provide an analytical framework that deepens our understanding of migrant entrepreneurship's possibilities for action. However, understanding immigrant entrepreneurship requires not only the capital types owned by the immigrant, the socio-economic and political-institutional structure of the destination country also shapes immigrant entrepreneurship (Kloosterman et al., 1999, p. 254; Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2019, p. 201). This study combines the forms of capital approach with the opportunity structure proposed by the mixed embeddedness theory. The mixed embeddedness theory presents migrant entrepreneurship in an analytical framework that encompasses the actor and opportunity structure. It deals with the entrepreneur and his resources at the micro level, and deals with the local opportunity structure at the meso level by associating it with the macro-institutional structure (Kloosterman, 2010, pp. 27-28). The mixed embeddedness approach focuses on the relationship between ethnic social networks and economic and political structures. (Karan, 2019, p. 262). It criticizes interaction theory for ignoring the market environment created by political institutions (Karan, 2019, p. 262).

According to the mixed embeddedness theory, migrant entrepreneurship should be evaluated by including the surrounding structural contexts such as the market, competition and regulatory regime (Ram et al., 2008, p. 428). Mixed embeddedness does not only address the meso-level opportunity structure's relationship to the micro-level entrepreneur, it relates the opportunity structure more broadly to the institutional framework. The source of the opportunity structure is the socio-economic and

institutional structure itself. (Kloosterman, 2010, p. 40-41). Opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in capitalist societies are inherently related to the market. Opportunities emerge within the market, making the market an integral part of the opportunity structure. There must be sufficient demand in the market to start a business, the market must be accessible to entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneur must have the resources (Kloosterman, 2010, p. 28). Various factors affect the opportunity structure at three different levels: the national, the regional and the neighborhood level. National institutions, laws and regulations determine access to the market. Although legal regulations and laws are at a national level, practices may differ on the basis of regions or cities. Therefore, the market access and growth potential of immigrant entrepreneurs at the sub-national level also differ. Opportunity structure can vary even between neighborhoods within the same city. For instance, neighborhoods mostly populated by immigrants are particularly attractive venues for immigrant entrepreneurs who cater to the ethnic market (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001, pp. 194-197).

Entrepreneurs not only take advantage of existing opportunities, they also create new opportunities (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001, p. 192). However, some circumstances impact the opportunity structure. Different levels of welfare and social structures create or hinder the emergence of new sectors in the market. For example, in areas with low female labor force participation, there may be relatively less demand for sectors such as daycare, home-cooked meals, or cleaning services. Another factor affecting the opportunity structure is the direct intervention of the state in the labor market with regulations such as minimum wage and social security. Apart from that, government interventions regulating businesses have an effect on entrepreneurs, such as permits, business regulations and required qualifications. The relationship between economic actors other than the state also affects the opportunity structure, as running a business in a collaborative environment differs from operating in a competitive environment (Kloosterman, 2010, pp. 37-39). As a result, it is not possible to think of immigrant entrepreneurship separately from the influence of the surrounding structures. This study will evaluate the entrepreneurship experiences of Syrian immigrants, focusing on the impact of Turkey's institutional, political, social and

economic environment with the mixed embeddedness approach and the mobilization of resources and intragroup differences with the capital types approach.

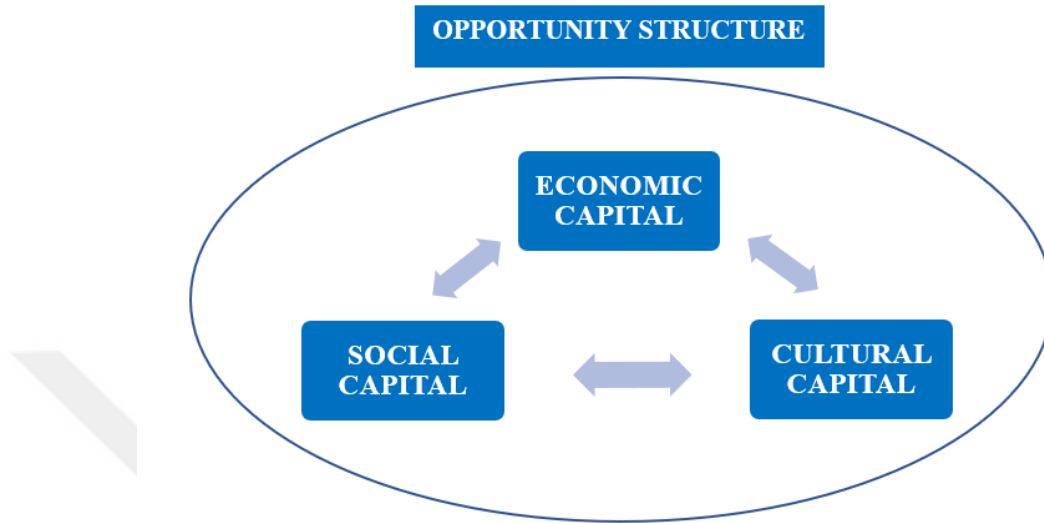


Figure 1.1.: Theoretical Framework.

1.4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

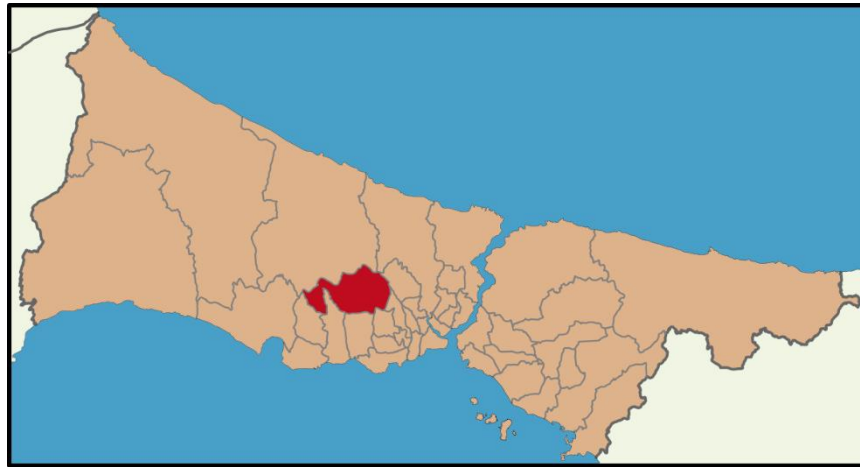
1.4.1. Geographical Scope: Başakşehir

Başakşehir emerged with a housing estate project in 1995 and became a municipality in 2008 by separating from Esenler and Küçükçekmece. Except for Kayabaşı Village, Ziya Gökalp (İkitelli Village), Altınşehir, Şahintepe and Güvercintepe, the remaining parts consist of mass housing. Since the 1990s, it has turned into a green, clean and quiet satellite district preferred by the religious and conservative middle class, with immigration from other districts of Istanbul and other cities (Aydin, 2020). It is a subprovince of 104.33 km² consisting of 10 neighborhoods.

Başakşehir is a multicultural subprovince that hosts many immigrant groups living in Istanbul. Syrian, Saudi Arabian, Egyptian, Iraqi, Yemeni, Jordanian, Palestinian, Russian, Uzbek, Afghan, Pakistani, Kuwaiti, Iranian, Libyan and Uyghur immigrants reside in Başakşehir. Some of them come from other districts of Istanbul, some from different provinces of Turkey. Especially Arabic-speaking immigrants prefer Başakşehir because of the presence of a large Arab community and the opportunity to

buy and sell services there (IOM, 2019a, p. 22). While the reason for immigrants to prefer Başakşehir was based on cheap rents and its cosmopolitan structure, now only the effect of the cosmopolitan and religious/conservative structure, and migrant networks can be mentioned. Increasing rents and the difficulty of finding a house compel the low-income group to move.

Istanbul is the city with the highest number of Syrians in Turkey, and Başakşehir ranks fourth among the subprovinces with the highest number of Syrians in Istanbul (Morgül et al., 2021, p. 10). Besides, the largest number of companies with Syrian capital is in Istanbul, and Başakşehir ranks third after Fatih and Esenyurt among the districts (Yılmaz, 2019, p. 75). Syrian nationals make up 61.8% of the immigrants in Başakşehir (IOM, 2019a, p. 22). The density of both the number of Syrians residing and the number of companies with Syrian capital has made the Başakşehir region worth examining. The absence of a study specific to Başakşehir on this subject and the fact that the researcher is an insider residing in Başakşehir were influential in the selection of this region as the research area. In addition, determining the features that differentiate Başakşehir from other districts in the preference will explain how the dense immigrant population lives in relative harmony.



Map 1.1.: Location of Başakşehir

1.4.2. Methodology

The aim of this research is to address immigrant entrepreneurship by presenting empirical evidence about the difficulties and entrepreneurship experiences of Syrian entrepreneurs who own businesses in Başakşehir. The research approach of the study is exploratory and descriptive. The exploratory research approach aims to gain new insights about a phenomenon, ask questions and evaluate from a different perspective. Descriptive research, on the other hand, aims to accurately represent individuals, groups or events (Saunders et al., 2019). By employing both exploratory and descriptive approach, it is aimed to better understand and represent the experiences of Syrian immigrants who have businesses in Başakşehir. In this study, an inductive approach was adopted. Following the bottom-up approach is in harmony with the innovative idea-generating structure of qualitative research (Yin, 2011, p. 21). The inductive approach leads to the creation of conceptual categories from the data (Yin, 2011, p. 93). Based on this approach, themes were derived from the data. The codes were directly generated from the data itself in line with the inductive approach, and an appropriate theoretical framework was adopted to explain the findings during data analysis.

A qualitative research method was adopted to address the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants. The qualitative approach is the most appropriate approach to answer how and why questions. It allows us to examine people's lives under real-world conditions and represents the views of the participants involved in the study. Qualitative research contributes to development of concepts that help explain human behavior (Yin, 2011, pp. 7-8). It examines people, events and cases in their natural state and, unlike quantitative designs, does not aim to create a situation suitable for research purposes. In qualitative research, the conceptualization and structuring of the data occur subsequently (Punch, 2005, p. 142). It focuses on meaning and understanding. Qualitative researchers are concerned with how people interpret their experiences, how they construct what is happening around them, and what those experiences mean to them (Merriam, 2009, p. 5).

The main data source of the research is semi-structured in-depth interviews collected through fieldwork. Field researchers explore subcultures, other segments of social life, and a broad social sphere. Fieldwork method is appropriate when the research question aims to learn, define and understand a group (Neuman, 2003, p. 364). In this research, the field study method was used to understand the experiences of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs. Participants were selected through purposive sampling method. The intention was to use snowball and purposive sampling methods before going to the field. Although the snowball sampling method is a suitable method to reach hard-to-reach groups, it was not necessary during the fieldwork in this case. The high number of businesses opened by Syrian immigrants in Başakşehir and the absence of any security concerns while reaching the participants are thought to be effective in this situation. All participants were reached directly with the purposeful sampling method. Purposive sampling was preferred to attain maximum diversity in the sample and to avoid focusing solely on a single sector. Choosing the sample group for a specific purpose provides access to the most relevant and diverse sample. Here, the researcher should create a participant group that will provide a broad perspective (Yin, 2011, p. 88). Although the purposive sampling method is an effective method in exploratory studies, it is insufficient for generalization from research findings. However, since the objective of this study is not to achieve generalization, this issue is not a problem.

Interviews were conducted between February 2022 and May 2023. During the participant selection process, Syrian businesses located in the mass housing area of Başakşehir were visited and determined. Attention was paid to the use of Arabic expressions, the use of names related to Syria or the indicators suggesting that the owner of the business is a foreign national. Businesses whose business owners are likely to be Syrians were contacted directly. Before participating in the research, the participants were informed about the researcher, the purpose and scope of the research, the interview process, interview questions, audio recording and voluntary participation. A sample that will provide sector diversity has been determined. Any business that did not comply with these conditions was not included in the study. Although some of the participants were not officially owners of the business, they were

included in the study because they played an active role in opening and running the business as company managers.

Table 1.1.: Demographic Information of Participants

Name	Age	Education	Year of arrival in Turkey	Year of opening the business	Occupation in Syria	Occupation in Turkey
Osman	31	Bachelor	2017	2019	Student	Restaurant Manager
Abdullah	53	High-school	2019	2020	Nuts Factory Owner	Nuts Shop Owner
Mahmud	27	Secondary school	2017	2020	Hairdresser	Hairdresser
Hamid	29	Associate	2015	2022	Telephone Repairman	Telephone Repairman
Yusuf	54	Elementary school	2013	2021	Restaurant Owner	Restaurant Owner
İbrahim	28	Bachelor	2012	2020	Student, Apprentice	Technology Manufacturer and Consultant
Enes	26	Master	2012	2019	Student	International School Manager
Said	44	Elementary school	2018	2019	Merchant	Grocer
Nedim	46	Secondary school		2021	Tailor, Coach	Martial Arts School Owner
Muhammed	45	Master	2016	2022	Medical Doctor	Polyclinic Owner
Ziyad	36	Associate	2013	2022	Accountant, Merchant	Café Owner
Faruk	58	Secondary school	2018	2019	Nuts Shop Owner	Nuts Shop Owner
Bilal	27	Bachelor	2012	2020	Student	Food Ordering App Owner
Mahir	39	Associate	2017	2019	Electrician	Electronic Repairman
Zubeyr	23	High-school	2019	2019	Student	Spice-seller
Hasan	25	High-school	2018	2018	Event Organizer, Merchant	Giftshop Owner
Mustafa	47	Bachelor	2013	2019	Judge	Language Course Owner
Sena	38	High-school	2015	2020	Housewife	Food Delivery Service Owner
Fatma	45	Master	2015	2015	Interior Architect	Interior Architect

The in-depth interviews were conducted with entrepreneurs who agreed to participate, and suitable times were determined. The interviews were conducted in Arabic and Turkish. During the Arabic interviews, simultaneous translation into Turkish was provided, and the transcripts were reviewed during the transcription process. The translator was informed in advance about the interview questions, research topic, interview procedure, and implementation. Participants were given the option of having a translator, but it was noticed that some participants, despite being able to have a translator, preferred to speak Turkish. The researcher's intermediate level of Arabic proficiency facilitated a quicker establishment of trust with the participants. It is not possible to abstract the researcher as a neutral entity without any influence in the fieldwork. The researcher is a headscarved woman residing in Başakşehir. Being an insider residing in Başakşehir has given the opportunity to observe and experience the social dynamics of the district. While determining the participants, there is a preliminary observation about the regions and places to be visited. It is thought that being a woman researcher has a positive effect on establishing a bond of trust with the participants. Besides, wearing a headscarf had a positive effect considering the conservative nature of the sample. These assumptions arise from the absence of any problems encountered in reaching the participants and conducting interviews, as well as the participants' comfort in expressing themselves. Although it is not thought that the effect of adverse situations will be negative, they are open to research. It has been promised that the names of the businesses and the participants will be kept confidential within the scope of ethical rules. Business type is used instead of business name and pseudonym is used instead of participant name.

The participants reside under different legal statuses. Of the nineteen participants, seven are residing with residence permit, six with temporary protection, five with citizenship and one with international protection. The participant under international protection immigrated from Palestine, originally from Syria. The different legal statuses of the participants are important as they indicate different challenges they face. All the businesses are registered in the formal sector.³ However, although businesses are officially registered, some business owners remain unregistered because they

³ The registration process of a business is ongoing.

cannot obtain a work permit. Especially, Syrian enterprises residing with a residence permit are struggling with this problem. The education level of the participants is above the average. Ten out of nineteen participants have an associate degree or higher education degree. The age distribution of the participants is between 23 and 54, with an average age of 37.6. There was variation in age distribution. Experienced entrepreneurs with previous entrepreneurship experience and new breaths who started a venture for the first time in Turkey were brought together. Unfortunately, gender diversity could not be achieved, as only two out of the 19 participants are women. This is proof that the number of Syrian women entrepreneurs is low. According to the years of migration to Turkey and opening a business, some participants opened their own businesses shortly after the migration, while others did not open their own businesses directly. The factors that affect this situation are as follows: capital accumulation, continuing the education process and opening another business. Despite the limitations, the study contains variations within itself.

In-depth semi-structured questions were posed to the participants through the interview method, which allows them to express themselves more freely. While determining the research questions, the relevant literature was examined and appropriate questions were formed to answer the research questions. The first part of the questions consists of demographic information, including age, education level, city of origin, year of arrival in Turkey, district of residence, year of opening the business, business partners, number of employees and nationalities. The second part of the questions focuses on understanding the entrepreneurial experience of Syrian immigrants in Başakşehir. In this context, questions were asked about the process of immigration to Turkey, work experience before migration, legal, economic and socio-cultural problems encountered while opening and maintaining the business, working experience in Turkey before opening a business, support system, experience of working with Turks, the target customer group of the business, relations with neighboring tradesmen, the reason for opening the business in Başakşehir and the advantages and disadvantages of Başakşehir, plans for the future and the issues that need to be developed for more Syrian immigrants to venture. The interview questions

were revised according to the participant' feedback. During the interviews, additional questions were asked through probing to further clarify superficially addressed topics.

Interviews lasted on average between thirty to sixty minutes; all audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded. Audio-recording of the interviews with, the permission of the participants, and then literal transcription and decoding enhances the reliability of the research. In qualitative data analysis, the code is the building block that represents the data and is needed to detect future patterns and categories. The purpose of coding is not to reduce the data but to distill its essence and condense it. The researcher concentrates on the text, firstly decodes and then encodes it. Data analysis is not limited to coding but is an important stage of the analysis process. Researchers establish connections between the coded data. Coding is an iterative process that involves repeated coding to generate categories and themes. Since coding is an interpretive action, there is no single correct interpretation. Different researchers with diverse academic and theoretical backgrounds interpreting the same data differently does not diminish the value of the study; on the contrary, it adds value (Saldaña, 2019, pp. 4-9). Transcribed interviews were deciphered by the line-by-line coding in the first cycle coding. In the second cycle coding, the focused coding method was used to create the categories, looking for the most repetitive or most important codes in the data corpus. The obtained categories were analyzed under appropriate themes.

There are difficulties encountered during the research and limitations of the research. Only one owner declined to participate due to security reasons, other than that, no security concerns were encountered in the people contacted for the interview. The researcher's limited fluency in Arabic and the participants' varying fluency in Turkish necessitated the involvement of an interpreter during the research. Conducting field research through an interpreter extended the research process due to time constraints. Potential details that might have been missed during instant translation were checked during transcription. Although transcription and translation are time-consuming practices, they are important steps to enhance the reliability of the research.

One limitation of the study is the inability to establish gender balance. Despite the presence of Syrian women entrepreneurs in Başakşehir, their number is significantly

lower compared to men. Therefore, the number of included female entrepreneurs in the study remained scarce. Another limitation of the study is that the study area covers only Başakşehir and Kayabaşı neighborhoods. Both of them are mass housing area with a high concentration of migrant entrepreneurs. The experiences of Syrian entrepreneurs in other districts of Başakşehir such as Altınşehir, Güvercipe, Şahintepe or Bahçeşehir are not included in this study. Accessing up-to-date data is another challenging problem. Data regarding Syrian entrepreneurs operating in Turkey is not publicly available, the book Syrian Entrepreneurs in the Istanbul Economy, published by İTO in 2022, lacks data to fill this gap. The data such as the distribution of the businesses opened with the Syrian capital in Istanbul based on districts, sectoral and gender-based distribution are repeated from the previous researches, and the current figures are not updated.

Next two sections will evaluate the findings and will give voice to experiences of Syrian entrepreneurs.

CHAPTER II: PAVING THE WAY TO SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TURKEY

2.1. MACRO STRUCTURE OF SYRIAN IMMIGRANTS

Considering the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants independently from their experience of being a migrant in Turkey leads to a superficial result. In order to understand the opportunity structure suggested by the mixed embeddedness approach, the social, political and economic framework of the Syrian immigrants should be taken into account. Therefore, this section will provide information about the migration process of Syrian refugees, their position in Turkey, their legal status, current rights, right to work and participation in the labor market in order to provide more comprehensive understanding. The title of *Syrians in Turkey* talks about the process of mass migration of Syrians to Turkey that started in 2011, Turkey's policies towards Syrian immigrants, and demographic information about Syrian immigrants. *Legal status* deals with temporary protection status, the rights it provides and the obstacles it brings. Finally, *participation in the labor market* covers the working permits and conditions granted to Syrian immigrants, the informal labor market and the situation of Syrians in the labor market of Turkey.

