POTENTIALITIES FOR AND LIMITS TO INCLUSION BY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SYRIAN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN TURKEY AND CHILD LABOUR

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ABSTRACT

POTENTIALITIES FOR AND LIMITS TO INCLUSION BY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF SYRIAN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN TURKEY AND CHILD LABOUR

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Thousands of people have lost their lives and millions of people were affected by the conflicts in Syria in April 2011. Many people had to flee neighbouring countries due to the conflict; and now Turkey currently hosts more than 3.5 million Syrian migrants which make Turkey the biggest migrant hosting country in the world. In the first years of the conflict, the policies for Syrians were short-term as it has been assumed that they would go back to their country soon and policies aimed at meeting the urgent needs such as food and shelter. In recent years, longer-term policies have been commenced, including policies in education. There are more than 1.6 million Syrian children living in Turkey. While efforts to ensure the access and participation of these children to education continue, still over 400.000 Syrian children are out of the education domain. The main aim of the study is to discover the reasons behind why thousands of Syrian children are out of school, and how child labour creates the biggest reason behind the out of schooling problem of Syrian children living in Turkey. The study is based upon a documentation and policy analysis together with secondary data analysis. Using this research methodology, I present that the migration related

schooling problems of Syrian children in Turkey can be solved with short-term policies and strategies; nonetheless, problems and obstacles related to poverty resulting with child labour are harder to overcome and need special focus through longer term, comprehensive and multisectoral policy making.

Keywords: Education Policies, Migrant Policies, Poverty, Child Labour, Humanitarian Programmes

ÖZ

EĞİTİM TARAFINDAN İÇERMEDE POTANSİYELLER VE LİMİTLER: TÜRKİYE'DEKİ SURİYELİ ÇOCUKLARIN EĞİTİMİ VE ÇOCUK İŞÇİLİĞİ

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Nisan 2011'de Suriye'de çıkan çatışmalarda binlerce insan hayatını kaybetmiş, milyonlarca insan da bu krizden etkilenmiştir. Çatışma nedeniyle çok sayıda insan komşu ülkelere kaçmak zorunda kalmıştır. Türkiye'de şu anda 3,5 milyondan fazla Suriyeli göçmen yaşamakta; bu da Türkiye'yi dünyanın en büyük göçmen barındıran ülkesi yapmaktadır. Çatışmanın ilk yıllarında Suriyeliler için geliştirilen politikalar, kısa süre içinde ülkelerine dönecekleri varsayıldığından, gıda ve barınma gibi acil ihtiyaçların karşılanmasına yönelik kısa vadeli politikalardı. Son yıllarda eğitim politikaları da dahil olmak üzere daha uzun vadeli politikalar uygulanmaya başlanmıştır. Türkiye'de 1,6 milyondan fazla Suriyeli çocuk yaşamaktadır. Bu çocukların eğitime erişim ve katılımlarının sağlanmasına yönelik çalışmalar devam ederken, halen 400.000'in üzerinde Suriyeli çocuk eğitim alanının dışında kalmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, binlerce Suriyeli çocuğun okula gidememe nedenlerini ve Türkiye'de yaşayan Suriyeli çocukların okulsuz kalma sorununun en büyük nedenini çocuk işçiliğinin nasıl oluşturduğunu ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışma, ikincil veri analizi ile birlikte bir dokümantasyon ve politika analizine dayanmaktadır. Bu araştırma metodolojisini kullanarak, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocukların göçle ilgili okullaşma sorunlarının kısa vadeli politika ve stratejilerle çözülebileceğini; bununla birlikte,

çocuk işçiliği ile sonuçlanan yoksullukla ilgili sorunların ve engellerin üstesinden gelinmesinin daha zor olduğunu, ve daha uzun vadeli, kapsamlı ve çok sektörlü politika yapımı odaklanmaya ihtiyaç duyulduğunu göstermekteyim.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim Politikaları, Göç Politikaları, Yoksulluk, Çocuk İşçiliği, İnsani Yardım Programları

Dedicated to my cat who has always been there with me
by my table

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
CCTE	Conditional Cash Transfer for Education
DGMM	Directorate General of Migration Management
DGLLL	Directorate General of Life-Long Learning
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
EU	European Union
ESC	European Social Charter
FRiT	Facility for Refugees in Turkey
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LoFIP	Law on Foreigners and International Protection
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MoFSS	Ministry of Family and Social Services
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OHCHR	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
SASF	Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation
TAC	Temporary Accommodation Centres
TEC	Temporary Education Centres
TPR	Temporary Protection Regulation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thousands of people died and millions were affected by the crisis in Syria in April 2011 as a result of internal strife. As a result of the conflict, large number of people refuged neighbouring countries including Turkey; and now Turkey hosts more than 3.5 million Syrian migrants, making it the world's largest migrant hosting country. In the first years of the conflict, the policy suggestions for Syrians were short-term as it has been estimated that these migrants would soon return to their country. Therefore, initial policies aimed at the security and fulfilment of basic needs of these migrants only. After first few years of the influx, however, long-term, integration-oriented plans and arrangements have been put into action, including policies in education. There are more than 1.6 million Syrian children living in Turkey. Efforts to ensure the access and participation of these children to education continue with the support of the Ministry of National Education, and other national and international organizations.