2.1.1. Syrians in Turkey

The "Arab Spring," which started in Tunisia in 2011 as a popular uprising against an oppressive government, spreading from country to country in the region, also affected Syria. The protest demonstrations against the Bashar al-Assad regime that began in March 2011 were violently suppressed and escalated into a civil war with increasing acts of violence. The opposition, fragmented into different factions and armed, gained strength with national and international support, creating resistance against the Syrian government. The intervention of international actors, the emergence of ISIS, and the internal divisions within the opposition have led to a shift in the balance, resulting in the ongoing war and the survival of the Bashar al-Assad government. As a result, millions of people who faced threats to their lives and properties were forced to flee (Kaya & Kırac, 2016, pp. 6-7). The ongoing insecurity within the country has

accelerated the number of people joining the migration caravan every year. As a result of the events in Syria, 6.7 million people were displaced within the country and 6.6 million people migrated across the border (UNHCR, 2021b). The vast majority of refugees sought refuge in neighboring countries. Turkey hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees (65.1%) and is also the country that hosts the largest number of refugees in the world. Lebanon (corresponding to about ¼ of the population) is the second country with the highest number of Syrian refugees (14.8%). These countries are followed by Jordan (12.0%), Iraq (4.7%) and Egypt (2.6%) in the region (UNHCR, 2022). Apart from the countries in the region, Germany is another country that hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees (616,325) (Statista, 2021).

The first refugee caravan of 252 people arrived Turkey from Syria in April 2011 (Erdoğan, 2015, p. 317). Turkey's political stance has been a determining factor in the flow rate of this migration. Turkish government officials contacted the Syrian authorities in the first period of the crisis and pressured them to make reforms but the Syrian administration rejected these calls (Hinnebusch, 2015, p.14). Syria and Turkey, which had been at different poles for many years, got closer within the framework of the "zero problems with neighbors" policy adopted by the AKP government. However, as the war intensified and diplomatic channels remained unresponsive, Turkey openly supported the opposition forces of another state for the first time in its history and called on the international community to take action to overthrow the Assad government. Turkey's aspiration to become a growing regional power and global actor has been influential in determining such a policy. The open-door policy adopted for incoming refugees would confirm that Turkey's capacity to deal with such a crisis. It was thought that the Syrian government would be overthrown in a short time and a new government close to Turkey would be established in its place. The Turkish government aimed to create a safe zone in Syria, as in the 1991 Iraq example,⁴ but the difference between the two policies was Turkey's desire to influence Syria's internal affairs (Altıok & Tosun, 2019, pp. 692-698).

⁴ During the Gulf War, Turkey created a buffer zone on the Iraqi side for refugees from Iraq, but did not intervene in its internal affairs. See. Altıok & Tosun, 2019.

The Turkish government could only sustain this idealist and opportunist policy until 2015. The Assad regime maintained its power with the involvement of actors such as Iran and Russia. In addition, the attacks carried out in Turkey and the USA support of Kurdish groups against radical Islamist groups were other determinants in Turkey's adoption of policies that prioritize security. Turkey conducted military operations to create a safe zone in Syria and eliminate the elements that threaten Turkey. If we focus on the relationship between migration and foreign policy, the large Syrian refugee population has given Turkey the right to intervene more in foreign policy. (Altıok & Tosun, 2019, pp. 692-698). At the same time, Turkey have used its large refugee population as leverage against Europe. As conceptualized by Tsourapas, Turkey have been using a “blackmail strategy”, unlike other refugee-hosting states, due to the large refugee population in its country and its geographical proximity to Europe (Tsourapas, 2019, p. 465). Faced with the influx of refugees from Europe in 2015, the EU started to approach Turkey. With the 2015 Joint Action Plan and then the 2016 Declaration, some decisions were taken between Turkey and the EU. According to these agreements, Turkey would receive financial support from the EU, visa exemptions would be provided, membership would be revitalized, and in return, every illegal refugee arriving in Europe would be returned to Turkey, and one refugee from Turkey would be resettled in Europe. Despite Turkey's departure from EU norms and democratic principles, the fact that the EU chose to make such an agreement instead of imposing sanctions on Turkey demonstrates that the refugee population is an influential factor in foreign policy. (Saatçioğlu, 2019, p. 174-180).

YILLARA GÖRE GEÇİCİ KORUMA KAPSAMINDAKİ SURIYELİLER

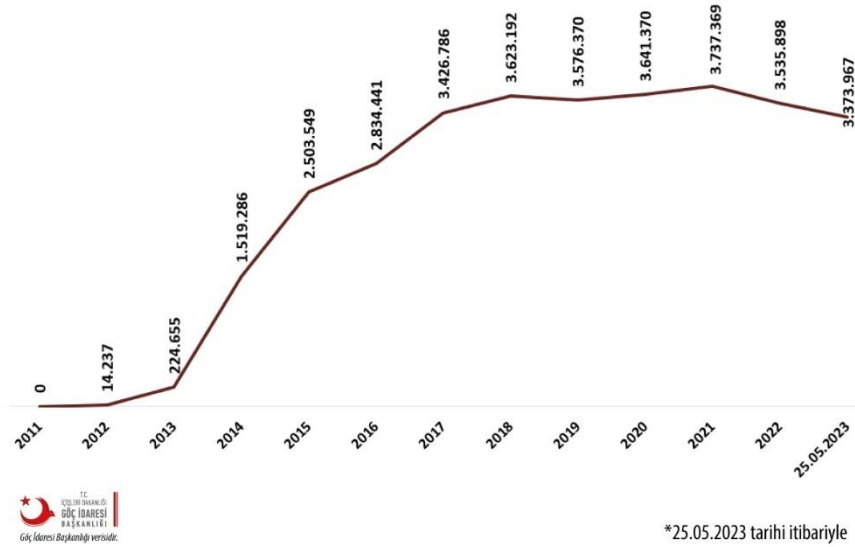


Figure 1.2.: Syrians Under Temporary Protection by Years (Presidency of Migration Management, 2022b).

Today, 3,373,967 Syrian migrants reside in Turkey with temporary protection status (Presidency of Migration Management, 2022b). Natural population growth has a great impact on this number as well as immigration. As of February 2023, it is estimated that there were 850 thousand newborns Syrian in Turkey (Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2023). The newborns cannot be citizens of either Turkey or Syria leaving hundreds of thousands of people with the status of “statelessness”. Although Turkey considers these babies as *de facto* Syrian citizens, the lack of an official recognition and their inability to possess a state passport will inevitably cause difficulties in the future (Avcı, 2022). According to the statement made by the Minister of Internal Affairs, as of May 2023, the number of Syrian nationals who acquired Turkish citizenship is 223,881 (Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2022). The process of obtaining citizenship takes place within the framework of the procedure applied for foreigners to become Turkish citizens, there is no right provided by temporary protection. In addition to those under temporary protection and citizens, 92,825 Syrians residing in Turkey with a residence permit (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023c). Based on all these data, it can be said that approximately 3,7 million Syrian migrants live in Turkey.

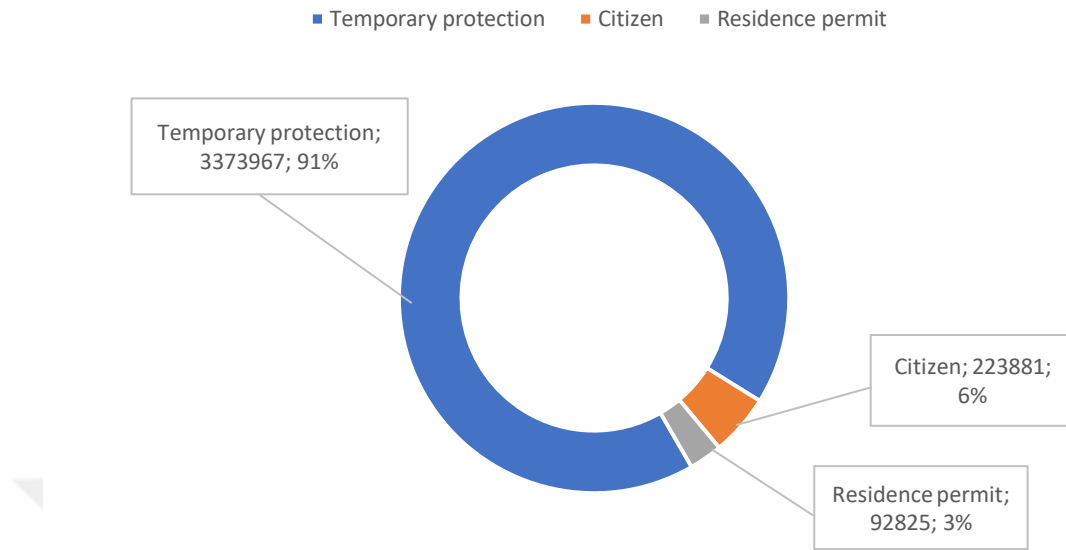


Figure 1.3.: Syrians Residing in Turkey.

Temporary accommodation centers were initially established for the Syrian refugees but the number of asylum seekers living in temporary accommodation centers has shown a decreasing trend, especially after 2013. While the accommodation centers were designed as temporary living spaces, the prolonged temporary situation has led to a shift towards cities with more job and living opportunities. Currently, there are 61,943 Syrians living under temporary protection in 7 accommodation centers located in Adana, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, and Osmaniye. This accounts for 1.68% of the general population. The majority of the population continues to reside in different cities throughout Turkey. The top five cities with the highest population density are Istanbul (15.71%), Gaziantep (13.13%), Şanlıurfa (10.04%), Hatay (9.45%) and Adana (7.19%) (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023b). Due to the high job opportunities in Istanbul, it is a city that receives intense immigration from both inside and outside the country. Therefore, the migration of Syrian immigrants to Istanbul is in line with the general migration trend in Turkey.

According to the age/gender-based population data shared in May 2023, males constitute 52.9% and females constitute 47.1% of Syrians under temporary protection. Of the Syrian population under temporary protection, 1,164,823 children fall within the compulsory education age range from kindergarten to university, accounting for 34.44% (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023a). Progress has been made in the

rate of schooling each year. According to the Ministry of National Education data, the enrollment rate, which was 30.42% in the 2014-2015 academic year, increased to 64.68% in 2020-2021 (Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, 2021). However, the level reached in the schooling rate is still low. In 2021, 422,867 children did not have access to educational opportunities, and children enrolled in school also face various difficulties. Challenges related to enrollment and school attendance stem from factors such as language skills, discrimination, access to schools, economic status, psychological well-being, adaptation issues, and systemic problems (Celik et al., 2021, pp. 8-10). The inclusion of Syrian children in the education system will contribute to the long-term processes of "social cohesion" and "social integration." Otherwise, there is a high likelihood of encountering difficult problems that are hard to reverse (Özçürümez & İçduygu, 2020, pp. 116-117).

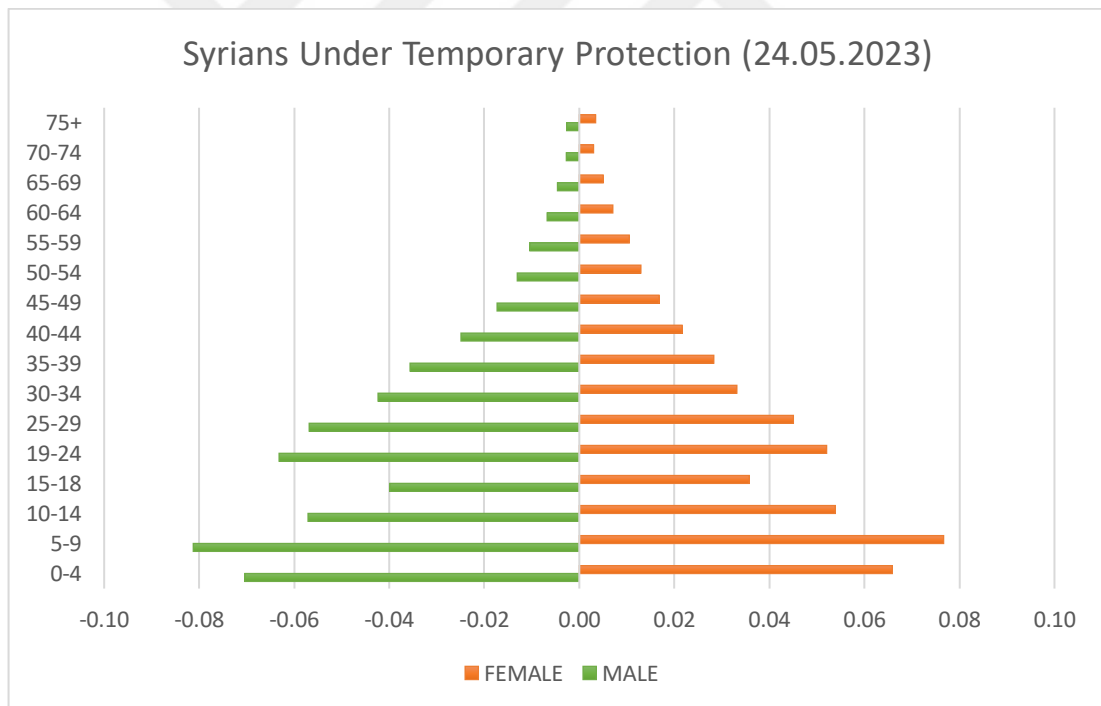


Figure 1.4.: Syrians Under Temporary Protection (Presidency of Migration Management, 2023a).

During the 11 years since the migration process that started in 2011, Turkey has adopted various practices for the forcibly displaced Syrians. Policies produced on the basis of "temporary status" necessitated more permanent solutions over time. The current situation of Syrians in Turkey has become a major topic in contemporary

politics, leaving little room for discussions on long-term solutions. As the name suggests, the legal legislation was built on the axis of temporality. The next section will focus on the legal legislation dealing with Syrians living under temporary protection status.

2.1.2. Legal Status

Temporary protection is a status developed to provide solutions to the urgent protection needs of asylum seekers who came to Turkey with mass migration and whose international protection applications could not be evaluated. Pursuant to Article 91 of the YUKK, individuals who have sought refuge in Turkey due to the internal turmoil in Syria and have requested protection are granted temporary protection status. They cannot be evaluated under the conditional refugee status because it is temporary in nature and does not include Syrians who have sought refuge in Turkey in large numbers, as it involves the resettlement to a third country. Similarly, since the majority of Syrians do not meet the secondary protection conditions, they are not included in this status either. Although the status of Syrians corresponds to refugee (de facto refugee) status in international law, they do not have refugee status within the framework of Turkey's immigration legislation.

Since individuals who took refuge in Turkey from Syria are not granted the right to apply for refugee status, they are not considered within the scope of international protection. The legal status and rights granted to Syrians in Turkey are regulated in accordance with Temporary Protection Regulation No. 29153, which entered into force on October 22, 2014. Turkey is not the first state to introduce temporary protection status, but since there is no established definition in international law, the principles of temporary protection of states are different from each other (İneli Cığır, 2016, p. 68). Temporary protection provides the right not to non-refoulement and legal stay; however, this temporary protection document does not replace a residence permit and does not grant Turkish citizenship. Persons under temporary protection can benefit from the right to education, social assistance if they prove that they are in need, and emergency and basic health services by being evaluated within the scope of general health insurance (Oruç, 2021, pp. 128-129). Although temporary protection status

grants similar rights to refugee status, the absence of a barrier under international law to the withdrawal of these rights renders the status vulnerable (İneli Cığır, 2016, p. 70). As stated in the second paragraph of Article 91 of the YUKK, the arrangements regarding the persons requesting temporary protection and the temporary protection status are subject to the decision of the President.⁵ The uncertainty, lack of international guarantees, and temporary nature of the temporary protection status directly affect the future plans of individuals living under this status.

According to the Temporary Protection Regulation, foreigners within the scope of temporary protection are not penalized for illegal entry into Turkey (art. 5) and are not returned to their country of origin (art. 6). After admission to the country, those who are serving in the military are first disarmed (art. 17), and then relocation procedures begin. After a health check (art. 20), their photo, fingerprints, and identification information are recorded (art. 21). Those whose registration procedures are completed receive a temporary protection identity document (art. 22). They are directed from the relocation center to the temporary accommodation center approved by the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM)⁶ (art. 23), or they are allowed to stay in the provinces approved by the DGMM (Article 24). The temporary protection identity document grants the right to live in Turkey but does not replace a residence permit or provide the right to apply for citizenship (art. 25). Foreigners holding temporary protection identity documents can benefit from education, health, work, and interpretation services according to the procedures determined by the Migration Board (art. 26). Furthermore, Syrian migrants, being legally protected foreigners in Turkey, can benefit from regional and international human rights conventions to which Turkey is a party, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the United Nations Convention against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (İneli Cığır, 2016, pp. 73-74). The next section will examine the participation of Syrian migrants

⁵ The phrase “Council of Ministers” in this article has been changed to “President” with Article 71 of the Decree Law No. 703 dated 2/7/2018 (YUKK, art. 91).

⁶TR Directorate General of Migration Management changed its status as the TR Presidency of Migration Management with the Presidential Decree on 29.10.2021. <https://en.goc.gov.tr/announcement2>

in the labor market in Turkey and the right to work regulated within the scope of temporary protection.

2.1.3. Participation in the Labor Market

In order to meet their needs and desires, individuals require livelihood resources. Accessing livelihood resources is also necessary to improve the quality of life. Access to the labor market for individuals who have resettled in a new country due to forced migration is essential for leading self-sufficient, independent, and dignified lives. The vulnerabilities of refugees decrease as they become involved in the workforce and sustain their own lives. Additionally, providing refugees with the opportunity to contribute to the host country's economy creates economic benefits. The reluctance of host countries to grant refugees the right to work is based on concerns such as the lack of capacity to absorb new labor force in the market, existing unemployment, and the potential for refugees to become permanent residents after entering the workforce. Restricting refugees' access to the formal labor market leads them to turn to the informal sector. However, granting refugees the right to work is inadequate without the relevant mechanisms for integration and enforcement. Supporting education and language learning facilitates the participation of refugees in the labor market (Zetter & Ruaudel, 2018, pp. 4-7). The legal regulations of the host country regarding the right to work determine the access of asylum seekers to the labor market. The 1951 Geneva Convention ensures the working rights of refugees and asylum seekers in the host country, requiring the states to treat refugees the same as their own citizens regarding access to the labor market (Art. 17). Due to Turkey's geographical reservation to the Geneva Convention, the legislation applied to individuals arriving in Turkey through forced migration is different.

In Turkey, access of foreigners to the labor market is regulated by numerous laws and regulations and generally subject to strict restrictions (Toksöz et al., 2012, p. 24). The Law on Work Permits of Foreigners (Law No. 4817), adopted in 2003, established regulations on the issuance of work permits to foreigners, determination of authorizing institutions, prevention of irregular labor, and employment of foreigners in areas of need (Dönmez Kara, 2016, p. 153). Under this law, foreigners could obtain work

permits from the undersecretariat or ministry related to the sector they would be involved in. Due to the difficulty of monitoring, the decision-making authority was transferred to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security along with the Implementation Regulation on Work Permits for Foreigners issued in the same year. In 2013, the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (YUKK) (Law No. 6458) came into force, leading to a more comprehensive regulation regarding foreigners residing in Turkey. Under this law, access of foreigners residing in Turkey and refugees arriving through forced migration to the labor market was regulated. Individuals in Turkey with refugee or subsidiary protection status can work without obtaining a work permit, as their identity documents replace the need for a permit. Persons with international or temporary protection status have the right to apply for a work permit six months after their arrival. The 2014 Temporary Protection Regulation and the 2016 Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners Under Temporary Protection brought more detailed regulations regarding the work permits of those who took refuge in Turkey with mass immigration from Syria (Özçürümez & İçduygu, 2020, pp. 69-71).

States that accept individuals who have left their countries due to forced migration meet the basic needs of the incoming population from an international protection perspective. Therefore, they lack regulations regarding labor force participation. However, the prolonged nature of the temporary situation necessitates the regulation of work procedures (Özçürümez & İçduygu, 2020, pp. 57-59). Similarly, Turkey initially adopted an approach that focused solely on meeting the basic needs of Syrian refugees who arrived through forced migration, without any specific regulations regarding their participation in the workforce. Syrian refugees who arrived in cities were primarily covered by Law No. 4817 on Work Permits for Foreigners. The increase in the number of migrants coming to Turkey and the inadequacy of the existing legislation necessitated the need for a new law. In this context, the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (YUKK) was enacted, which determines the procedures for both foreigners residing in Turkey and those who arrived through forced migration. The Temporary Protection Regulation was adopted in 2014, and the Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners Under Temporary Protection was adopted in 2016, due to the increasing trend of persons under temporary protection and the

inadequacy of existing regulations. Within the scope of this legislation, the working procedures of Syrians under temporary protection status have been determined. The adoption of the YUKK and the establishment of the Presidency of Migration Management show that a more protection-oriented approach has been adopted than the nation-state mentality that perceives immigrants as a security threat. However, many problems in the field could not be resolved despite the regulations and procedures. Although these regulations ensure the right to apply for a work permit for individuals with international protection, conditional protection, and subsidiary protection, those under temporary protection, such as Syrian refugees, may have their work permits revoked depending on market conditions or developments (İçduygu, 2016, pp. 19-20; İçduygu & Diker, 2017, pp. 16- 17). This situation indicates that Syrian migrants lack future guarantees for their work rights.