Education is important for one's life because it does not only provide tools to financial income in the future but also gives freedom, self-confidence and status in the society. Accessing the education opportunities is even more critical for the disadvantaged groups as it might be the only way to break the poverty cycle from generation to generation and might be the only means they could have to live the life in a more dignified manner. Unfortunately, many children are still excluded from the education domain all over the world. According to UNESCO, around 258 million youth and children are still out of school for the school year in 2018 (UNESCO) and remain excluded from the education opportunities. Migrant children are among one of the groups who are at highest risk of dropping school or not start at all. Although every child has right to education regardless of their nationality, legal status or ethnicity, the practices of it display a different reality. In 2015, more than 28 million children were

displaced due to war or conflict and 27 millions of them were out of school (UNICEF, 2007). The situation is not much different for the Syrian children living in Turkey. Up until 2016, only 37,28% of Syrian children at school age were schooled, and the number does not exceed around 60% in 2021 (MoNE, 2021). Even after 10 years of the crisis, many policies and programmes to include more Syrian children into education domain still mostly focus on migration related obstacles but the problem lies deeper in socio-economic obstacles mostly resulting with child labour. Moreover, there is a limitation to policy solutions in migration management and migration policies especially within the context of education as educational inclusion goes beyond the education and migration policies: the solution must include poverty alleviation and social protection policies. Forced migration made it even more difficult for the disadvantaged ones as anticipated. Thus, the migration focus is also crucial to be considered.

Within the scope of this thesis, I will provide a comprehensive policy and programme analysis of the responsible political actors in order to defend that the main reason behind being of out school for Syrian children is the child labour as a result of poverty and already existing migration and education policies are not enough to tackle this structural problems; thus, multi-sectoral poverty alleviation policies are much needed. I believe that these policies are needed because poverty related issues cause children to enter labour market at such an early age when they are supposed to go to school instead of work. I will examine the programmes, policies and strategies of the authorities, and the snapshots/data/statistics from the field while providing policy analysis as well as situational analysis of the Syrian children's inclusion and exclusion from the education in Turkey.

1.1. Aim of the Research

In this thesis, the main objective is to provide an in-depth policy and programme analysis as well as a situational analysis to discover the potentialities and limitations towards educational inclusion of the Syrian children living in Turkey; and provide a link between education accession and child labour as a main problem. While doing so,

firstly, the concepts of social inclusion and exclusion; basic rights and services; migration; socio-economic exclusion, child labour and education will be discussed. Secondly, situational analysis of the Syrians including legal, social and economic aspects will take part in order to grasp the problem from the root. Thirdly, education services of the Turkish government to Syrian children will be reviewed and analysed. Fourthly, the results of secondary data analysis and results of the field studies conducted by various NGOs and INGOs on the topic will be presented in order to provide empirical findings. Lastly, education policies, programmes and strategies of both Turkish Government and international organisations will be examined in order to discover why current solutions cannot be enough to reach out almost 40% of these children.

1.2. Literature Review

In this research, the main concepts are social exclusion of Syrian children from education and poverty resulting in child labour. Although there exist many publications and studies in the areas of social exclusion, migration, poverty, child labour or education in general, specific focus on education of the migrant children and their exclusion from the education domain do not suffice in those publications and studies. Moreover, limited number of studies on education of migrant children are mostly concentrated on exclusion reasons on the surface; which may be listed as reasons like language and integration problems, peer bullying, lack of physical access (transportation/vicinity problem) or lack of awareness of both the child and the parents. Majority of the studies, policies, discussions and suggestions towards exclusion of Syrian children from education have been degraded to legal and physical accessions which have been resolved over the years. However, children are part of a family and they are subjected to certain dynamics such as economic conditions of the family. The data we have about out of school Syrians showed that more than 400,000 of them are out of school (UNICEF, 2020) and majority of them have to take care of the family economically, thus relation between poverty and exclusion from the education should be looked into deeper. Furthermore, studies on poverty and poverty of the migrants varies especially from the very beginning of the Syrian crisis, which started in 2011.

While these studies mostly examine the situation socio-economically, some secondary effects such as lack of access to education should not be overlooked and these should also be studied. There are a quite few numbers of studies in the literature that link the exclusion from the education and poverty of the families that deepened especially after forced migration from their home countries. We can find some studies including this link partly but studies focusing on the link entirely are inadequate.