Regulations regarding the rights and obligations of Syrians in Turkey are specified in the Temporary Protection Regulation. This regulation addresses the legal status, registration processes, access to healthcare, education, and work rights of Syrians under temporary protection. Initially, policies towards incoming Syrians focused on humanitarian aid but evolved into policies that support their livelihoods as the duration of their stay increased. The adoption of the Regulation on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection in 2016 aimed to clarify Syrians' work rights (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 18). According to the Regulation on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection, obtaining a work permit is mandatory to participate in the labor market. To obtain a work permit, individuals must possess a temporary protection identity card starting with the digits "99," have at least six months of temporary protection, work in an establishment where the number of employees does not exceed 10% of Turkish citizens employed there, and apply for work in the province where they are registered under temporary protection. The quota can be relaxed if it is documented by the employer that no Turkish worker could be found within four weeks. Although individuals who reside in a different province from their registration have the opportunity to apply for a change at the Directorate General of Migration Management, it is not practically applicable. Employers can apply for work permits on behalf of employees, and individuals who will work independently can personally

apply for work permits. Those who will work in seasonal agricultural or livestock jobs make their applications to the governorships of the provinces where they are registered (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, pp. 20-21; Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners Under Temporary Protection, 2016).

Approximately 60% of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey is comprised of active working-age individuals between 15 and 65 years old. Despite the regulations and facilitators for obtaining work permits, the number of individuals obtaining work permits is quite low. According to the 2020 Work Permits for Foreigners report, a total of 62,369 Syrian nationals, 58,402 men and 3,967 women, received work permits (Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2020). However, since the data released by the ministry does not differentiate between Syrian migrants with temporary protection and residence permits, it is not possible to obtain precise figures. According to UNHCR's data, a total of 132,497 Syrian refugees received work permits in Turkey (UNHCR, 2021a, p. 12). The majority of Syrians work in the informal sector. The entry of refugees into the labor market in the provinces where they reside is shaped according to the existing gaps in the market. In Gaziantep, refugees are predominantly involved in the industrial sector, while in Adana, they work as seasonal agricultural workers. In metropolitan areas, refugees play a dominant role in the informal sector. The employment opportunities also vary depending on the spatial differences between rural areas and cities (Aygül, 2018, p. 73).

Syrian migrants predominantly work in labor-intensive sectors and mostly engage in low-skilled occupations such as construction, agriculture, textile, service, and manufacturing. There are also refugees working as domestic helpers, street vendors, waste collectors, shepherds, and child or elderly caretakers (Aygül, 2018, p. 73). There are Syrians who work in jobs below their qualification level. The most important problems faced by Syrian workers are low wages, long working hours and an insecure working environment. Particularly in unskilled jobs, it is more common to encounter below-average wages or even situations where wages are not paid (Lordoğlu, 2016, p. 793). In addition to these, the language barrier is another obstacle to participation in the labor market (Korkmaz, 2017, p. 65). Employers find it more profitable to employ Syrians in the informal sector in order to avoid the costs associated with employing

registered workers. For Syrians, working in the informal sector has become inevitable. Due to their dire circumstances, they accept low wages, long working hours, and job insecurity, conditions that Turkish citizens would not want or accept. Syrian employees accept to be a part of the informal sector due to the risk of losing their existing jobs if they request formal employment from the employer and losing their competitive advantage over Turkish citizens (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, pp. 22-23). Additionally, the requirement to work in the registered province and the quota on the number of Syrian workers are other factors that make the informal sector attractive.

There is no definitive data on the number of Syrians working in the informal sector in Turkey. In a study published in 2017, it was estimated that there were between 500,000 and 1,000,000 Syrian migrants working in the informal sector (Kadkoy, 2017), while in 2021, this estimate ranged from 1,000,000 to 1,400,000 (Erdoğan, 2021, p. 80). Syrians trapped in the informal sector continue the cycle of poverty in different ways. The language barrier, social exclusion and lack of access to legal employment force Syrian immigrants into the informal sector (Korkmaz, 2017, pp. 64-65). Given the inadequacies in employing the local population, it is difficult for individuals who have arrived due to forced migration to participate in the formal labor market. The Southeastern Anatolia Region, where refugees are concentrated, already has a high unemployment rate, creating a competitive environment between the local population and those who have come through forced migration. In order to ensure social cohesion between the host society and the immigrant society, both communities have to work at reasonable wages and suitable working conditions (Özçürümez & İçduygu, 2020, pp. 64-65), authorities have to create job opportunities and regulate investments in addition to legal regulations (Duruel, 2017, p. 220).

The disadvantaged positions of immigrant groups cause them to become precariat over time. Refugee labor, which is employed in the informal sector in an insecure manner as cheap labor, is instrumental, opportunistic, precarious and temporary. While the wage gap with the domestic workforce is relatively small in skilled jobs, the wage gap doubles in unskilled jobs. The presence of a reserve labor force formed by refugees creates a competitive environment and fosters hostility towards refugees in the labor market. Moreover, insecurely employed refugees do not receive fair compensation for

their labor and become vulnerable to exploitation (Aygül, 2018, pp. 74-75). The poverty situation experienced by Syrian refugees also contributes to the increase in child labor. Syrian children become a part of the labor market as a result of low wage rates in the informal market, loss of parents and poverty. Working children are often miss out of school or have attendance problems. The involvement of children in the informal sector increases their vulnerability considering unhealthy and insecure working conditions. In addition, the academic failure brought about by this situation directly affects their future. According to a study conducted in Istanbul, the majority of working children work in the textile sector (50%), followed by the service sector (29%) and industrial production (18%). The same study also found that 28% of children are out of school due to their work (Kaya & Kırac, 2016, p. 28; İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 25). The inability of children to access education is a social problem that poses a threat to future generations.

Syrian immigrants are not a homogeneous group in terms of labor supply. There are low-skilled migrants coming from rural areas as well as highly skilled urban migrants (Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2016, p. 806). Due to Turkey's proximity to the agricultural regions of Syria, the majority of Syrian farmers are in Turkey compared to other host countries in the region. Therewithal, the number of illiterate Syrians in Turkey is high (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 24). Therefore, many refugees would aspire to jobs that do not require qualifications in terms of their impact on the labor market (Duruel, 2017, pp. 210-211). It is estimated that educated professionals left Turkey until 2015 due to the delayed implementation of work permit regulations. In 2016, the Turkish government adopted a facilitative approach to prevent educated Syrians from leaving the country by granting citizenship. However, the lack of transparency in the citizenship process has led to rumors that the government adopted such a policy to increase its electoral support. Misunderstandings regarding access to citizenship have spread due to ad hoc and uncertain practices without an official policy framework (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 20).

A portion of Syrian migrants residing in Turkey are independent entrepreneurs who have opened their own businesses. In addition to mostly small-scale enterprises such as patisseries, grocery stores, restaurants and barbers, there are medium-sized

enterprises such as private schools and chain restaurants and large-scale enterprises that make production abroad and in Turkey. Syrians constitute the largest foreign group engaged in entrepreneurship in Turkey. According to the TOBB data, the number of Syrian-owned businesses is increasing. Most of these businesses have been established in Istanbul, but their positive impact is more evident in southern provinces such as Gaziantep and Mersin. In Gaziantep, the proportion of Syrian-owned businesses has reached 17%, and the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce has established a Syrian desk to ensure access to services for these businesses (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, pp. 27-28).

Turkey has fulfilled a humanitarian responsibility by following an open-door policy to the Syrians who came by forced migration, but at this point, it has faced difficulties in developing a long-term integration policy. Although providing economic integration does not result in social harmony between the host society and the immigrant society, it is an important step taken on this path (İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 15). While the effect of the refugee influx on unemployment throughout the country remains low, it is observed that it increases unemployment in areas where refugees live densely on a regional basis (İçduygu, 2016, p. 9). As stated in many studies, the increase in unemployment occurred in the informal sector, and refugees did not have a significant impact on formal employment (Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015, p. 4; Tumen, 2016, p. 457; Ceritoğlu et al., 2017, p. 5; İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 28). With the arrival of refugees, the excess labor supply in the sector decreased wages and the local workers working informally were adversely affected (Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015, p. 19; İçduygu & Diker, 2017, p. 29). However, some studies show that registered employment has increased to meet the needs in regions where Syrians live densely (Tumen, 2016, p. 457).

In conclusion, Syrian migrants are compelled to enter the labor market in order to sustain their livelihoods. Despite Turkey's legal regulations regarding work permits, the majority of employed Syrian migrants work in the informal sector without a work permit. Therefore, it is necessary to control legal regulations to prevent labor exploitation and to soften the social unrest created by competition. In addition, the condition of working in the registered province and the quota requirement should be

removed. Legal pathways for employment should be opened. The next section will examine the experiences of the participants.

2.2. MIGRATION TO TURKEY

Although Syrian immigrants are considered a homogeneous group, different experiences are encountered from the way they migrate to the migration processes. There is more than one reason for their migration to Turkey. The participants stated the reasons for migration as security concerns, not wanting to join the military, economic reasons, the problem of meeting basic needs, education and ethnic clustering opportunities. Participants generally stated that their migration to Turkey was due to the conjuncture that emerged in Syria. Most of the participants migrated to escape the insecurity created by the war.

“We came because of the war in Syria. One of my brothers is in prison, and my brother was martyred in the war. Then I decided to come to Turkey to live in a safe place. This is why I came.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“I left Syria in 2011, so I had to. I was already an associate professor there. I was working at the largest university hospital in Syria, but I ran away so they wouldn't arrest me and put me in jail, I had to.” (Muhammed, Policlinic Owner)

“In 2012, the war started below my house. The protests in Syria actually started in 2011. I was always participating in the protests. When it came to weapons after that, there was no weapon in Aleppo before, I was out of the province then. I have no father, only my mother and sisters. I took them and came here in 2012.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Another reason for the migration of Syrian entrepreneurs is the concern about compulsory military service. Government security forces are recruiting soldiers at checkpoints. Participants stated that they do not want to take up arms against their own people.

“I left the country because they called me to the military. I don't want to go into the military. If you are a university student, it's okay, but there are many police officers on the way. They stop and look at the ID, and ask why you didn't join the army. If I say I'm studying at university, they say okay, they tear off the ID and put me on the bus. Who am I going to kill when I enlist, my brother?” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

“Not because of the war, actually, they called me back for military service. I had served before, and they called me again. I didn't want to kill my own people or anything, I ran away from it.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

Apart from security concerns, another reason for migration is related to the difficult living conditions in Syria after the war, the inability to meet basic needs and the worsening of the economic situation. The economic crisis has made daily needs unaffordable. Cities not directly affected by the war are under the influence of this economic crisis.

“Due to the war, daily expenses increased a lot. For example, your salary is 2000, your expenses are 20000. There is no gas, no diesel, and no electricity. My family is in Syria, my sister lives in Damascus, and there is only 2 hours of electricity every day. It's not 2 hours continuously, it's 15 minutes. You have to wait at least a week to get diesel or petrol for the car.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

The unending war in Syria has affected every aspect of daily life. Education is another area affected by the war. Although there are schools where education continues, for security reasons, especially for men, the concern of being recruited into the military makes it difficult to get an education in Syria. Some Syrian immigrants migrated for educational purposes like Ibrahim, *“In fact, I came for education.”*

Family reasons also directly affect the migration of participants. Family members' decision to migrate triggers other members to migrate.

“I have two kids. One of them came to complete his medical specialization here, and the other chose a university here in Istanbul and started to study biotechnology. I came primarily for my children.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Interviews with Syrian migrant entrepreneurs revealed that not all Syrians came directly from Syria, but migrated to Turkey through a second country. Participants who left Syria in the early stages of the war immigrated to Turkey due to poor or worsening living conditions in the country they migrated to.

“I left Syria in 2012. I was 13 years old. We went to Jordan, then we came here in 2019. Things stopped a bit in Jordan, it got bad. That's why we came here.” (Zubeyr, Spice-seller)

“My husband started to work in Beirut in 2012. I joined him in 2014, I lived in Beirut for one year. We wanted to start something. You know it was close to Syria and the war will end soon and we will go back but it seemed it is going to long time. The situation in Lebanon was not welcoming at all actually. It is very hard conditions. At

the end of year we decided, we do not have any future in Lebanon and let's try something in Turkey.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“In 2012, we left Damascus because of the war and went to Egypt. We lived there for a year. After that, we came here to Istanbul.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

“I went to Sudan. Because my passport is from Syria, there are no visas. Sudan accepts Syrians, no problem. I went and worked in the restaurant. The people in Sudan are very good, it is a good country, but there is no job and no life. People are living a stagnant life, going through the same things for 5 years, nothing new.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

“Life is hard in Dubai, it is very difficult to do business. Very expensive. That's why I moved here from Dubai and quit trading.” (Said, Grocer)

The increasing Syrian immigrant population in Turkey has also attracted Syrians from other countries to Turkey. Osman, who lived in Dubai before the war, immigrated to Turkey based on the ethnic market opportunity created here.

“We moved here in two stages, in the first stage, we moved to Dubai in 2010, and we opened a restaurant there. Then we conducted research on the possibility of opening a restaurant in Turkey in 2016. We wanted to open a business here because we realized that a lot of Syrians flocked here.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

As can be seen from the examples above, Syrians immigrated to Turkey for various reasons such as security, economy and education. Changes in the social, political and economic structure have pushed the masses to find new living spaces. In addition, the individuals decide to migrate when they find the appropriate place and time for leveraging their resources they have. Immigrants need to be included in the labor market in order to survive. Most of the immigrants who immigrated to Turkey were included in the labor market as employees. Some of them are Syrian entrepreneurs who opened their own businesses, which are the subject of this research. In the next section, the factors that lead Syrian immigrants to become entrepreneurs and the process of opening a business will be discussed.

2.3. TRANSITION TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND STARTING A BUSINESS

There are factors that direct Syrian immigrants to enter into entrepreneurship. Some of them immigrated directly with their economic capital and established their businesses,

and some of them opened businesses after accumulating capital. The need to work is a factor that drives Syrian immigrants to become entrepreneurs.

“One cannot stop without doing a job. My children are happy at university, they came to study, but I couldn't stay here doing anything, I had to work.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“I had to work to live, to provide for my family.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

Immigrants who cannot find a place for themselves in the labor market due to market-related reasons or who face difficulties as employees tend to become entrepreneurs. Syrian migrants encounter challenges such as low wages, long working hours, and discrimination as employees, which led them to embrace entrepreneurship as a solution.

“I worked here as an apprentice, but the apprenticeship is always difficult. Salary does not pay, nothing happens etc. Because we are foreigners, we can experience such difficulties. That's why we have no choice but to open a business ourselves. So working with people is a bit difficult. At first, you don't understand, then you have trouble.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

“They paid a very little salary. They didn't give me my remaining money when I quit the job.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

Entrepreneurship is also a solution to unemployment. Immigrants who cannot find a job can create self-employment with low capital. Yusuf explains this as follows, “*I went to many places to work, no one wanted to hire me because I was old. Then I started to research what I can do here.*”.

Past work experience is one of the most important factors that lead Syrian immigrants to become entrepreneurs. Participants continued their past professional experiences at the most appropriate time after they migrated. Cultural capital such as entrepreneurship experience and professional competencies affect the participants' choice of sector and decision to open a business.

“I was doing the same job in Syria. My family and my grandparents' business, they were all doing it.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

“We had our offices in Syria before the war. We were very famous in this community. So we didn't want to change our career.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“We have language, no problem. We have a profession, nothing is missing. The place is clear, the shop is clear as trust.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“*Lokma* is the best I can do, I'm a master at *lokma* and *burma*.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

Some participants express owning their own business with habits and cultural tendencies.

“The number of Syrians there increased and when we saw that there was a mass, we decided to open a place. Syrians generally like to have their own businesses.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“So, I'm not used to being an employee at all. I had two shops. I say two shops, these were such big shops. I wasn't the tenant, it was mine.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

In addition, the increasing immigrant population has created an opportunity for immigrant entrepreneurs to venture into the ethnic market. Entrepreneurs take action by detecting the gap in the market. Syrian migrant entrepreneurs identify the needs of the ethnic market and develop solutions for these needs.

“Because the need arose... When Syrians first came to Turkey, they opened temporary schools around 2013 with the cooperation of certain associations. These temporary schools gradually disappeared, the state closed them. The government actually showed some convenience to international schools to close that gap.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Social capital facilitates the entrepreneurial process of immigrants. Participants receive support from their relatives, friends and professionals when opening a business.

“I have not been to Turkey before, but I have many relatives here. They showed me the way and there is a Turkish brother who helped us to open a shop. We pray to him.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

In addition to an informal support provided from social networks, participants benefit from professional support. In particular, they receive financial advisor or accountant support while executing the legal process.

“We work with a Turkish accountant. Accountant deals with legal issues. Other than that, I handle things myself, rent and so on.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“First, we rented this place, then the financial advisor did all the transactions.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

On average, a Syrian migrant entrepreneur goes through the following process to open a business:

“First, I talked to the accountant and asked what it takes to open a business. Must be a limited liability company or sole proprietorship. You need some money. Then we went to the municipality to get permission from the finance department. Then we open the shop, the accountant takes care of the rest. Because permissions don't come out right away. Open the shop now, it's okay, but the license only comes out after 6 months. The shop opens, the municipality comes to explore, then gives a license.”
(Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

This process requires different procedures in different sectors. For example, Muhammed stated that to open a polyclinic in the health sector, it is necessary to have at least 2 Turkish citizens. Enes stated that in order to open an international school, at least one of the partners must be Turkish. No such requirement is sought in other sectors we interviewed within the scope of the study. Therefore, it turns out that Syrian immigrants who are not Turkish citizens do not take part in every sector of the labor market and they can operate in areas permitted by market regulators.

Syrian immigrants open their own businesses in order to eliminate the problems they encounter in the market, to sustain their lives and to make use of the capital they have. In the next section, the characteristics of Syrian entrepreneurs, their reasons for choosing Başakşehir and their satisfaction with owning a business in Başakşehir will be discussed.

CHAPTER III: SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERIENCES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM BAŞAKŞEHİR

3.1. SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BAŞAKŞEHİR

3.1.1. The Reasons for Choosing Başakşehir

Başakşehir is the fourth subprovince in Istanbul where Syrian immigrants live the most (Morgül et al., 2021, p. 10), and ranks third among the subprovinces with the highest concentration of companies established with Syrian capital (Yılmaz, 2019, p. 75). The majority (15) of the Syrian migrant entrepreneurs interviewed within the scope of the research live in Başakşehir, only two participants reside in another subprovince. There are certain issues expressed by the participants in choosing Başakşehir to open a business and reside. Some participants resided in different cities before coming to Istanbul, and then migrated to Istanbul for various reasons.

“I first came to Bursa. I lived there for 3 years. There were so many problems there. Especially among Syrians and Turks.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“We used to sell Turkish doner kebab in the business we opened in Gaziantep, but the Turks there never accepted it.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

The high foreign population in Başakşehir attracts other immigrants to live there and creates an ethnic market, which is in line with the immigrant/refugee entrepreneurship literature that emphasizes the importance of the ethnic market for immigrant entrepreneurs (Wauters & Lambrecht, 2008). The opportunity structure at the neighborhood level suggested by the mixed embeddedness approach creates a suitable basis for the entrepreneurs to evaluate the social and cultural capital they have. In such an opportunity structure, immigrant entrepreneurs can mobilize their social capital to use their ethnic networks and their cultural capital such as language and aesthetic knowledge.

“When we first came, we lived in Bayrampasa because the hospital where my son was an intern doctor was there. Then we moved here after choosing the location of the business. I wanted to open such a shop in a place where mostly foreigners live, since Turks do not shop at foreign businesses.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“We opened the first restaurant in Fatih in 2017, we chose that place because of the large number of Arabs. For the same reason, we opened a branch in Başakşehir. Our customer base directs us, we see where our customers are, and we want to open our branch accordingly.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

Başakşehir is a district where the conservative and religious population is more visible compared to other districts of Istanbul (Aydin, 2020). This sociological concentration in Başakşehir is one of the main reasons for preference of religious/conservative Muslim immigrants. Mustafa expresses this situation as follows:

“The main reason for us is that this place is conservative, there are other problems in other neighborhoods and I guess it is not suitable for Arabs. For example, women dress immodest or there is alcohol or other problems. Başakşehir is generally conservative, so we chose this place. This is the most important reason for us, our children are growing up here now.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

The calm and conservative nature of Başakşehir evokes a cultural affinity for Syrian immigrants. Some of the participants liken it to Damascus, the capital of Syria.

“We are people of Damascus, we come from a quiet area. In this respect, Başakşehir is similar to its calmness, so we preferred this place.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“Actually, we felt like Damascus here, for example, everybody here is conservative. There is no immodesty for example. For example, it is different on the Anatolian side.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

The fact that Başakşehir is a new settlement is another reason mentioned by the participants. Since it is a new settlement, it is easier to absorb the newcomers in Başakşehir.

“It is both new and conservative. That's why we came here, we chose this place.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“For example, they are right in Fatih. The arrival of Syrians and Arabs has changed the demographic and it is a historical place. So, more attention should have been paid and nothing should have been changed there. True, but Başakşehir is a new settlement.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

According to participants, the local population of Başakşehir accepts foreigners, there is less racist behavior and it is a problem-free place.

“Well, I love Başakşehir very much and actually I always feel something like this. I can't leave Başakşehir right now, so let me tell you. Even if I want to go out, I can't go out. I hear some problems on the internet and so on, I don't feel them. Indeed, Başakşehir is a little different from other districts. People are closer to us, I think, or I feel that way because we are too many here, I don't know.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

“Here, for example, no older sister came and said, “Why do you live here, the war is over, go back to Syria”.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

“Right now, I'm going everywhere in Istanbul. I also know outside of Istanbul, I lived in Gaziantep. So, I think Başakşehir is one of the best places in Turkey regarding racism and it is more comfortable for daily life.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

The high economic level of Başakşehir is another point expressed by the participants. This is also a reason for preference to open a business.

“We have a lot of good financial situation Arab customers living in the region. Also, the Turkish people who are living in Başakşehir have better financial situation. So, they are willing to pay, we have two or three customers who we worked for them and made decoration and furniture for their houses and they are willing to pay. As I told you, it is kind of luxury to make decorations, it is not essential thing. So, our target customer is here.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“Başakşehir, because it is the place where most Arabs do business. Either here or Beylikdüzü. Most of the people here are rich.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

The presence of social, cultural and economic capital in Başakşehir has affected the preferences of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs to open a business. Besides, the surrounding factors in Başakşehir are suitable for mobilizing these capitals. In the next section, the partnerships, target customers and suppliers of the businesses opened by Syrian entrepreneurs will be discussed.

3.1.2. Characteristics of Syrian Immigrant Enterprises

While Syrian entrepreneurs attach more importance to their social capital when establishing partnerships, the use of social capital in recruiting employees varies according to the sector and the strategy of the business. 13 (68.4%) of the Syrian entrepreneurs participating in the research have at least one partner. In the table below, data on the partners of the enterprises and the nationality of the employees are given. Except for one, partnered businesses have at least one Syrian business partner. When establishing partnerships, Syrian entrepreneurs mostly prefer people from their own ethnic origins. The fact that these partnerships are generally related to relatives and friendships can be explained by reasons such as a sense of trust, cultural proximity and a common language.

“My cousins in France were supportive. We've already become business partners.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“Investment came to us in 2020, the third partner is our relative and invested.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Businesses opened by immigrants create employment especially for other immigrants. The nationalities working in Syrian enterprises are more diverse than the partnerships they have established. While 10 of the enterprises employ employees of Arab origin, 7 of them employ only Syrian employees. The remaining 8 enterprises employ both Turkish, Arab and some other nationalities. There is one business that has no employees.

Table 3.1.: Business Partners and Employee Characteristics

NAME	NUMBER OF PARTNERS	NATIONALITY OF PARTNERS ⁷	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	NATIONALITY OF EMPLOYEES
Osman	0	0	110	ARAB
Abdullah	1	SYRIAN	6	ARAB & TURKISH
Mahmud	1	SYRIAN	2	SYRIAN & TURKISH
Hamid	1	SYRIAN	0	0
Yusuf	0	0	36	SYRIAN & PALESTINIAN
İbrahim	3	SAUDI & SYRIAN	3	ARAB
Enes	COMPANY ⁸	SYRIAN & KUWAITI	64	ARAB & TURKISH
Said	0	0	1	SYRIAN
Nedim	2	PALESTINIAN	1	TURKISH
Muhammed	1	SYRIAN/TURKISH	50	ARAB & TURKISH
Ziyad	4	SYRIAN /FRENCH & SYRIAN	2	SYRIAN
Faruk	1	SYRIAN /AMERICAN	2	SYRIAN
Bilal	3	SYRIAN /TURKISH & SYRIAN	30	ARAB & TURKISH & RUSSIAN
Mahir	1	SYRIAN / TURKISH	1	SYRIAN
Zubeyr	0	0	1	SYRIAN

⁷ The “/” sign is used to indicate dual citizenship.

⁸ The entity is a subsidiary of the Kuwaiti company. The number of partners is not shared.

Hasan	1	SYRIAN	1	SYRIAN
Mustafa	1	SYRIAN / TURKISH	12	ARAB & TURKISH
Sena	0	0	5-10 ⁹	SYRIAN
Fatma	0	0	10 ¹⁰	ARAB & TURKISH & MIDDLE ASIAN

Enterprise sizes are grouped as micro (0-9), small (10-49), medium (50-249) and large (250+) enterprises according to the number of employees. Accordingly, 3 of the participants have medium scale, 3 small scale, 13 micro scale enterprises. While the employees employed in micro-sized enterprises consist of family members and friends, this acquaintance relationship decreases according to the size of the enterprise.

Immigrant entrepreneurs do not only employ themselves, they also create employment opportunities for other immigrant populations (Bizri, 2017, p. 17).

“Here, for example, there is a dessert shop, bakery, grocery store, who work in the same way. This situation also provides a job opportunity for the Syrians who have migrated here. When I ask them to come and work with me, they agree.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

However, employees in some ethnic-based businesses work without security and receive low wages. Kloosterman argues that this is because resources are scarce and competition is high (Kloosterman, 2010, p. 34).

“I work here manually, my son-in-law is here, my children work with me. Thus, my personnel costs are reduced.

There are 30 employees, but 5 of them work with a work permit and I have to pay 1500 lira for all of them. There is not much profit at the moment.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

Existing and target customers of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs vary according to the sector. For example, the customers of ethnic initiatives such as restaurants, grocery stores, language courses and spice shops are shaped within this framework. Due to

⁹ Flexible.

¹⁰ The number of full-time (6) and part-time (4) employees. There are also seasonal workers employed in the projects, which can reach 30 in total depending on the size of the project.

knowledge of ethnic taste, absence of language problems and cultural proximity, the customer base of Syrian enterprises is mostly Arab customers. Zubeyr expresses this situation, *“Majority Arab. Because Arabs use a lot of spices, and communication is easier.”*.

Yusuf, who opened his first business in Fatih, explains the reason why Syrians come to his business as follows, *“They also liked coming to a Syrian shop and sitting there. And they liked to come and see a shop like them, they came to my shop because they were Syrian.”*.

Bilal, the owner of the food ordering app for foreigners, and Mustafa, the course owner who offers a Turkish language course and YÖS exam preparation course, focused directly on Arabic-speaking customers who do not speak Turkish in general. Therefore, the sector in which the business is located also determines the customer base and use of social and cultural capital.

Also, the customer group of businesses is related to the customer attracting strategy of the business owner. Mahmud, who runs a barber shop, stated that sixty percent of his customers are Turks.

“When this place first opened, I focused on the Turkish customer base. Most Arab barbers focus on Arab customers, they don't want Turks, they want Arab customers. On the contrary, I focused more on Turkish customers than Arabs.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

A similar strategy was adopted by Abdullah, emphasizing the need to take Turkish customers into account.

“Of course, we strategically targeted everyone from the start. Because it would be a big mistake not to target the Turks. Of course, the rate of foreigners is high in Başakşehir, but most of them are Turks. It is wrong not to take them into account, for this we address Turks from the very beginning and adjust our ads on Google on social media accordingly.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Due to the surrounding factors, Fatma turned to the local market as the target customer group.

“After the 2016, there was the coup d'etat, we have our customers mostly from Arabic countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait or Yemen. They are investors that doing business in Turkey. After that businessman stop to invest money because of the situation isn't

clear at the beginning. So, we lost wide range of our customers. At this point, we said that we have to change our customers and we have to get in inner market. We have to have Turkish customers. We started with our neighbors in the place where we work and they asked for simple things like a cupboard, a bedroom. They started to comment their friends to wider community. In this way, in 2017 or around we almost have equal Arab and Turkish customers, they are equal.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

Osman, who offers menus focused on Damascus cuisine, states that while they expect their customers to consist of Damascus and Arabs, they also attract Turkish customers with the details they care about in providing service.

“We had heard that the Turks are closed to different tastes, so we were afraid at first to make such an investment here. We thought whether we should enter it or not, but the data surprised us. Currently, 30-40% of our customers are Turks. The problem here is not that the Turks are closed to the outside, but some details they care about. Whoever pays attention to these details will be successful.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

Some businesses act independently from the ethnic market and create customers who want to receive the service they offer.

“Our target customers are companies that do not have an office. We provide a working environment for them. There are offices inside, where they can sit and work. Apart from that, the cafe section also has its own customers.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“Generally, there are phone repairers here, we do repairs for them at most. For example, regular customers do not come to us, we bring broken phones from the shops, for example, and we repair them here. Like this. There are Turks and Arabs.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

“We are currently doing export-oriented works.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

From whom the Syrian migrant entrepreneurs procure their products is related to the status of being an ethnic business. Businesses that offer products for the ethnic market also supply their products from the ethnic market, they procure other goods from Turkish suppliers or importing from abroad.

“We supply from Turkish and Syrian shops. For example, there are things specific to Syrians, such as coffee. Or like this tea, Turkish tea is Marmara Tea, this is Ceylon tea. Syrian-specific things like this.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“Some spices come from India, some from Syria, some from Egypt.” (Zubeyr, Spice-seller)

“I get the material from the Turks in Eminönü, Beyazıt.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Partnerships established by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs mostly consist of Syrians, especially their close circle. Micro-enterprises similarly employ Syrian staff, while ethnic market-oriented businesses employ Arabic-speaking employees. However, more than half of the enterprises employ Turkish employees. Participants explain their employment of Turkish employees as a conscious choice to reach Turkish customers.

“We have an employee who speaks Turkish in the store, so that they can communicate more easily when the Turks come.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“More Turks come here. I would say 60% of the visitors. Because there is a Turkish employee here. But there are also Turkish customers who come to me to get a cut.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

This chapter has revealed the heterogeneous nature of entrepreneurs and the use of capital that differs within the same surrounding factors. In the next section, the satisfaction of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs who own a business in Başakşehir will be discussed.

3.1.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Doing Business in Başakşehir

Syrian migrant entrepreneurs differ in their satisfaction with owning a business in Başakşehir. Participants expressed their positive and negative judgments about owning a business in Başakşehir mostly with structural factors. While Mahmud is satisfied with living in Başakşehir in terms of social environment, he considers it an economically expensive district.

“On the positive side, I met very good people in Başakşehir. Different from not friendly people in other places or like in Bursa, I met good people here. On the downside, Başakşehir is very expensive, but on the other hand, there is no problem with people here.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

Abdullah states that he could not reach a definite decision about owning a business in Başakşehir due to the factors affecting the economy.

“I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, I can't say anything for now. Because I'm new, we're open in the pandemic, the dollar crisis, it all came together, now it's Ukraine's war. All of these affects. I can't make a decision right now because there is still no normal stable situation.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

The problem of high rent is the biggest problem most business owners face in Başakşehir.

“There is a rent problem here. In Syria, we did not pay rent, we owned property there. We pay rent here, that's the problem. It was our property from our grandfather in Syria. Property owners want to constantly increase the rent. Thank goodness the owner of this place is a good person. There is no problem, but of course it would be better to have property.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

Most of the participants mention that Başakşehir is a quiet area as a positive feature, but the stagnant market causes low profits.

“Actually, the positive side is that it is a quiet place, there are no problems. On the negative side, there is not much movement, there is not much outgoing and incoming. Only a few people come every day.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

The weak transportation infrastructure of Başakşehir prevents businesses from reaching their customers and their employees.

“Buses are still very bad in this neighborhood, very difficult. There are a lot of people here. There was nothing here before, when I came, the square was dirt. The mosque and the public garden were not finished then, but now. Still the buses are very little, very weak, very bad. That's a problem.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

“The public transportation is kind of isolated. There is nearly opened metro station but still needs be more connected at least with the metrobus line or Asian part. There is no direct transportation for example between Başakşehir and Esenyurt, even they are so close and a lot of our workers live there. So, you have a worker living in Esenyurt, for coming to us he has to change two or three directions because there is no direct line.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

Participants generally state that there is no racism in Başakşehir and they are satisfied with this issue. Although racist behavior is not widespread, it is not completely absent. Mahir stated that some customers showed a racist reaction when they learned that he was Syrian.

“Actually, sometimes customers come and ask something. Then they say where are you from, I say I'm from Syria, they get angry, they say "what are you doing here" and leaves.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

Apart from the above problems, Syrian entrepreneurs express that they are happy to own a business in Başakşehir.

“In Başakşehir, Turks also come to the Syrians' shops as customers. But outside of Başakşehir, Turks don't come to Syrians' shops very often.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“Good area, good neighbors in Başakşehir. I am really comfortable here. I've been here for 4 years, I haven't had any problems, thank goodness. When I first opened this place, no one was there.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

According to the Syrian entrepreneurs, the problems experienced in Başakşehir for a Syrian business owner are generally based on the economy, and the social life is more comfortable and problem-free. In the next section, the problems faced by Syrian immigrants throughout their entrepreneurial experience will be discussed.

3.2. CHALLENGES FACED BY SYRIAN ENTREPRENEURS

Syrian migrant entrepreneurs face various difficulties after migration. These problems include not only the problems they face as an entrepreneur, but also the problems they experience as immigrants. Identifying the problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs is an important starting point for these businesses to transform into long-term investments. Alrawadieh et al. (2019) classified the typology of problems faced by refugee entrepreneurs as legislative/administrative, financial, market-related and socio-cultural problems. The findings obtained in this study do not support the problems related to the market. This research addresses the problems faced by Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs under three headings: legal, economic, and socio-cultural, in order to present a more systematic picture of all these problems. Nevertheless, the challenges faced by Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs are interconnected.

3.2.1. Legal Challenges and Procedures

The title of legal challenges deals with the state institutions, official transactions and other legal problems Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs face. Legal problems faced by business owners can be summarized as follows: work permit, residence permit, employment quota, long-lasting official transactions, municipality license, policies adopted by Turkey, repatriation, travel ban, lack of knowledge about laws, passport problem, citizenship, property acquisition, changing laws, diploma equivalence, Arabic-letter signage problem and exclusion to the unregistered area. It is more appropriate to gather these problems in a single text rather than to separate them into subheadings in order to show the intertwinedness of the problems.

Residence permit is a problem faced by Syrian immigrants. Theoretically, Syrian immigrants under temporary protection cannot reside in another province other than

the province they are registered in, and it is forbidden to leave the city where they are registered without obtaining permission. Some of the Syrian immigrants with temporary protection or residence permit status do not reside in the province where they are registered for various reasons. For example, although Bilal and his sister have obtained citizenship, his mother is registered in Gaziantep with temporary protection status.

“For example, my mother's identity is currently registered in Gaziantep, temporary protection. Identity cannot be taken here in any way; it cannot be taken to Istanbul. Right now, my mother has become illegal, there is something wrong with her legal situation. I couldn't fix it in any way. For example, I went to the Immigration Administration and they said that you can get a work permit and then you can change your identity. Me and my sister are both citizens, we live in the same house here, but my mother's identity is not valid.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Said, whose identity is registered in another province, complains about the lack of job opportunities.

“They come here because there are many job opportunities in Istanbul. Not only Syrians but also Turks came here from different cities, like Hatay and Rize. Because job opportunities exist here. For example, my ID is registered in Mersin, I have to work there. If there is a job, it is not a problem, but there is a problem if there is no job.” (Said, Grocer)

Immigrants who succeed in obtaining a work permit after leaving the province where they are registered do not encounter residence permit problems during this period. Hasan stated that even if you return to the registered city after the work permit expires, your temporary protection identity is cancelled.

“Even if I go to Yozgat, they may not give me permission. Same happened to my friend. My friend had an Istanbul ID here. The work permit was not paid for two weeks, and the Istanbul identity card was canceled a week later. The Immigration Administration told him to go to Urfa, they did not give his identity card there, what did he do, he returned to Idlib.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Abdullah stated that immigrants who moved to another city were sent to Syria, not to the city where they were registered.

“There is also a situation like this right now, for example, if people who have an identity record in Adana and who have an identity record in Bursa come to Istanbul, they are not sent back to those cities, they are sent directly to Syria.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Work permit is one of the legal problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs. According to the Temporary Protection Regulation, those holding temporary protection status can apply for a work permit to the Ministry of Family, Social Security and Labor in the province where they are registered (Art. 29). Although this regulation aims to remove the barriers for Syrian immigrants under temporary protection status to enter the labor market formally, it is challenging in practice.

Work permit issue is a problem that immigrants residing with a residence permit frequently experience. Business owners who cannot obtain a work permit, despite not encountering any problems while opening a company, are in an illegal position in their own businesses.

“There were many problems. Although I have a company, I do not have a work permit. Why then did they give me permission to start the company? I founded the company, I rented it, after paying all the expenses, they say you don't have a work permit. And we don't know why, there is no reason. This was the biggest problem I faced, we opened the company, there is no work permit. We are trying to run a company but we are having trouble without a work permit. Legally, I cannot work only with a residence permit, but I cannot comply.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“I want to do everything according to the law. When I was in Syria, I used to do everything right. I'm illegal here right now. I own the shop, but I can't sit comfortably here. I'm scared when the police come. My kids need to be here. If you are a company owner, a work permit must also be given. I hope it fixes.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

Syrian entrepreneurs who obtain work permits have difficulties in obtaining work permits for the personnel they will employ. This situation increases the workload of business owners or causes a change in the business model.

“Here, a few of my friends quit their jobs because they did not have a work permit.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

“I had a lot of trouble recruiting employees. We could not employ too many Syrian workers in the workshop in Çekmeköy. Because of the temporary identity, such as the identity registered in another city. We have encountered many such problems. This is actually one of the reasons why I'm considering running an online business, women don't need a work permit.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

Another problem parallel to the work permit problem is related to the employment quota of foreign workers. There are no legal barriers to employing Syrians in businesses established by Syrian immigrants under temporary protection (Özipek &

Tanrikulu, 2022, p. 110). Yusuf, who is under temporary protection status, says that there is no such quota for Syrians.

“There is a quota for every business that opens a business in Turkey, but there is no such obligation for Syrians. Syrians do not have to employ 5 people.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

However, in enterprises with residence permit and citizenship status, there is an employment quota application of 10%, which obliges to employ ten Turkish employees for each foreign worker. Although it is stated in the law as 1 to 10, while talking about the employment quota during the fieldwork, all of the participants mentioned the obligation to employ 5 Turks for a foreigner. Despite the employment quota has been stretched in practice, it continues to be a practice that forces business owners. Telephone repairman Hamid cannot recruit new staff due to the employment quota.

“Why am I not hiring employees because they want 5 Turkish employees in return. We are not doing business properly anyway; how can I meet 5 employees? I can't live by myself.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

Mohammed, the owner of the health clinic, described the problem created by the employment quota as follows:

“...I have a problem there, too, to get a work permit. So I have to, there must be someone who can speak Arabic who works with me. I cannot employ Turks here for children with autism. That's why we are trying so hard to get a work permit.” (Muhammed, Polyclinic Owner)

Similarly, international school principal Enes states that although they are exempted in the law, they have difficulties in obtaining work permits due to the employment quota.

“Since this is an international school, most of the staff here must be foreigners. Because it teaches a foreign curriculum. That's why it needs to be exempted from the "5 Turks, one foreigner" law, and it is. In other words, we make the application even though this exemption is exempt in the law, and then we get a rejection from the 9A and 9E labor clauses.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Business owners are required to obtain a license by registering their businesses with the municipality. The problem encountered in obtaining a license is the municipality's request for a work permit. Business owners enter a vicious circle about how to get a work permit before opening a business.

“When I went to the municipality to register this enterprise, they said that you need a work permit. I was just opening this shop, how will I have a work permit? This doesn't make sense.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

One of the most important problem that Syrian entrepreneurs faced at the beginning was the lack of knowledge about the law. Not having enough knowledge about the laws prolongs the permit/license process.

“Naturally, everything was new to me. I didn't know what the laws were, how the nature of the business was. We got tired in the first year, but then we understood the laws, what they wanted.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

“We wanted everything to proceed legally anyway. But we made a mistake due to lack of information, so that's why.” (Muhammed, Policlinic Owner)

Participants cope with the problem of lack of knowledge by applying to experienced acquaintances or professionals such as financial advisors, accountants or lawyers. Sena and Fatma are the only participants who applied for the support of an organization in this regard.

“Honestly, I haven't had problems with the legal issues. Because I have cooperated with European institutions such as Building Markets and Ingev, they help with legal matters.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

“I had a connection with Syrian Economic Forum and they introduced us to Ingev and Building Markets. I started attended courses, mostly about Turkish labor laws, rights and goals, what we can do with businessman, kind of networking for our companies. They also have professional advisors, lawyers, financial advisors, different people who you can take real advise for and it was very helpful for us. I wish we had at the beginning, they get so easier for us.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

Enes stated that working with competent people is effective in solving the legal problems encountered.

“There are some difficulties, of course, inevitably. But since there are people like Cengiz teacher and İsmet teacher in this school, the problems are solved.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Another problem that Syrian immigrants frequently encounter is educational equivalence problem. Although Nedim has certificates, he cannot use them. This situation puts an obstacle to enlarge the business.

“I need the equivalence of my certificates, although I have 9 belts, this place works with the certificate of a guy with 3 belts. This needs to be resolved.” (Nedim, Martial Arts School Owner)

There are problems that Syrian business owners face in official institutions. The first of these is the long-lasting official processes. According to Ibrahim, these things need to be handled in a more practical way.

“You have to spend a lot of time to get in line, maybe a month, maybe 2-3 months later, the turn will not come. Maybe you have to wait 3 months to do a job in vain, still these things have not been systematic.” (Ibrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

Abdullah states that this problem stems from the lack of coordination between institutions.

“For example, after I rented the house, I went to the civil registration office and had the residence address determined, but it does not automatically go to the immigration administration. I have to go to the immigration administration again. If I paid the rent of the house, I went to the civil registry, why do I have to go to the immigration administration again? I've already identified them and spent a lot of time. Funny thing is, when I went to the bank the next day, my new address was updated there. But it did not appear in the other ministry, I had to go again.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Syrian entrepreneurs encounter problems arising from the personnel in charge during official transactions.

“Legally, opening a business in Turkey is an easy process. After all, Turkey is a country open to investments. The real problem is keeping these businesses going. Frankly, it seems to me that there are laws in Turkey, but sometimes whether they are implemented or not depends on the situation, not always. There are laws, but sometimes they are implemented, sometimes they are not. The procedures you will do in government offices vary according to the personnel there.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

“We go anywhere, we see an officer, he doesn't know what we're going to do, he doesn't know, he doesn't know at all. What are we going to do, go come, go, come and so on.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Besides, the language problem has been ongoing at the most of public institutions. The capital owned by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs makes it easier to cope with the difficulties they face. Hasan stated that he could understand Turkish, but he had communication difficulties when he went to public institutions. He found the solution in his social capital.

“A friend of mine works as a translator, I call him when necessary.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Syrian immigrants residing with temporary protection status face the problem of travel barriers. This situation narrows the space for Syrian entrepreneurs to trade and hinders the development of the business.

“This is a huge inconvenience for us as the business owner. For example, I can go to China commercially, I can buy goods, for example, I can help, but they do not allow us to travel. When I go out of the country, this ID is cancelled. They don't look at what you have done for how many years, they cancel it directly. This is a problem for us, as if it's like a big prison, we can't go anywhere. For example, I went to China 3 times in the past, while I was living in Syria, I was buying goods and selling from there. I buy goods from Syria, I sell them to Arabia, I make a deal, I go, I come, and then I start sending goods there. I can't do that here because I don't have that permission.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“I have not seen my family for 10 years, I cannot leave Turkey. Once I get out of here, I can't go back. This is an obstacle to doing a stable business, an obstacle to doing serious business.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

Apart from this, with the Law No. 1062 of *Mukabele-i Bilmisil*, which entered into force in 1927, Syrians were prohibited from acquiring property such as residences or vehicles. Syrians with dual citizenship are also unable to acquire property under this law. Syrians can only acquire property on behalf of the company.

“This is a big problem, as the Syrians cannot own property. Syrians are not allowed to own property. A second problem stemming from the law is that if a person has another nationality but is originally from Syria, he is also not allowed to own property.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Another problem encountered in fieldwork is the problem of illegal economy. The illegal economy leaves the door open, especially where legal avenues are closed. The existence of the informal area in the system and its functioning as a solution mechanism feeds the informal economy and exploits the migrant labor.

“I made 3-4 times (application), it was not accepted. Then I talked to the pirate, got a fake passport. It's not cheap, \$3500. In 2018, I could get 2 visas for 3500 dollars, but they (officials) did not issue visas.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

“When I asked for ID, they said that temporary protection ID is not allowed for Syrians in Istanbul. Ok, I went to Yozgat and asked for ID, it's forbidden again. I went to the pirate and he said ok. I went to the same immigration office, went to the same man, got the same number, it worked. I said, I came a week ago, I asked for ID, you said it's forbidden, how is it happening now?” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Another legal problem is related to the use of Arabic-letter advertising and signboards. Participants mention that since the target customer group is Arabic speaking foreigners, writing the signboards in Latin alphabet negatively affects the business.

“For example, if there are Arabs in Başakşehir or in another neighborhood, like us or any other shop, “döner” or something else, we write Arabic on the sign, since its customers are usually Arabs. Why, because our customers are Arabs, they do not speak Turkish. Now, according to the new law, this is prohibited, if you write in Arabic on the sign, the municipal police come immediately and they say this is prohibited. But why is it forbidden, how will I work? Our client is Arab and they do not speak Turkish. If I write in Turkish, they cannot read, this is a problem for example. For example, this does not harm anyone, but the municipal police come and say it is forbidden.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Hasan states that Arabic signboards should not be perceived as a threat to the Turkish identity, and that this is done to capture the customer base with commercial concerns.

“For example, Başakşehir Municipality requires every sign to be written in Latin letters. Syrians and Arabs are not trying to change Turkey's identity. We are not destroying Turkey when we speak Arabic or write Arabic on the sign. For example, many customers come here and say, "Are you Arab, I don't understand." Because it is always written in Turkish outside.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

A sense of distrust in the justice system is an obstacle for entrepreneurs to run their businesses. In this context, disproportionate punishments, lack of sanction in crimes against immigrants and arbitrary practices negatively affect Syrian immigrants. Participants express this feeling of insecurity as follows:

“So if someone writes something hateful against me, I have to get my due. If I go to the courthouse now, what will happen if I go to the court, nothing will happen, nothing. There will be no jail, no fines.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“... I will go to the police for everything, I will get a video or something. And actually, I know that it will be the same whether I go or not. Because once a few people came to the shop to steal, they stopped in a car across the street. They were going to unlock the shop. Thank God the employee was lying above, he realized. He shouted a little, and they ran away. We went to the police, we brought the camera records, just because it happened like this. You know what they said, "if no one was hurt, if they didn't break the lock of the shop, if they didn't steal anything, there's no need for anything, you can't complain or something". We said, at least see whom this car belongs to, find the license plate of the car from the camera on the street. Let's find out if the same car does the same thing again or the car was stolen, for example. They did not accept.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

Arbitrary detention of Syrians in removal centers creates a daunting effect for immigrants.

“Right now, when a problem comes to every Syrian, the police hand them over to the Migration Management after they talk and take their statement. After that, they send him to the Removal Center because he is Syrian. I know many people who have encountered this problem. The teacher I am talking about now has not returned home for more than three months. You see, the court actually let him go, it's not his fault, he didn't do anything. He just looks like another person, that's all. He's got a residence permit, he's decent, he didn't commit any crime. If he had committed a crime, the court would not have released him anyway. But it was immediately understood that the person he was compared to was a different person, and they left. But the Immigration Administration detained him.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Another problem stems from the inability to establish a correct communication between the government and Syrian immigrants.

“I think there is a communication problem. In other words, the government is probably talking to the wrong people, that is, to the wrong people from us. The right people can't reach the government, unfortunately, the government can't reach them, so it stays in the middle.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

Syrian entrepreneurs also expressed the situations they find faulty regarding Turkey's border policies and practices.

“For example, when we first came here, it was very easy to come here. You pay like 100 liras at the border, you pass, without a passport, without an identity card, without anything. It was a very bad thing. I believe this is a political thing, there are many purposes through it, but this has been very harmful to us. Both us and Turkey. Because if you, as the government, say, we will take all Syrians, but let's get ID, let's see, let's find out statistically, who came and who left. There was no such thing.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“Yesterday, someone said that if you don't want us, open the border gates, there were people who went to Europe before, but after Turkey took this decision, no one can go. Greece did not prevent it, Serbia did not, frankly, the Turkish military police is currently blocking it. People say if you don't want us here, set us free, we'll go, but they don't.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Since some of the participants obtained citizenship, the processes of opening and running a business proceed more smoothly. However, there are certain problems faced by non-citizens. For example, travel ban, work permit or residence permit. Yusuf stated that there is a need to obtain citizenship in order to eliminate these problems.

“We need to get citizenship so that we can travel from one place to another, when I meet someone, let me be Turkish, not a foreigner.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

However, it was also stated by the participants that the process of obtaining citizenship is not easy and requires certain conditions and processes. The situation stated by Zubeyr is parallel to the situation of the participants who obtained citizenship within

the scope of the fieldwork. All (5) of the participants who obtained citizenship are university graduates. Three of these participants received their undergraduate education in Turkey.

“Citizenship is not easy anyway, some think it is easy. You just apply and get it, no, it's not that easy. My relatives came here 8 years ago, none of them got citizenship. Only my aunt bought it, she is studying at university.” (Zubeyr, Spice-seller)

Apart from the problems mentioned above, some Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs stated that it is easy to open a business in Turkey and they do not encounter any legal problems.

“In the beginning I did not encounter a problem, on the contrary, there was a lot of facilitating.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

“Thanks to the Ministry of National Education, thanks to the Directorate of National Education, when we encounter a problem, of course, there is a procedure, there is a law, there is a system, but people help.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Most of the legal and legislative challenges stem from legal structure and its practices. Lack of cultural capital like knowledge about laws also deepens problems they face on the legal ground. The fact that immigrant entrepreneurship is directly affected by the legal and institutional structure in the country they are in, both negatively and positively.

3.2.2. Economic Challenges

The title of economic problems deals with the process of obtaining economic capital and financial problems that Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs face during the establishment stage and present. The economic problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs are briefly summarized as taxes, hikes and increasing cost, the problem of finding a job, the effect of Covid-19, changes in the exchange rate, and pecuniary damages.

Entrepreneurs start their ventures by evaluating the capital they have. Some participants established their businesses directly, bringing their economic capital with them. Although we categorize the types of capital as economic, social and cultural, they are interrelated. For example, Yusuf and Hamid, created their economic capital by working and received support from their social circle.

“...my son was working and my wife was working in textile and we started to save some money. Now that we were ready to open a shop, we started dealing with dessert. Gradually, the varieties increased, such as dates, cookies, dry cakes. We started to earn profit from trading.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

“I went and asked for help from my relatives, and they helped. I had some savings, too. I started the business, that's it.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

Sena and Fatma have obtained some of their economic capital through professional social networks.

“From the beginning of this idea until now, I entered business hubs. The first time I entered, I was with Qatar Charity, and I got ready grant of approximately five thousand dollars from it, and I made a company website with this money.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

“We have changed three places to bigger and every time bigger and better. The last one we delivered grant from KOSGEB, we were there in a program with INGEV. Because of them, we gave a plan for developing our business and this plan let to get a bigger place to put more machines and metal workshop also in the same place. It also let us to improve our work.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

Although Nedim has no economic capital, he has managed to establish his own business thanks to his cultural and social capital.

“At first, we were training with the children in the parks, then we said it wouldn't be like this, let's open a place. My partner said I'll give you the money, you have experience too. This is how it happened.” (Nedim, Martial Arts School Owner)

There are economic challenges Syrian entrepreneurs face like taxes. Opinions of the participants about taxes are varied. First of all, Syria and Turkey have different tax regulations, so many things are actually new to Syrian entrepreneurs.

“Invoice order, tax order, etc. things did not exist in Syria. All of this was new to us. We learned, even though it was difficult, we understood later. There is no such order or law in Syria. It was tiring at first, but then we learned.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

Some participants find Turkey's tax system reasonable and understandable.

“...I think Turkey is very comfortable in this part. Taxes are very understandable, we also have financial advisors we work with. They take care of.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

However, there are other participants who complain about the high taxes. In particular, the high insurance fee paid for personnel creates a heavy burden for some employers.

“Taxes and bills need to be reduced. There are 30 employees, but 5 of them have insurance and I have to pay 1500 lira for all of them.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

The hikes and rising cost affect all business owners. Economic problems in Turkey also directly affect Syrian business owners.

“The biggest problem I have had so far in this business is the constant change in prices. For this reason, I have narrowed down the number of women I work with. Every woman is shopping, buying what she needs, and prices can change every week. This worries me, price adjustment is an important issue.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

According to Yusuf, Turkey's position as the country of opportunity has changed in a negative way over time.

“When my friends/relatives living in Dubai, Qatar and Germany asked how Turkey was, I said come here. I was saying that Turkey is very beautiful, there is trade, there is everything. Most of the people I talked to came here, they bought a house and they live here. Now, I say don't come. Currently, there is a high cost in most countries, it is difficult to make a living.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

Some of the participants mention that these economic problems are not unique to Turkey, that there are similar problems all over the world.

“Unfortunately, Turkey has always faced difficulties, there are difficulties affecting the whole world, such as Covid-19, inflation, etc.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

The financial difficulties brought by Covid-19 have also affected Syrian migrant entrepreneurs.

“Everything is more difficult since Covid-19, but this is how it is everywhere.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

“We were devastated when the corona crisis started. Restaurants have been the sector most affected by Covid-19. Many other professions have been able to stand on their feet during the Corona era, but we restaurants depend entirely on social interaction from people on the street. When the curfew was introduced, no restaurant was able to make up for its losses with home delivery alone.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

The effect of inflation on invoices increases the expenses of the enterprises.

“Electricity bill started to come a lot, increased by 125%. The government is trying to make decisions against inflation, but still there is a 125% hike in electricity.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Changing exchange rates have affected the investors who want to establish a business by bringing foreign currency to Turkey.

“It took a year and a few months since I came here until this place opened. One of the most important reasons for this was the volatility of the Turkish lira against foreign currency. So, we could only make this decision. But in the end, unfortunately, we lost.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Hamid states that it is difficult to maintain businesses due to expensiveness.

“But no one will be able to do phone business in time because everything is so expensive.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

Most business owners mention rising rental prices as a major problem for their businesses.

“He wants to raise from 4000 TL to 15000 TL, there is a court for him right now. The same thing happens for home. It's irrational, you either hire or quit. We have now taken it to court.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

“A law should be enacted that obliges the owner not to raise prices. The purchasing power for all consumers has already decreased. At the very least, the investor should be offered a few exemptions on rent, because rent is the largest payment we regularly pay.” (Osman, Restaurant Manager)

Business owners try to cope with landlords who demand high rents by resorting to lease agreements and legal remedies.

“We have taken precautionary measures for this, we have a 10-year contract. He wanted to increase it by almost seventy percent, but that is much higher than the figure set by the government. Fortunately, this was not a problem as it was our contract, we did not have to increase it that much, it increased according to the law.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“Of course, whatever the law is, the owner of the property asked for 50-60%, I immediately came to him and said, "There is no such thing, so it's beyond impossible." He said, "If you don't want it, get out." That won't happen either, so our contract is 10 years, we made a raise over the law.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Due to the high cost, İbrahim started to market his products abroad, not in Turkey. In this way, he minimizes the effect of constantly changing prices on the business.

“We do not buy from abroad, but because they bring from abroad, the materials are very expensive. Material prices change every day, selling them in Turkey does not make much sense.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

According to Enes, budget planning has a strategic importance in preventing potential problems.

“For example, we sit down at the beginning of each year and set a budget, this much and this much, after that, if something happens, we also set it, which we call the

reserve budget. In other words, I can say that we did not encounter any problems because everything went through the budget. Because we have calculated everything, everything is already clear how much these will cost, how much the offices will cost, how much the salaries of the staff will cost. Since we are now in the age of technology, you can calculate how much a chair will cost in 2 minutes over the Internet.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Syrian business owners are affected by the economic structure in Turkey like local business owners. In addition, being an immigrant makes it difficult for them to reach economic capital. However, the findings indicate that global issues beyond national borders also affect immigrant entrepreneurship.

3.2.3. Socio-cultural Challenges

The title of sociocultural problems deals with the social and cultural problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs. In this context, social and cultural capital, social structure, language problem, discrimination, cultural similarities and differences and media are discussed.

It was observed that the participants effectively benefited from the social capital they had in the process of opening a business. The support of relatives, friends and professional networks facilitates the migration, establishment of a business and maintenance. Inner circle has an effect on the selection of the place to migrate and to open a business.

“Before me, my mother, father and brothers had come here.” (Said, Grocer)

“I first came to Başakşehir in 2014. I came because my friend was here at the time.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“I had a friend who lives here, he knew about this restaurant. The restaurant existed before me, the owner was Syrian, but he did not know the business. My friend said that there is a restaurant here and the price is reasonable, you can run it. I came here, at that time Covid-19 appeared. I'm here so right now, but I've taken over very conveniently.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

Acquaintances who have immigrated and opened a business earlier transfer their knowledge to others and guide them.

“My relatives who have lived here for 10 years also shared their experiences. They taught us the laws, how to open a company.” (Faruk, Nuts Shop Owner)

“My uncle helped. He already knew where to buy the goods, which is good and which is not.” (Zubeyr, Spice-seller)

Professional networks are an important source of information for people who want to become entrepreneurs. Of the participants, only Sena established her business by receiving training through professional networks.

“I applied some business hubs like Core İstanbul and Binaa. These business hubs connect us with business people. They welcome entrepreneurs, offer ideas and bring them together with investors. For instance, Core İstanbul provide 6 months of training, open to everyone, not just women. There are consultants out there. We offer projects to businessmen both from Istanbul and abroad. If there is an investor ready to support the project, a partnership is established. I was in the 20th place among 300 people and then I was the first among the 20 people.” (Sena, Food Delivery Service Owner)

The social capital owned by some Syrian entrepreneurs has given them access to the economic capital needed to open and maintain the business.

“A Turkish friend with whom I have been doing business for 8 years gave me a loan and did not take it back. When I want to give, don't give, he said, when you have money, you will pay back.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

“There is an organization in America, a very large association. For Syrian doctors, Syrians in America, it's called SALS. I contacted them. That is because the number of children with autism has increased a lot, and they do not speak the same language. That's why, for example, they cannot benefit from the state hospital. We talked about opening a place. Thank God we received a donation.” (Muhammed, Policlinic Owner)

Some of the participants stated that they did not receive any support from anyone and that they started an initiative entirely by their own means.

“No, I have never received such support.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

Syrian entrepreneurs establish and run businesses by making use of their cultural capital such as language, ethnic taste, past experience and professional competence.

“Turkish restaurants speak neither English nor Arabic. Foreign customers cannot speak Turkish at all. There was a problem, so we tried to find a solution. We have found a solution where the restaurant will see Turkish, the customer will see it in Arabic, English and now Russian.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“I had this kind of business, I was busy with such a business when I was in Syria. When I came here, I know how to trade, but it required a lot of money. I opened such a place with little money without requiring big capital.” (Said, Grocer)

Immigrants may lose their pre-migration social, economic and cultural capital during migration or become invalid in the place of migration. Immigrants, especially those who had to migrate forcibly, experience this loss of capital more. Immigrant entrepreneurs rebuild the capital they lost in their new home country (Atasü-

Topçuoğlu, 2019, p. 204). Hamid, who has two shops in Syria, made an effort to regain the economic and cultural capital necessary to open his own business after the migration.

“So I'm not used to being an employee at all. I had two shops. After I came, the place where I worked was getting every phone stolen or something. I don't like this job, I don't want to make it misgotten. I saved up like this, and then gradually I went to the vocational course of public education. It's not about starting a business, it's about electronics. After that, I took a language course, for Turkish. Then I opened it.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

The most common socio-cultural problem faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs is the language problem. Due to the language barrier, Syrian entrepreneurs state that they are inadequate in communicating and solving their problems.

“The first challenge was the language. Because nobody speaks English, even in the banks. When you go to banks or anywhere, maybe now it is getting better, for example Türk Telekom or Türkcell they didn't have English speaker or Arabic speaker. So, language was the first difficulty.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“If I knew Turkish, I could speak properly, I could solve all the problems. Because I can deal with the language, but I have a problem because I do not speak Turkish.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“I understand 90% of what is being said, but my problem is in speaking. For example, I have a Turkish neighbor, I understand him but I cannot answer. It is difficult to speak a language, I memorize words and their meanings, but I have difficulty in practice.” (Said, Grocer)

Participants strive to improve their Turkish knowledge by participating in various trainings.

“I already love learning languages. I took a course for a year or two at the "Public Education Center". I took A1, A2, B1, B2 classes.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

“A teacher taught me when I came in 2019. I learned there. I started speaking Turkish in a year or so.” (Zubeyr, Spice-seller)

Apart from education, social interactions also played a facilitating role on learning Turkish.

“Turkish neighbors come, I go to them, that's how I improved my Turkish. Now I can understand them, I can speak a little Turkish, I tell my problem.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

Some participants state that their lack of competence in Turkish is due to the intense work schedule and working with Arabs.

“Language was difficult for me, I have been in Turkey for nine years, but I could not learn it. This is because I have always worked with Arabs and I did not have time to learn the language because I was always busy working.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“For example, I lived in Bursa for 3 years and I did not know any Turkish at all, because I always worked with Arabs, Turks did not enter the shop.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

Hasan stated that there should be more Arabic-speaking employees in public institutions and organizations in order to alleviate the problems arising from the language barrier.

“In government offices, there should be employees who can speak Arabic easily. Immigration Administration has it, Kuveyt Türk has it. In order to get a work permit or a workplace license, for example, in the municipality and government offices, there should be an employee who speaks Arabic instead of doing many transactions.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Syrian entrepreneurs in Başakşehir generally do not have problems with neighboring shops. Most of the participants said that they have good relations with neighboring local businesses and that they did not encounter any problems.

“The shopkeepers welcomed us very much. They use me as an interpreter here because there is no Turkish-speaking Arab here. For example, I have 3 languages, English, Arabic and Turkish. I help them, and they help me. There is a conversation between us.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“Very good. For example, my neighbor Nazmi Bey, he is a very good man. For example, when this place was opened 4 years ago, a police officer came and asked them if the license was over. He came right away.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Yusuf finds that the interaction between neighboring shopkeepers is weaker compared to the social relations in Syria.

“When I was in Damascus, there was a social life. Every day I ate at my neighbor's shop and my neighbor ate at my shop. But in Turkey, this is very little, social interaction does not happen much.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

Mustafa mentioned that the news about Syrians on social media changed the attitudes of some neighbors, but they still maintain relations.

“Some good people, my acquaintances, my neighbors didn't think that way before, they didn't talk that way about foreigners. It was as if the media had a great influence on them, we realized that, it (relations) continues, but unfortunately there was a difference.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

In general, Syrian business owners have a positive relationship with neighboring tradesmen. However, in the last example, news against Syrians, posts on social media and political discourses have the potential to negatively affect positive relations. Participants stated that the media created a perception against Syrians.

“There is also a great propaganda in the media against the Syrians.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

İbrahim and Fatma state that despite the racist discourse, the situation is different in real life.

“I think this perception operation only exists on social media. Not in real life, we didn't see it. In real life, someone didn't come and say anything like that to me, on the contrary, he tried to get to know me, and I tried to get to know him.” (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

“You know lately there is kind of directed hatred. It was very focused and my husband always goes to market and contact with merchants. They said “yes, all the Syrians have to go and they are damaging the economy”. He said “OK, I am the Syrian, shall I go?”, “No, no, you can stay but they have to go.”. So, personally there is nothing.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

Mustafa thinks that the perception against Syrians in social media affects real life.

“At first, a few years ago, it wasn't like it is now. In the past, Turkish men and women were normal, but now they are very tense. It's like social media has taken a toll on them.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Some of the participants have encountered racism in person, some have not personally encountered it, but there are people around them who have been exposed to racism.

“Sometimes some people hate us, because we are not Turkish. They are waging such a war, I don't understand why.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“I have not personally encountered it, but my friend went through a lot. People in Turkey only want Turks, they want you to speak Turkish.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Mustafa stated that racism has increased especially in recent years and is a very big problem.

“This sedition, that is, racism between Syrians and Turks, is a big problem, not a small thing. Because this is very dangerous, have you heard about the recent murders? Some Turks killed Syrian youth. For example, a month ago, a (Syrian) student studying medicine was killed by some Turkish youth.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Another reason for the negative perception against Syrians stems from political discourses.

“There is who are making these things those who wanted to get votes but they don’t know what they are doing into the society. Yes, you took some votes but what you have made there? People are hating each other, the workers are not feeling safe. It doesn’t make a stable or sustainable economy. I will not open a company if I do not feel safe. I will not buy anything if I don’t feel safe.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“For example, I know the problem faced by the Turks. Because what the government always said in the first place is that we gave this amount of TL to the Syrians, a man looks at himself because I don’t have any money, you give money to the Syrians. This accumulates in people over time. Why does the government say this, for Europe. But the Turks think badly when they hear this.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

“For example, I saw a statement by Ümit Özdağ today, he says that the presence of refugees in Turkey will cause a civil war. So why, what are they doing?” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

The fact that the fake news and discourses against the Syrians are not corrected and the lack of sanctions feeds this situation.

“You can write whatever you want now, nothing will happen. What does it mean if a political party leader lies like this over and over again and nothing will happen to him?” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Bilal said that not only Syrians living in Turkey, but also Arab tourists coming for touristic purposes are faced with racist behavior and this will have negative consequences for Turkey.

“Now this season, there have been tourists, they came from Saudi Arabia, they came from Qatar, they came from Kuwait. Everyone came back with a bad memory. Will he come back next year or not, he will go to France, he will go to another country, he will not come to Turkey. That’s a bad thing for everyone, not a good thing. I think it is wrong to say that we only want to live in Turkey with Turks and that no one should come.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

While talking about the perception of Turks about Syrians, the participants mentioned the lack of information, fake news and facts that are thought to be true.

“For example, when my son was on the bus, when the driver realized that he was Syrian, he said, "You are spending our money, we will take you out one by one, the government gives you money." This is wrong. As you know, most of the aid is from Europe and a very small amount is given to those in need, for support purposes. It’s not enough to live on.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“For example, there is a huge lie about education, I am Syrian, I studied at Turkish universities. I don’t go to school without an exam, I finish high school, then I get YÖS

and then I go to university. It's a big lie, they say "they enter without an exam". Why doesn't anyone say they take exams? Only a lie comes, but there is no correction in the face of the lie. There are many like this and nothing happens against it." (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

"I wish the state gave us houses or something (laughs). Now, two or three hours ago, my landlord came and told me to get out of the house. I'm looking for a house now, where is the house?" (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

İbrahim states that a prejudice arises due to the fact that Syrians and Turks do not know each other, and this prejudice is broken as people get to know each other.

"People didn't know us. A friend was saying, we became friends later, so I was buying materials from him and so on. "What do you do?" he asked. When we say robotics, we are developing medical robots for the world, nothing less. The owner of the business there really did not understand us. He said, "When I think of Syrian, other people come to mind, as I get to know you, as I listen to you, I feel something else." Whenever there is an opportunity, we try to introduce ourselves." (İbrahim, Technology Manufacturer and Consultant)

Some participants stated that they sometimes encounter discriminatory attitudes as a Syrian business owner or in their daily life.

"Turkish customers do not come to us. They don't come to us because we are Arabs, something like this happens because the shop is Arab. Because why, the man does not trust or does not want, so he takes it to a Turkish mechanic. We are experiencing such a problem, we are still experiencing these problems." (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

"We are not second-degree people just because we are foreigners. Some openly say so. They say you are a second-degree citizen. This situation is now very bad. Our children are having trouble at school, saying "you are a foreigner" or something." (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

The participants mentioned that Syrians should not be understood as a homogeneous group and that there are all kinds of people, good or bad.

"Unfortunately, some people look at the majority of Syrians with a bad eye, which is very wrong. I always say to them that there are good and bad among Syrians, just like Turks, just like in every country. It's not true to generalize." (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

"I know that not every finger on a hand is the same. There are bad Syrian people, it's true. But this is the same for the Arabs and the same for the Turks." (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

It is necessary to correct the fake news and prevent negative perception.

“The media and the things that looks like soft power is not soft, they are really damaging the whole concept. It is damaging more than anything.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“The solution will be just the opposite, the government needs to correct the fake news about Syrians in the media. "Syrians enter the university without examination", this is not true. Something like that. Media is very important.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Another problem is related to housing. The fact that the landlords do not want to rent a house to foreigners or demand high prices creates a housing problem for Syrian immigrants.

“The owner says “Get out, I will use the house”. Lie, in fact he will rent it higher. I went everywhere and looked, I say “I'm looking for a house for rent”. They say “We do not give to the foreigner” or if they do, you have to give an advance for one year.” (Mahir, Electronic Repairman)

Despite the social problems, the participants mention that they have good one-to-one relations with the Turks.

“Also, we didn't have much discussion with the Turks. We explain ourselves, when we speak beautifully, the man understands, then he becomes our customer.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“I worked at Çemberlitaş Turkish Delight, I have Varol brothers there, people from Çankırı. We have a very good relationship with them, I still visit them.” (Enes, International School Manager)

“I have a Turkish friend who said I'll give you my flat for 3 months, then you can pay rent at a reasonable price. We met in the morning prayer, became friends. Thank goodness there are good people.” (Nedim, Martial Arts School Owner)

Syrian entrepreneurs pointed out that they did not encounter many cultural problems and that the culture between Turkey and Syria is generally similar. They express these similarities through geographical proximity, common religion and common history.

“I feel closer here, even though they were Arabs in Egypt and they loved us, it was different, but for example, Turkey is much closer to us in terms of culture. We don't feel foreign here as a culture, just as a culture. We are already border neighbors, so our customs are similar, our house arrangement is similar.” (Abdullah, Nuts Shop Owner)

“There are already cultural similarities between Syria and Turkey. Both are Muslim countries.” (Yusuf, Restaurant Owner)

“Now my mother's father's mother is from Aleppo and her father is from Kilis. Kilis, Aleppo is not so close, it's the same. Look at the province of Aleppo. There was no province called Antep, Antep was a sanjak. Iskenderun was not a province but a

sanjak. Iskenderun sanjak, Antep sanjak, they all belong to Aleppo Province. Aleppo is a huge place.” (Enes, International School Manager)

Thanks to cultural capital, immigrant entrepreneurs interact with the local community and strengthen the practice of living together.

“There is a burger shop next door, an Arab customer calls, wants to say something, but the man doesn't understand, he calls me to come and translate. There's a real estate agent next door, I help him sometimes. Because why, we need to be such a unity, we are such a family. This is my comment.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“We talk to the Turks who come here, we joke, we laugh, the customers leave happy. I think that's the secret, it's social cohesion. We become friends.” (Mahmud, Hairdresser)

At the same time, Syrian migrant entrepreneurs avoid potential problems with their strategic attitudes.

“Sometimes we hide that we are actually foreigners. We are Turkish citizens, we speak Turkish, it goes without saying that we are foreigners. We do not say, so it is not very useful to say. Sometimes it can be harmful, so we usually don't show it.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“Well, I've lived here for 4 years, I've never seen a bad person. Why, because I speak well, you will not say anything wrong. I don't care about Erdogan or something. I'm a foreigner, I live here. I love Turkey yes, but Erdogan is not my president. I'm not talking. Many drivers say, for example, where are you from, Syrian, do you like Erdoğan or not? I say I don't know or I don't understand. It gets better that way.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

The title of sociocultural problems deals with the social and cultural problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs. In this context, social and cultural capital, social structure, language problem, discrimination, integration, cultural similarities and differences and media are highlighted. The capital owned by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs minimizes the difficulties they face while opening and maintaining businesses and plays a facilitating role. The statements of the participants show the transformation of social, cultural and economic capital within itself. Cultural capital can be transformed into social capital and social capital into economic capital. The strategies adopted by the participants also prevent potential problems. In the next section, the future projections of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs will be discussed.

3.3. AN AMBIGUOUS FUTURE IN THE FACE OF REALITIES

This section deals with the future plans of Syrian entrepreneurs to live in Turkey. Syrian migrant entrepreneurs have similar and differentiating thoughts in their plans for the future. Some participants stated that they base their future plans entirely on staying in Turkey. Love of Turkey, cultural closeness and sense of belonging are the main reasons for the participants who want to stay in Turkey.

“In other words, the moment you take me out of Turkey, I am like a fish out of water. I go abroad a lot, my mood breaks down as soon as I get on the plane. The moment I get off the plane on the way back, oh I'm relieved. I feel foreign, so I don't want to go abroad to live.” (Enes, International School Manager)

“This is a Muslim country, I chose to live here. Whatever it was, my relatives were also here. There is a mosque in front of me, these are very important to me. I think it is very important both for me and for my child.” (Hamid, Telephone Repairman)

“Of course, I plan to stay here. This is my second hometown. My country is done. As Palestine went, so did Syria.” (Said, Grocer)

“A few offers came to me from Europe and Qatar. I have a lot of friends there, the head of the Unit knows me. But I didn't want to go anywhere, this is more comfortable for me, I want to work as a freelancer.” (Muhammed, Policlinic Owner)

Participants who make a business plan for the future aim to expand and grow their business.

“If situation goes like this, we have plan to enlarge our work. We are planning to have our own showroom, we are working on that. It still needs a lot of money. So, we may make some partnership with other showrooms and we are working on that. The second plan is expanding the work for exporting, we are also working on that. We have exported to café in the USA but it is through other relations. Having showroom, exporting and having our e-store selling our products. So, making a stable business.” (Fatma, Interior Architect)

“Right now, we want to open a larger, higher quality and more comprehensive institution. We are working on it too. That school will be an international school.” (Enes, International School Manager)

“We will work in countries other than Turkey with the same concept, "local restaurants and foreign customers". Now, we went to Cyprus, we are thinking of starting a business there. It can happen in Europe or the USA. We have these in mind. Now let's finish a first stage, then we'll look at the other stages.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

Some of the participants who want to leave Turkey point to the worsening of the economic situation in Turkey as the reason.

“If the conditions were better here, if the economy were better, I wouldn't think of going out of here... I love this country, but I want to go somewhere else where I can have a better job opportunity and a better future for marriage and starting a family. My next goal is to come back here again.” (Hasan, Giftshop Owner)

Increasing incidents of racism and discrimination feed the thought of Syrian immigrants to go somewhere other than Turkey. Syrian immigrants prefer to live outside of Turkey rather than living in insecurity. During the interviews, a business owner was not officially involved in the research but wanted to answer the interview questions. He explained his unwillingness to be involved in the research with a growing sense of insecurity. Although he is a Turkish citizen, speaks Turkish, owns a business and has a doctorate in Turkey, he feels insecure despite being in an advantageous position compared to many Syrian immigrants. The fact that the feeling of insecurity is so intense shows the concerns of Syrian immigrants about the future. Increasing racism, refoulement and arbitrary practices against Syrians make the plans of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs to stay in Turkey uncertain.

“If someone asked me this question a year ago, I would certainly not think of living anywhere other than Başakşehir (I would say). I want to continue living in Başakşehir, I am not currently married, I am single, but when I have children, I want to be in Başakşehir. But actually problems are starting to arise right now so I don't know if I will go or not.” (Bilal, Food Ordering App Owner)

“I think of living here, but they always say that we will send Syrians. If something like that happens, I will go to Egypt. If nothing like that happens, I wouldn't want to go, we are peaceful here in Başakşehir. Nice, comfortable place. We love this place, but if there is too much pressure, we will go.” (Ziyad, Café Owner)

“Syrians were thinking positively, not like that. Because both people think of racism and have a negative view, and the government says that we will take a million people to Syria. Families are worried now, they wonder what will happen in the future.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Even those who received Turkish citizenship from Syrian immigrants are worried that this citizenship will be deemed invalid.

“Some people say that you are the same way, probably the state will take your citizenship back from you in the future. There is this idea, people are now thinking about what will happen in the future.” (Mustafa, Language Course Owner)

Although most of the Syrian migrant entrepreneurs want to stay in Turkey, an increasing concern for the future draw attention. According to the statements of the participants in the fieldwork, social and political pressures are more effective than

economic pressures in the plans of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs to leave Turkey. Since the effect of the economic situation is general, the effect of being a migrant is relatively small. However, the social and political situation affects Syrian entrepreneurs in every aspect to sustain their businesses.



CONCLUSION

The main question of this thesis is: What are the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants in the Başakşehir district? Answering this question necessitated conducting a field study. Along with this question, the difficulties encountered by Syrian entrepreneurs, the impact of surrounding factors, the role of capital types in starting a business and overcoming challenges, and the advantages and disadvantages of Başakşehir were examined. In the theoretical background, the approaches of mixed embeddedness and forms of capital types integrated to scrutinize the entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian immigrants. This section will provide a general evaluation of the findings, discuss the main contributions, address the limitations of the study, and conclude by offering suggestions for future research.

The conflicts and atmosphere of insecurity that began in Syria in 2011 displaced millions of people. Turkey, as a neighboring country, became the country with the highest number of Syrian refugees due to its open-door policy adopted until 2015, the legal closure of European borders, and the increasing migrant population and networks. With the transition from camps to cities, Syrian migrants have become part of the Turkish labor market to sustain their livelihoods. Most Syrian migrants work in paid jobs, and an increasing number of them are starting their own businesses. The reasons behind Syrian migrants' entrepreneurship can be classified at macro, meso, and micro levels. Negative factors such as low wages, poor working conditions, social exclusion, language barriers, and inability to find employment are accompanied by positive factors that influence migrant entrepreneurship, including easy business establishment, clustering of ethnic populations, the desire to be self-employed, and independence.

Istanbul, where both local and foreign migrants reside, is also the city with the highest concentration of Syrian immigrants. Likewise, Syrian-owned businesses operate mostly in Istanbul. Syrian immigrants are scattered across the districts of Istanbul, and ethnic networks and ethnic economy in certain districts attract other migrants there. Başakşehir is the fourth most populated subprovince by Syrian immigrants and the third province with the highest number of Syrian-owned companies. Apart from Syrian

immigrants, it also hosts migrants from various other nationalities. The participants explain their preference for Başakşehir in opening businesses due to the high migrant population, ethnic market opportunities, a religious/conservative social structure, a calm and problem-free environment, being a new residential area, the absence of discriminatory/racist individuals, and high economic prosperity. Syrian entrepreneurs in Başakşehir generally express satisfaction with owning businesses in the district, stating that it is much better than other districts and that they feel culturally close. However, they also mention drawbacks such as high rents, a stagnant market, high cost of living, and recent incidents of racism. The participants interviewed for this study are mainly engaged in the formal sector. Previous studies on Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey have primarily focused on the informal sector, and this study does not contribute to that particular area.

In this study, using qualitative research techniques, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 19 Syrian entrepreneurs. This method allowed participants to express themselves comfortably. The field research aimed to highlight the problems encountered by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs and their coping mechanisms. Although the decision to migrate to Turkey and become an entrepreneur is a micro-level individual choice, it is influenced by macro structural factors. In the study, the problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs were categorized as legal, economic, and sociocultural challenges. The legal problems encompassed work permits, residency issues, employment quotas, lengthy of bureaucratic procedures, municipal permits, policies adopted by Turkey, repatriation, travel restrictions, lack of knowledge of laws, passport issues, citizenship, property ownership, changing regulations and Arabic signage problems. The economic challenges addressed the taxes, price increases, and financial losses that Syrian migrant entrepreneurs face when establishing and operating their businesses, as well as the impact of COVID-19, currency exchange rate fluctuations, and rising costs. The sociocultural problems category explored social capital, language barriers, discrimination, cohesion, cultural similarities and differences, and media-related issues.

In this study, it was found that Syrian migrants do not form a homogeneous group and even the surrounding factors can vary. The main reason for the differences in

surrounding problems is the varying legal statuses of Syrian migrants. Syrian migrants under temporary protection, those residing with residence permits, and those who are Turkish citizens have different opportunity structures that influence their entrepreneurship. For example, entrepreneurs residing with residence permits encounter more difficulties in obtaining work permits, while those under temporary protection face travel restrictions. Although the legal framework shaped around legal status is subject to variation, there are common issues, of course. A Syrian entrepreneur who has obtained citizenship does not face problems with work permits for themselves, but they may encounter difficulties in obtaining work permits for the immigrants they employ. The findings indicate that legal, economic, and sociocultural issues are interconnected within themselves.

One of the aims of this study is to determine the role of different types of capital. The economic, social, and cultural capital that migrants possess have a positive impact on establishing and sustaining businesses. However, the capacity to utilize capital is directly related to the opportunity structure. Surrounding factors such as legal regulations, socio-economic environment, and the market shape the extent to which migrant entrepreneurs can utilize their capital. The forms of capital approach is particularly important in understanding intra-group differences. For example, an immigrant without economic capital can still become a business owner through their cultural and social capital. This serves as an example of the transformation within capital types.

Having economic capital provides a significant advantage for entrepreneurs. During forced migration, most individuals were only able to bring their portable economic capital with them, leaving behind immovable properties such as houses, shops, and land. Along with migration, not only their places of residence but also social statuses have changed. Examples of status changes experienced by participants include relying on family support to start their own business while owning two shops in Syria, becoming a tenant after being a homeowner, or transitioning from owning a factory to owning a medium-sized shop. Immigrants who came with economic capital directly opened their own businesses, while those without economic capital opened their businesses after working as an employee for a period or with support from their social

capital. None of the participants formed economic capital by taking loans from banks. This situation could be related to the micro-level preferences of entrepreneurs or could be attributed to bureaucratic problems faced by Syrians in accessing banks and obtaining credit at the macro level (Özipek & Tanrikulu, 2022, p. 73).

Cultural capital encompasses institutionalized forms such as diplomas and educational certificates, as well as materialized forms including professional competence, command of local culture, language skills, knowledge of the target customer's taste, and entrepreneurial experience. According to the findings, professional competence and experience have an impact on Syrian migrants becoming entrepreneurs, as most participants engage in the same or similar business activities as they did in Syria. Some participants have managed to bring documents that prove their professional qualifications, such as diplomas and certificates, to Turkey. However, it is not always possible to transfer institutionalized cultural capital, which is why some Syrian immigrants have started working in different sectors. Participants who migrated at a younger age have received education and developed their cultural capital in Turkey. Syrian entrepreneurs primarily benefit from their materialized cultural capital, such as professional knowledge, entrepreneurial experience, language, and cultural knowledge. Cultural capital is not only utilized when starting a business; participants also rely on their cultural capital to find solutions to challenges or create new opportunities.

For migrants who lack economic and cultural capital such as language and legal knowledge, their most important and reliable resource is their social networks. Social capital encompasses both pre-migration connections and connections established after migration. Participants access their social capital to acquire the necessary economic capital for starting a business, form partnerships, obtain information from acquaintances who migrated earlier, and access the workforce. Particularly in small-scale immigrant businesses, they prefer to hire employees from their social networks, primarily family members. This allows them to reduce costs by paying lower wages and avoids trust issues. Additionally, entrepreneurs utilize their social capital to solve problems they encounter. While social capital plays a facilitating role for Syrian migrant entrepreneurs, it also has a limiting aspect in terms of external communication.

In places with ethnic clustering, such as Başakşehir, it is possible to live without any interaction with locals solely relying on ethnic networks. However, this situation implies that individuals sharing the same environment do not interact with each other, which hinders social cohesion.

The entrepreneurial experiences of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs have been examined through the integration of the opportunity structure offered by the mixed embeddedness and Bourdieu's forms of capital approach. This theoretical framework provides valuable insights into understanding the macro and micro structures that shape immigrant entrepreneurship. The role and impact of the capital possessed by migrants have been examined within the macro and meso opportunity structure. The findings indicate that the capital possessed by migrants plays a determining role in initiating entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurs mobilize and transform capital internally. However, evaluating Syrian migrant entrepreneurship solely based on the forms of capital would be insufficient without considering the opportunity structure that determines the movement of capital. Moreover, both approaches fall short in explaining the personal motivations that drive migrants to become entrepreneurs, such as the desire for self-employment, success, or becoming an exemplary story.

This study contributes to the research field by providing a glimpse into the lives of Syrian migrant entrepreneurs in Turkey. Its narrow scope and awareness of its limitations make it valuable. The high number of Syrian migrants and businesses in Başakşehir subprovince made it a suitable area for the study. According to the participants' statements, compared to other districts in Istanbul, Başakşehir is considered a "more comfortable and problem-free" place for migrants to live. As an exploratory and descriptive study, it does not aim to make generalizations. Based on the findings from this study, generalizable conclusions about Syrian entrepreneurs in Turkey can be reached using a large-N data with a random sample. However, conducting similar micro-level studies can increase the possibility of directly applicable solutions by identifying the problems faced by Syrian migrant entrepreneurs at the local level. Despite having common issues, each of stories is unique. Qualitative studies are crucial in capturing and presenting these stories. Failing to include migrants in the discussion of their problems leads researchers to approach

the topic superficially. While developing solutions to the problems faced by migrants, their voices should be heard, and they should be involved in the policy-making process.

One limitation of this study arises from language issues. The researcher's limited knowledge of Arabic necessitated conducting interviews through an interpreter. Determining a suitable time for interviews with the participants and the interpreter led to an extension of the study duration. Another limitation is related to the scope of the study. This research was conducted in Başakşehir and Kayabaşı neighborhoods, which are collective housing areas and have a high concentration of migrant entrepreneurs. It is likely that different opportunity structures exist in neighborhoods with lower economic prosperity in Başakşehir, such as Şahintepe, Güvercintepe, and Altınşehir, or in residential areas like Bahçeşehir, where a more secular upper-middle class resides. In future research, presenting comparisons between neighborhoods will provide a more comprehensive picture of Başakşehir. One of the limitations encountered during the research process is the access issue to macro-level data. Detailed data corpus is needed for research aiming to measure the economic contribution of Syrian entrepreneurs, and sharing relevant data with researchers would enrich studies in this field.

Lastly, this thesis has outlined the entrepreneurial journeys of Syrian immigrants, the opportunity structure they face, the problems they encounter, the impact of capital types on the process of establishing and sustaining businesses, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of Başakşehir district for immigrant entrepreneurs. Based on the findings, the following suggestions can be made for addressing the problems faced by Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs:

- Establishing a Migrant Desk within the municipality in Başakşehir, which would address the problems of migrants and provide socio-cultural activities, would alleviate the challenges faced by migrants and contribute to social cohesion.

- A Syrian Desk should be established within the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, similar to the examples of Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce and Şanlıurfa Chamber of Commerce.
- Policies that promote immigrant entrepreneurship should be adopted to ensure the sustainability of businesses in a legal framework.
- Bureaucratic barriers related to work permits for Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs residing with residence permits should be eased.
- Employment quotas force immigrants into the informal economy. Removing employment quotas would encourage both employers and immigrant workers to operate within the legal framework.
- A comparative field study among districts could reveal the impact of meso-level opportunity structure on immigrant entrepreneurship. Topics such as the attitudes of local businesses towards Syrian entrepreneurs, social interactions between immigrants and the local population in Başakşehir, have not been included in this study and remain open for future research.

Immigrant entrepreneurship is an important step for the integration of immigrant communities into the host society. Immigrant entrepreneurs have the potential to play a bridging role between both communities. In this context, supporting immigrant entrepreneurship and ensuring the sustainability of these businesses would contribute to both the national economy and social cohesion. The current political atmosphere in Turkey is shaped by discourse focusing more on the repatriation of immigrants rather than their harmonious coexistence within the country. This study has found that Syrian immigrants establish their own businesses, create employment opportunities, and develop innovative solutions, particularly catering to the needs of fellow immigrants. The neighborhoods of Başakşehir and Kayabaşı, where the fieldwork was conducted, have experienced revitalization due to the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs. Contrary to the claims of rising nationalist discourse, immigrants do not deplete the resources of this country; rather, the focus of this study, Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs, contribute to Turkey. The question is, what kind of void will be left behind if Syrian immigrants withdraw from the market?

REFERENCES

- ABADAN UNAT, N., 2002 **Bitmeyen Göç: Konuk İşçilikten Ulus-Ötesi Yurttaşlığa**, İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları
- AJZEN, I., 1991 “The Theory of Planned Behavior”, **Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes**, 5/2, 179–211.
- AKYİĞİT, H., 2021 “Eşyaların Mekân Aidiyeti ve Sosyo-Mekânsal Davranışlarla İlişkisi Sakarya’da Suriyeli Girişimciler”, **Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, 9, 55–65.
- AKYİĞİT, H., Z. BAKİ, 2021 “Sosyal Sermayenin Göç ve Etnik Girişimcilik Üzerindeki Etkisi: İzmir’deki Suriyeli Küçük Girişimciler”, **Yorum Yönetim Yöntem Uluslararası Yönetim Ekonomi ve Felsefe Dergisi**, 9/1, 67-88.
- ALDRICH, H.E., R. WALDINGER, 1990 “Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship”, **Annual Review of Sociology**, 16/1, 111–135.
- ALMOHAMMAD, D., O. DURRAH, M. RASHID, 2021 “Entrepreneurship in Crisis: The Determinants of Syrian Refugees’ Entrepreneurial Intentions in Turkey”, **Sustainability**, 13/8602.
- ALRAWADIEH, Z., E. KARAYILAN, L. DZIERZBICKA-GLOWACKA, 2019 “Understanding the Challenges of Refugee Entrepreneurship in Tourism and Hospitality”, **Service Industries Journal**, 39, 717–740.
- ALSTATT, K. E., C. B. BRETTEL, 2007 “The Agency of Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Biographies of the Self-Employed in Ethnic and Occupational Niches of the Urban Labor Market”, **Journal of Anthropological Research**, 63/3, 383-397.
- ALTIOK, B, S. TOSUN, 2019 “Understanding Foreign Policy Strategies During Migration Movements: A Comparative Study of Iraqi and Syrian Mass Refugee Inflows to Turkey”, **Turkish Studies**, 21/5, 684-704.
- ANDERSON, B, S., BLINDER, 2019 “Who Counts as a Migrant? Definitions and Their Consequences [Briefing], **The Migration Observatory**, Retrieved May 14, 2022, from

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Briefing-Who-Counts-as-a-Migrant-Definitions-and-their-Consequences.pdf>

- ANDERSSON, P., E.,
WADENSJO, 2004 “Self-Employed Immigrants in Denmark and Sweden: A Way to Economic Self-Reliance?”, **SSRN Electronic Journal**.
- ATASÜ TOPÇUOĞLU, R.,
2019 “Syrian Refugee Entrepreneurship in Turkey: Integration and the Use of Immigrant Capital in the Informal Economy”, **Social Inclusion**, 7/4, 200–210.
- AVCI, C., 2022 “Gayriresmi Rakamlara Göre: Türkiye’de 750 bin “Vatansız” Yenidoğan Var”, **Bianet-Bağımsız İletişim Ağı**, Retrieved August 22, 2022, from <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/264080-turkiye-de-750-bin-vatansiz-yenidogan-var>
- AYDIN, I., 2020 “Kentleşme Sürecinde Dini Hayat: Başakşehir Örneği”, **MANAS Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi**, 9/2, 637–647.
- AYGÜL, H. H., 2018 “Mülteci Emeginin Türkiye İşgücü Piyasalarındaki Görünümü ve Etkileri”, **Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Vizyoner Dergisi**, 9/20, 68–82.
- BAYCAN LEVENT, T., P.
NIJKAMP, 2009 “Characteristics of Migrant Entrepreneurship in Europe”, **Entrepreneurship & Regional Development**, 21/4, 375–397.
- BAYINDIR GOULARAS,
G., U. SUNATA, 2015 “Türk Dış Politikasında Göç ve Mülteci Rejimi”, **Moment Dergi**, 2/1, 12-40.
- BASU, A., 1998 “An Exploration of Entrepreneurial Activity among Asian Small Businesses in Britain”, **Small Business Economics**, 10/4, 313-326.
- BASU, A., E. ALTINAY,
2002 “The Interaction between Culture and Entrepreneurship in London’s Immigrant Businesses”, **International Small Business Journal: Researching Entrepreneurship**, 20/4, 371–393.
- BEAN, F. D., S. K.
BROWN, 2015 “Demographic Analyses of Immigration”, **Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines**,

- Eds. by. C. B. Brettell, J. F. Hollifield, Routledge, pp. 67–89.
- BETTS, A., 2008 “Global Migration Governance”, **Global Economic Governance Programme (GEG)**, Working Paper No. 2008/43, Oxford.
- BETTS, A., 2010 “Survival Migration: A New Protection Framework”, **Global Governance**, 16, 361–382.
- BETTS, A., G. LOESCHER, J., MILNER, 2012 **UNHCR: The Politics and Practice of Refugee Protection**, Routledge.
- BIZRI, R. M., 2017 “Refugee-Entrepreneurship: A Social Capital Perspective”, **Entrepreneurship & Regional Development**, 29/9–10, 847–868.
- BONACICH, E., 1973 “A Theory of Middleman Minorities”, **American Sociological Review**, 38,75, 583–594.
- BOURDIEU, P., 1986 “The Forms of Capital”, **Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education**, Ed. by. J. G. Richardson, Greenwood Press, pp. 241–258.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2017 “Another Side to the Story: An Assessment of Syrian-owned SMEs in Turkey”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2018A “One Year Later: Revisiting the Contributions of Syrian Entrepreneurs in Türkiye”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2018B “Türkiye-Suriye İş Ortaklıkları”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2020 “Women as Entrepreneurs and Employees in Syrian SMEs in Turkey”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2021 “SME Snapshot: Syrian Exporters in Turkey”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, 2022 “Emerging & High-Value Sectors for Syrian Entrepreneurs in Turkey”, **Building Markets**.
- BUILDING MARKETS, INGEV, 2020 “An Assessment on the Financial Inclusion of Syrian-Owned Enterprises in Turkey”, **Building Markets & INGEV**.

- BÜYÜKÇALIK, M. E., 2015 **Mülteci Hukukunun Gelişimi ve Türkiye’de Mültecilerin Sosyal Hakları**, On İki Levha Yayıncılık.
- CASTLES, S., 2004 “The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies”, **International Migration Review**, 38/3, 852–884.
- CASTLES, S., 2007 “The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies”, **Rethinking Migration**, Eds. by. A. Portes, J. DeWind, Berghahn Books, pp. 29–61.
- CEDERBERG, M., M. VILLARES-VARELA, 2018 “Ethnic Entrepreneurship and the Question of Agency: The Role of Different Forms of Capital, and the Relevance of Social Class”, **Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies**, 45/1, 115–132.
- CELİK, S., N. KARDAŞ İŞLER, D. SAKA, 2021 “Refugee Education in Turkey: Barriers and Suggested Solutions”, **Pedagogy, Culture & Society**, 1–19.
- CERİTOĞLU, E., B. GURCİHAN YÜNCÜLER, H. TORUN, S. TUMEN, 2017 The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Natives’ Labor Market Outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a Quasi-Experimental Design, **Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey**, Working Paper No: 17/05.
- CHANG, C., 2021 “The Economically Rich Refugees: A Case Study of the Business Operations of Istanbul-Based Syrian Refugee Businesspeople”, **International Migration**, 60/3, 38–51.
- CHEUNG, S. Y., J. PHILLIMORE, 2013 “Refugees, Social Capital, and Labour Market Integration in the UK”, **Sociology**, 48/3, 518–536.
- CHYE KOH, H., 1996 “Testing Hypotheses of Entrepreneurial Characteristics: A Study of Hong Kong MBA Students”, **Journal of Managerial Psychology**, 11/3, 12-25.
- ÇAĞLAYAN, S., 2006 “Göç Kuramları, Göç ve Göçmen İlişkisi”, **Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, 17, 67–91.
- ÇAHA, Ö., A. KOMŞUOĞLU ÇİTİPİTİOĞLU, Y. “İstanbul Göçmen Girişimci Araştırması”, **IMRA**.

ADIGÜZEL, A. O.,
DEMİR, O., ALTINKOZ,
2021

DEL CARPIO, X. V., M. C. WAGNER, 2015 “The Impact of Syrians Refugees on the Turkish Labor Market”, **World Bank Policy Research Working Papers**, Working Paper No. 7402.

DEMİR, A. O., 2018 “Syrian Entrepreneurs in Turkey: Challenges and Opportunities”, **İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, 17/34, 109-130.

DENİZ, D., M. REYHANOĞLU, 2018 İten ve Çeken Faktörler Temelinde Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Mültecilerin Girişimci Olma nedenleri. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, 7(2), 33-66.

DESAI, S., W. NAUDÉ, N., STEL, 2020 “Refugee Entrepreneurship: Context and Directions for Future Research”, **Small Business Economics**, 56/3, 933–945.

DÖNMEZ KARA, C. Ö., 2016 “Türkiye’de Yabancıların Çalışma Hakkı: Suriyelilerin İşgücü Piyasasındaki Durumu”, **Üsküdar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi**, 2, 151–174.

DRORI, I., M. LERNER, 2002 “The Dynamics of Limited Breaking Out: The Case of the Arab Manufacturing Businesses in Israel”, **Entrepreneurship & Regional Development**, 14/2, 135–154.

DUMAN, E. E., A. ÖZDEMİRCİ, 2020 “Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Göçmen Girişimciler Üzerine Bir Alan Araştırması”, **Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi**, 18/37, 629–656.

DURUEL, M., 2017 “Suriyeli Sığınmacıların Türk Emek Piyasasına Etkileri Fırsatlar ve Tehditler”, **International Journal of Economic Studies**, 3/2, 207–222.

DUVELL, F., 2011 “Irregular Migration”, **Global Migration Governance**, Ed. by. A. Betts, Oxford University Press, pp. 78–108.

ERAYDIN, A., T. TASAN KOK, J. VRANKEN, 2010 “Diversity Matters: Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Contribution of Different Forms of Social Integration in Economic Performance of Cities”, **European Planning Studies**, 18/4, 521–543.

- ERDOĞAN, M. M., 2015 “Türkiye’ye Kitleli Göçlerde Son ve Dev Dalga: Suriyeliler”, **Türkiye’nin Göç Tarihi: 14. Yüzyıldan 21. Yüzyıla Türkiye’ye Göçler**, Eds. by. M. M. Erdoğan, A. Kaya, İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, pp. 315–347.
- ERDOĞAN, M. M., 2017 **Kopuştan Uyuma Kent Mültecileri**, MBB Kültür Yayınları.
- ERDOĞAN, M. M., 2020 **Suriyeliler Barometresi: Suriyelilerle Uyum İçinde Yaşamın Çerçevesi**, İstanbul, Orion Kitapevi.
- ERGÜVEN, N. S., B. ÖZTUNALI, 2013 “Uluslararası Mülteci Hukuku ve Türkiye”, **Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi**, 62/4, 1007–1061.
- FAIST, T., 2003 **Uluslararası Göç ve Ulusaşırı Toplumsal Alanlar**, Trans. A. Z. Gündoğan, C. Nacar, İstanbul, Bağlam Yayınları.
- FONG, R., N. B. BUSCH, M. ARMOUR, L. C. HEFFRON, A. CHANMUGAM, 2007 “Pathways to Self-Sufficiency: Successful Entrepreneurship for Refugees”, **Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work**, 16/1–2, 127–159.
- GEDEON, S., 2010 “What is Entrepreneurship?”, **Entrepreneurial Practice Review**, 1/3, 16–35.
- GOLD, S. J., 1988 “Refugees and Small Business: The Case of Soviet Jews and Vietnamese”, **Ethnic and Racial Studies**, 11/4, 411–438.
- GOLD, S. J., W. COLLEGE, 1992 “The Employment Potential of Refugee Entrepreneurship: Soviet Jews and Vietnamese in California”, **Review of Policy Research**, 11/2, 176–186.
- GOLDSBY, M. G., R. MATHEWS, 2015 “Entrepreneurship and Existentialism: Establishing Authenticity in a Crowded Global Marketplace”, **The Challenges of Ethics and Entrepreneurship in the Global Environment**, Eds. by. S. Hoskinson, D. F. Kuratko, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Vol. 25, pp. 1–16.

- GÜVEN, S., M. KENANOĞLU, M. KADKOY, T. KURT, 2018 “Syrian Entrepreneurship and Refugee Start-Ups in Turkey: Leveraging the Turkish Experience”, **TEPAV**.
- HAMMERSTAD, A., 2017 “Migrants and Refugees in Global Politics”, **Issues in 21st Century World Politics**, Eds. by. M. Beeson, N. Bisley, Palgrave Macmillan Education, Third Edition, pp. 200–216.
- HEILBRUNN, S., R. L. IANNONE, 2019 “Introduction”, **Refugee Entrepreneurship: A Case-based Topography**, Eds. by. S. Heilbrunn, J. Freiling, A. Harima, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1–25.
- HEILBRUNN, S., R. L. IANNONE, 2020 “From Center to Periphery and Back Again: A Systematic Literature Review of Refugee Entrepreneurship”, **Sustainability**, 12/18, 7658.
- HINNEBUSCH, R., 2015 “Back to Enmity: Turkey-Syria Relations Since the Syrian Uprising”, **Orient**, 56/1, 14–22.
- ILO, 2016 “Suriyeli İşçi, İşveren ve Girişimcilerin İşgücü Piyasasında Karşılaştıkları Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri Çalıştayı Genel Değerlendirme”, **International Labour Organisation-ILO**
- INGEV, 2017 “Suriyeliler Tarafından Kurulan Şirketler İçin Potansiyel İyileştirme Alanları”, **INGEV**.
- IOM, 2019A “Baseline Assessment in Istanbul Province”, **International Organization for Migration-IOM**.
- IOM, 2019B “Glossary on Migration”, **International Organization for Migration-IOM**.
- İÇDUYGU, A., 2016 “Turkey: Labour Market Integration and Social Inclusion of Refugees”, **European Parliament**.
- İÇDUYGU, A., E. DİKER, 2017 “Labor Market Integration of Syrian Refugees in Turkey: From Refugees to Settlers”, **Göç Araştırmaları Dergisi**, 3/1, 12–35.
- İÇDUYGU, A., Ş. TOKTAŞ, 2002 “How Do Smuggling and Trafficking Operate via Irregular Border Crossings in the Middles East? Evidence from Fieldwork in Turkey”, **International Migration**, 40/6, 25-54.

- İNELİ CİĞER, M., 2016 “Uluslararası Hukuka Uygun Geçici Koruma Rejiminin Unsurları Üzerine”, **Göç Araştırmaları Dergisi**, 2/3, 62-92.
- KACHKAR, O. A., 2018 “Refugee Entrepreneurship: Empirical Quantitative Evidence on Microenterprises in Refugee Camps in Turkey”, **Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies**, 17/3, 333–352.
- KADKOY, O., 2017 “Syrians and Labor Market Integration: Dynamics in Turkey and Germany”, **The German Marshall Fund of the United States**.
- KARAN, O., 2019 “Suriyeli Mültecilerin Esnaflaşmasını Anlamada Bourdieucu Yaklaşımın Olanakları”, **İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Dergisi**, 39/2, 249–276.
- KARAN, O., B. ÇAKIR, E. KURTARIR, 2020 “Hatay’daki Suriyeli Mültecilerin Girişimcilik Alanındaki Deneyimleri ve Mekânsal Faktörler”, **Göç Dergisi**, 7/1, 77–94.
- KAYA, A., A. KIRAÇ, 2016 “İstanbul’daki Suriyeli Mültecilere İlişkin Zarar Görebilirlik Değerlendirme Raporu”, **Hayata Destek**.
- KAYALAR, M., S. YILDIZ, 2017 “Uluslararası Göç Sonrası Ortaya Çıkan Girişimcilik Türleri”, **Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi**, 22/1, 55-62.
- KAYALAR, M., S. YILDIZ, 2018 “Türkiye’deki Suriyelilerin ve Suriyeli Girişimcilerin Diaspora Yaklaşımları Bağlamında İncelenmesi”, **Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, 10/25, 454–466.
- KLOOSTERMAN, R. C., 2010 “Matching Opportunities with Resources: A Framework for Analysing (Migrant) Entrepreneurship from a Mixed Embeddedness Perspective”, **Entrepreneurship and Regional Development**, 22/1, 25–45.
- KLOOSTERMAN, R. C., J. RATH, 2001 “Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Advanced Economies: Mixed Embeddedness Further Explored”, **Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies**, 27/2, 189–201.
- KLOOSTERMAN, R. C., J. VAN DER LEUN, J. RATH, 1999 “Mixed Embeddedness: (In)formal Economic Activities and Immigrant Businesses in the

- Netherlands”, **International Journal of Urban and Regional Research**, 23/2, 252-266.
- KORKMAZ, M., 2017 “Geçici Koruma Kapsamındaki Suriyelilerin Türkiye İşgücü Piyasasına Etkileri ve Değerlendirmeler”, **Sosyal Güvence**, 7/13, 57–83.
- KOSER, K., 2007 **International Migration: A Very Short Introduction**, Oxford University Press.
- KOYUNCU, A., 2020 “Toplumsal Kabulde Ekonominin İmkânı: Konya’daki Suriyeli Girişimciler”, **İnsan ve Toplum**, 10/3, 100-131.
- KUL PARLAK, N., I. ULUDAĞ GÜLER, 2022 “Göçmen Girişimciliği Bağlamında Suriyeli Girişimciler: İstanbul İli Örneği”, **Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi**, 20/46, 849–884.
- LAW NO. 359, 1962 “Law No. 359 on the Ratification of the Convention on the Status of Refugees”, **Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey** (10898, 5.09.1961).
- LAW NO. 4817, 2003 “Law No. 4817 on Work Permits of Foreigners”, **Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey** (25040, 29.08.2003).
- LAW NO. 6458, 2013 “Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection (YUKK)”, **Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey** (28615, 11.04.2013).
- LIGHT, I. H., C. N. ROSENSTEIN, 1995 **Race, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurship in Urban America**, New York, Aldine de Gruyter.
- LORDOĞLU, K., 2010 “Türkiye’deki Çalışma Hayatının Bir Parçası Olarak Yabancı Çalışanlar”, **Türkiye’ye Uluslararası Göç: Toplumsal Koşullar – Bireysel Yaşamlar**, Eds. by. B. Pusch, T. Wilkoszewski, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, pp. 89–109.
- LORDOĞLU, K., M. ASLAN, 2016 “En Fazla Suriyeli Göçmen Alan Beş Kentin Emek Piyasalarında Değişimi: 2011-2014”, **Çalışma ve Toplum**, 49/2, 789-808.
- LYON, F., L. SEPULVEDA, S. SYRETT, 2007 “Enterprising Refugees: Contributions and Challenges in Deprived Urban Areas”, **Local Economy**, 22/4, 362–375.

- MAHIA, R., R. DE ARCE, A. A. KOÇ, G. BÖLÜK, Z. GUL, 2019 “The Long-Term Impact of Syrian Refugees on Turkish Economy: An Input-Output Simulation”, **Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts de Sciences Économiques**.
- MARTIN, S. F., 2015 “International Migration and Global Governance”, **Global Summitry**, 1/1, 64–83.
- MASSEY, D. S., J. ARANGO, G. HUGO, A. KOUAOUCI, A. PELLEGRINO, J. E. TAYLOR, 1993 “Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal”, **Population and Development Review**, 19/3, 431–466.
- MASUREL, E., P. NIJKAMP, M. TASTAN, G. VINDIGNI, 2002 “Motivations and Performance Conditions for Ethnic Entrepreneurship”, **Growth and Change**, 33/2, 238–260.
- MEISTER, A. D., R. MAUER, 2018 “Understanding Refugee Entrepreneurship Incubation – An Embeddedness Perspective”, **International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research**, 25/5, 1065-1092.
- MERRIAM, S. B., 2009 **Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation**, Jossey-Bass.
- MILLER, M. J., S. CASTLES, 2008 **Göçler Çağı: Modern Dünyada Uluslararası Göç Hareketleri**. Trans. B. U. Bal, İ. Akbulut, İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi.
- MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY, 2020 “Yurtdışında Yerleşik Gerçek ve Tüzel Kişilerin Türkiye’deki Yatırımları”, **Ministry of Industry and Technology**, Retrieved October 20, 2022, from <https://ticaret.gov.tr/hizmet-ticareti/yurtdisi-yatirimlar/uluslararasi-yatirim-istatistikleri/yurtdisinda-yerlesik-gercek-ve-tuzel-kisilerin-turkiyedeki-yatirimlari>
- MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, 2022 “Bakanımız Sn. Süleyman Soylu, CNN Türk Canlı Yayınında Gündeme İlişkin Soruları Yanıtladı”, **Ministry of Internal Affairs**, Retrieved May 22, 2023, from <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/bakanimiz-sn-suleyman-soylu-cnn-turk-canli-yayininda-gundeme-iliskin-sorulari-yanitladi>
- MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, 2023 “Bakanımız Sn. Süleyman Soylu, İl Göç İdaresi Müdürleri Değerlendirme Toplantısı’na Katıldı”, **Ministry of Internal Affairs**, Retrieved May 22,

- 2023, from <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/bakanimiz-sn-suleyman-soylu-il-goc-idaresi-mudurleri-degerlendirme-toplantisina-katildi>
- MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL SECURITY, 2020 “Work Permits for Foreigners [Dataset]”, **Ministry of Labor and Social Security**, Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://www.csqb.gov.tr/media/87487/yabanciizin2020.pdf>
- MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF LIFELONG LEARNING, 2021 “Numbers and Proportions of Students Under Temporary Protection Who Have & Cannot Access Education in Our Country by Years [Dataset]”, **Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Lifelong Learning**, Retrieved March 11, 2022, from http://hbogm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2021_03/18104635_Mart_internet_bulteni_.pdf
- MORGÜL, K., O. SAVAŞKAN, B. MUTLU, 2021 “İstanbul’da Suriyeli Sığınmacılara Yönelik Algı ve Tutumlar: Partizanlık, Yabancı Karşıtlığı, Tehdit Algıları ve Sosyal Temas”, **TÜSES**.
- NEE, V., J. M. SANDERS, 2001 “Understanding the Diversity of Immigrant Incorporation: A Forms-of-Capital Model”, **Ethnic and Racial Studies**, 24/3, 386–411.
- NEUMAN, W. L., 2003 **Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches**, Allyn and Bacon.
- NİŞANCI, Z. N., 2015 “Göçmen Girişimcilik Üzerine: Pittsburgh’daki Türk Girişimciler”, **Girişimcilik ve Kalkınma Dergisi**, 10/1.
- OĞUZ, F., K. GÖKSAL, S. OĞUZ, M. ŞAHİN, 2020 “Kayıtlı İstihdama Geçiş Programı Birinci Faz Etki Analizi Çalışması”, **ILO**.
- ORHAN, O., S. SENYÜCEL GÜNDOĞAR, 2015 Orhan, O., & Senyücel Gündoğar, S. (2015, January). Suriyeli sığınmacıların Türkiye’ye etkileri (No. 195). ORSAM & TESEV.
- ORUÇ, M., 2021 “Türkiye’de Bulunan Suriyelilerin Hukuki Statüleri ve Sahip Oldukları Haklar, **Göç ve Etkileri**, Eds. by. M. Karakaş, D. Çak, Pegem Akademi, pp. 123–130.
- ÖZÇÜRÜMEZ, S., A. İÇDUYGU, 2020 **Zorunlu Göç deneyimi ve Toplumsal Bütünleşme: Kavramlar, Modeller ve**

- Uygulamalar ile Türkiye**, İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- ÖZGÜR BAKLACIOĞLU, N., 2017 **Uluslararası Sınırların Gölgesinde Mülteci Kadınlar**, İstanbul, Der Yayınları.
- ÖZİPEK, B., F. TANRIKULU, 2022 “İstanbul Ekonomisinde Suriyeli Girişimciler”, İTO.
- ÖZKUL, G., S. DENGİZ, 2018 “Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Girişimci Olmalarını Etkileyen Faktörler: Hatay İli Örneği”, **Third Sector Social Economic Review**, 53/3, 1044.
- PARİN, S., A. R. KILIÇ, 2022 “Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Girişimcilik Faaliyetlerinde Farklı Sermaye Biçimlerinin Rolü”, **Göç Dergisi**, 9/1, 15–36.
- PORTES, A., J. DEWIND, 2007 “A Cross-Atlantic Dialogue: The Progress of Research and Theory in the Study of International Migration”, **Rethinking Migration**, Eds. by. A. Portes, J. DeWind, Berghahn Books, pp. 3–26.
- PRESIDENCY OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT, 2023A “Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Sayısı Mayıs 2023 [Dataset]”, **Mülteciler ve Sığınmacılar Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği**, Retrieved May 22, 2023, from <https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyedeki-suriyeli-sayisi/>
- PRESIDENCY OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT, 2023B “Geçici Koruma”, **Presidency of Migration Management**, Retrieved May 22, 2023, from <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638>
- PRESIDENCY OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT, 2023C “İkamet İzinleri”, **Presidency of Migration Management**, Retrieved May 22, 2023, from <https://www.goc.gov.tr/ikamet-izinleri>
- PUNCH, K. F., 2005 **Sosyal Araştırmalara Giriş: Nicel ve Nitel Yaklaşımlar**, Trans. D. Bayram, H. B. Aslan, Z. Akyüz, Siyasal Kitapevi.
- PUSCH, B., 2010 “İstenen ve İstenmeyen Konuklar: Türkiye’deki Yabancıların İş Hukuku Karşısındaki Durumu, **Türkiye’ye Uluslararası Göç: Toplumsal Koşullar – Bireysel Yaşamlar**, Eds. by. B. Pusch, T. Wilkoszewski, Kitap Yayınevi, pp. 75–89.

- RAM, M., N. THEODORAKOPOULOS, T. JONES, 2008 "Forms of Capital, Mixed Embeddedness and Somali Enterprise", **Work, Employment & Society**, 22/3, 427–446.
- RATH, J., V. SCHUTJENS, 2016 "Migrant Entrepreneurship: Alternative Paradigms of Economic Integration", **Routledge Handbook of Immigration and Refugee Studies**, Ed. by. A. Triandafyllidou, Routledge, pp. 96–103.
- REFAI, D., R. HALOUB, J. LEVER, 2018 "Contextualizing Entrepreneurial Identity Among Syrian Refugees in Jordan: The Emergence of a Destabilized Habitus?", **The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation**, 19/4, 250–260.
- SAATÇIOĞLU, B., 2019 "The European Union's Refugee Crisis and Rising Functionalism in EU-Turkey Relations", **Turkish Studies**, 21/2, 169-187.
- SAHIN, M., P. NIJKAMP, S. SUZIKI, 2014 "Contrasts and Similarities in Economic Performance of Migrant Entrepreneurs", **IZA Journal of Migration**, 3/7.
- SALDANA, J., 2019 **Nitel Araştırmacılar İçin Kodlama El Kitabı**, Trans, A. Tüfekci Akcan, & S. Nihat Şad, Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık.
- SAUNDERS, M. N. K., P. LEWIS, A. THORNHILL, 2019 **Research Methods for Business Students**, Pearson.
- SHNEIKAT, B., Z. ALRAWADIEH, 2019 "Unraveling Refugee Entrepreneurship and Its Role in Integration: Empirical Evidence from the Hospitality Industry", **The Service Industries Journal**, 39/9–10, 741–761.
- SINKOVICS, N., A. R. REUBER, 2021 "Beyond Disciplinary Silos: A Systematic Analysis of the Migrant Entrepreneurship Literature", **Journal of World Business**, 56/4, 101223–101244.
- STATISTA, 2021 "Ranking of the Largest Syrian Refugee-Hosting Countries in 2020 [Dataset]", **Statista**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/740233/major-syrian-refugee-hosting-countries-worldwide/>

- SHEPHERD, D. A., F. P. SAADE, J. WINCENT, 2019 “How to Circumvent Adversity? Refugee-Entrepreneurs’ Resilience in the Face of Substantial and Persistent Adversity”, **Journal of Business Venturing**, 35/4, 105940.
- SUNANTA, S., 2022 “Thai Immigrant Service-Based Entrepreneurship in the UK: Mixed Embeddedness, Superdiversity, and Combined Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Capital”, **Advances in Southeast Asian Studies**, 15/2, 213-230.
- TATLI, A., J. VASSILOPOULOU, M. ÖZBİLGİN, C. FORSON, N. SLUTSKAYA, 2014 “A Bourdieuan Relational Perspective for Entrepreneurship Research”, **Journal of Small Business Management**, 52/4, 615–632.
- TOKSÖZ, G., S. ERDOĞDU, S. KAŞKA, 2012 “Türkiye’de Düzensiz Emek Göçü ve Göçmenlerin İşgücü Piyasasındaki Durumları”, **International Organization for Migration-IOM**.
- TSOURAPAS, G., 2019 “The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey”, **Journal of Global Security Studies**, 4/4, 464-481.
- TUMEN, S., 2016 “The Economic Impact of Syrian Refugees on Host Countries: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Turkey”, **American Economic Review**, 106/5, 456–460.
- UN DESA, 2021 “International Migrant Stock 2020 [Dataset]”, **UN DESA**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>
- UNHCR, 2015 “Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries, 2014”, **UNHCR**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/551128679/asylum-levels-trends-industrialized-countries-2014.html>
- UNHCR, 2021A “3RP Regional Strategic Overview”, **UNHCR**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/73116>

- UNHCR, 2021B “Syria Emergency”, **UNHCR**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>
- UNHCR, 2022 “Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response [Dataset]”, **UNHCR**, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.8531510.2023931488.1657961988-1044338502.1604481307
- VINOGRADOV, E., E. J. B. JØRGENSEN, 2016 “Differences in International Opportunity Identification Between Native and Immigrant Entrepreneurs”, **Journal of International Entrepreneurship**, 15/2, 207–228.
- VOLERY, T., 2007 “Ethnic Entrepreneurship: A Theoretical Framework”, **Handbook of Research on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship**, Ed. by. L.P. Dana, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, pp. 30–41.
- YIN, R. K., 2011 **Qualitative Research from Start to Finish**, The Guilford Press.
- YIN, R. K., 2018 **Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods**, SAGE Publications.
- WAUTERS, B., J. LAMBRECHT, 2006 “Refugee Entrepreneurship in Belgium: Potential and Practice”, **The International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal**, 2/4, 509–525.
- WAUTERS, B., J. LAMBRECHT, 2008 “Barriers to Refugee Entrepreneurship in Belgium: Towards An Explanatory Model”, **Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies**, 34/6, 895–915.
- WILSON, K. L., A. PORTES, 1980 “Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami”, **American Journal of Sociology**, 86/2, 295–319.
- YILMAZ, B., 2019 “Girişimci Suriyeli Sığınmacıların İşgücü Piyasası Deneyimleri: Fatih Örneği [MA thesis]”, **Marmara University**.
- ZAMANTILI NAYIR, D., 2019 “From Refugee to Trader: In the Footsteps of Marco Polo”, **Refugee Entrepreneurship: A Case-Based Topography**, Eds. by. S. Heilbrunn, J. Freiling, A. Harima, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 175–194.

ZETTER, R., H.
RUAUDEL, 2018

“Refugees' Right to Work and Access to Labour Markets: Constraints, Challenges and Ways Forward”, **Forced Migration Review**, 58, 4-7.

ZİHNİOĞLU, Z., M.
DALKIRAN, 2022

“From Social Capital to Social Cohesion: Syrian Refugees in Turkey and the Role of NGOs as Intermediaries”, **Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies**, 48/11, 2455–2472.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Approval Document

Tarih ve Sayı: 03.02.2022-734488



T.C.
İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu
Başkanlığı



Sayı :E-35980450-663.05-734488
Konu :Zeynep Rana KAVAKDAN

Sayın Zeynep Rana KAVAKDAN

İlgi : 24.12.2021 tarihli, 670992 sayılı yazı

Sorumlu araştırmacılığımı üstlendiğiniz 2022/15 dosya numaralı "Türkiye'deki Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Girişimcilik Deneyimleri : Başakşehir Örneği" başlıklı çalışma, Kurulumuzun 17.01.2022 tarih ve 01 sayılı toplantısında görüşülerek etik yönden uygun bulunmuş olup, karar ekte sunulmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. N. Tolga SARUÇ
Başkan

Ek:Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Kararı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Belge Doğrulama Kodu :BSCPP90A53 Pin Kodu :44132

Belge Takip Adresi : <https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/istanbul-universitesi-ebys>

Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kampüsü

34452 Beyazıt/Fatih-Istanbul

Tel : 0212 440 20 89 Faks : 0212 440 20 88

e-posta : sosyalbilimleretikkurul@istanbul.edu.tr Elektronik Ağ : www.istanbul.edu.tr

Kep Adresi : istanbuluniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

Bilgi için : Süleyman ARIK

Dahili : 10689



Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.



T.C.
İSTANBUL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER
ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK KURULU BAŞKANLIĞI

Tarih ve Sayı: 01.02.2022-799287



İlgili makama,

İstanbul Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi **Zeynep Rana KAVAKDAN** “Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Girişimcilik Deneyimleri : Başakşehir Örneği” başlıklı, **2022/15** dosya numaralı 27.12.2021 tarih ve **670992** sayılı başvurusu ile İ.Ü. Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu’na başvurmuştur. 17.01.2022 tarihinde gerçekleştirilen inceleme sonucunda, adı geçen çalışmada etik açıdan bir sorun olmadığına oybirliği ile karar verilmiştir. Gereğini bilgilerinize saygılarımızla sunarız.

Unvanı / Adı / Soyadı	Kurumu	Araştırma ile ilişki	Karar	İmza
Prof. Dr. Naci Tolga SARUÇ (Başkan)	İktisat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Doç. Dr. Çiğdem Börke TUNALI (Başkan Yardımcısı)	İktisat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Eray YURTSEVEN (Başkan Yardımcısı)	İstanbul Tıp Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Aydın TOPALOĞLU	İlahiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Yasemin IŞIKTAÇ	Hukuk Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Selahattin KARABINAR	İktisat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Seyhan NİŞEL	İşletme Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Mustafa Hamdi SAYAR	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Selim YAZICI	Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Rasim İlker GÖKBULUT	Ulaştırma ve Lojistik Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Enes KABAKCI	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Prof. Dr. Haluk ZÜLFİKAR	İktisat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Doç. Dr. Hanife Özlem SERTEL BERK	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Doç. Dr. Şerife Sema KARAKELLE	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Göklem TEKDEMİR YURTDAS	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Bengi PİRİM DÜŞGÖR	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ayşe Elif YAVUZ SEVER	Edebiyat Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Mehmet Güven GÜNVER	İstanbul Tıp Fakültesi	E ☒ H ☒	☒ Onay ☒ Katılmadı ☒ Ret ☒ M.Katılmadı	

Appendix 2. Interview Dates

Participant	Occupation in Turkey	Date of Interview
Osman	Restaurant Manager	February 22, 2023
Abdullah	Nuts Shop Owner	February 24, 2023
Mahmud	Hairdresser	February 25, 2023
Hamid	Telephone Repairman	March 7, 2023
Yusuf	Restaurant Owner	March 15, 2023
İbrahim	Technology Manufacturer and Consultant	March 22, 2023
Enes	International School Manager	June 7, 2023
Said	Grocer	June 29, 2023
Nedim	Martial Arts School Owner	June 29, 2023
Muhammed	Policlinic Owner	September 16, 2023
Ziyad	Café Owner	September 16, 2023
Faruk	Nuts Shop Owner	September 17, 2023
Bilal	Food Ordering App Owner	September 23, 2023
Mahir	Electronic Repairman	September 23, 2023
Zubeyr	Spice-seller	September 25, 2023
Hasan	Giftshop Owner	September 25, 2023
Mustafa	Language Course Owner	October 4, 2023
Sena	Food Delivery Service Owner	May 21, 2023
Fatma	Interior Architect	May 31, 2023