The concept of poverty in general is widely discussed especially over the past few decades due to severe negative effects of globalisation and industrialisation. Scholars from different disciplines such as economics, sociology, urban studies etc. approach the subject from slightly different angles. This concept gains so much importance when it comes to migration studies as migration puts the poor in a more vulnerable position against the chronic poverty, and migration and poverty have become two inseparable subjects within this scope. The poverty studies in Turkey are either conceptual or specific to a case while only few of them are directly related to migration, particularly Syrians. Moreover, poverty that results in child labour is not given enough attention, not to mention that the relation between child labour and exclusion from the education are lacking in the literature.

Exclusion from the education is not as much discussed as poverty and the academic literature does not cover the subject extensively, though there are some articles providing theoretical knowledge as well as examples of specific cases. In addition, United Nations reports, World Bank publications and (I) NGO reports also cover the subject, but not many of them in Turkey context focus on specifically the exclusion from the education and the subject stays merely as a chapter in the reports. On the other hand, the concept of social exclusion in general is broadly reviewed; it is so in Turkey too. Both the academic literature and institutional reports include various studies on social exclusion and many case studies from different regions of Turkey. Most of the studies have close ties with poverty and socio-economic disadvantage-ness whilst social exclusion and migration relation is not much discussed. More and more studies can be found on the link of social exclusion and migration especially after

the Syrian Crisis yet still there are not sufficient numbers of studies, reports and articles that elaborate on the topic even after 10 years of the crisis.

Studies on Syrian children's exclusion from the education are deficient in the literature since most of the publications covering the issue mention about the subject quite as a summary. A few theses in Turkey address the issue but they are mostly case studies, so they reflect the information specific to a region. No comprehensive, nationwide policy analysis on social exclusion of Syrian children from education is encountered during the literature review. Some studies on the subject can usually be found on United Nations reports and publications, World Bank reports, and academic journals. The data, furthermore, can be reached from the institutional reports of TUIK or other Turkish government institutions in general. However, there is no official and concrete data on Syrian child labour or the reasons behind why more than 400,000 Syrian children are excluded from the education in Turkey.

I combine the concepts poverty, social exclusion, migration and education in my research and provide a secondary analysis to build my policy and programme analysis. I use various available data both narrative and statistical as well as information from the field studies; review many policy reports, laws, applications in order to provide an extensive research on social exclusion of Syrian children from education. I believe that this research will contribute to the literature and will help looking at the subject from a different angle.

The framework of my research will be drawn with the help of diverse resources in the literature and publications. I start with the concept of social exclusion by Bill Reimer, continue with using existing data and information on the published reports of some institutions such as UNHCR, UNICEF, government etc. I use Official Gazette for providing an extensive legal background to the issue. Data from TUIK, World Bank and UN studies, particularly UNICEF reports, and field studies build the foundations of the evidence of my research. I think that my thesis will be rare to provide a link for all of these concepts with an in-depth secondary data, information and document analysis to base the nationwide policy analysis, in order to discover main patterns and

reasons behind Syrian children's exclusion from the education and whether current policies are sufficient to solve these problems.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Question

The main research question of the thesis is "to what extent education inclusion of Syrian children in Turkey can be achieved through current policy making?" Nonetheless, there are also sub-questions that I will try to answer as auxiliary to the main question, which are as follows:

1. What are the main reasons for exclusion of Syrian children from education domain in Turkey?
2. How does child labour affect the educational accession?
3. How does migration affect and deepen the access of education as a basic right?
4. How do Syrian children experience and benefit from educational services in Turkey?
5. How do the education services of Turkish government towards Syrian children change over time? What were the priorities before and how do they change?
6. To what extend do education services meet the needs in terms of Syrian children's education accession?
7. Are education policies and strategies of Turkish Government and international organisations sufficient to battle the accession of out of school Syrian children?
8. What are the fundamental gaps in the education policies and programmes towards Syrian children and how do they lack responding the needs still?
9. What could be the longer-term solutions in increasing the schooling rate of Syrian children in Turkey?

2.2. Scope and the Limitations of the Research

The research will be a comprehensive situation and policy analysis on Syrian children's practices of and accession to education domain in Turkey. The research will cover the education accession of Syrian children who fled Turkey together with their families due to ongoing conflicts in their country to discover effect of urban child labour on the educational inclusion and exclusion; and national policies towards their inclusion. Therefore, the time focus of the study is between 2011 and 2021; spatial/regional focus is nationwide – Turkey; institutional focus covers number of ministries in Turkey, especially Ministry of National Education, United Nations Agencies, especially UNICEF, and the European Union; finally, analytical focus covers child labour and educational accession.

Obstacles in accessing the education for Syrian children are examined from different angles and reasons related to these obstacles are presented in different publications, reports and academic articles. The reasons for Syrian children's exclusion from the education are usually listed in the literature as integration problems, physical access, lack of awareness, etc. Very few publications also mention child marriage and child labour as problems in education access. Child marriage is also an alarming problem for especially girls in the Syrian community in Turkey, yet the scope of this thesis covers the problem of child labour as a reason for being out of school. Moreover, the education accession problem of Syrians also occurs in pre-school education and university level, but the thesis covers Syrians aged between 5 – 17.

Regarding the limitations of the thesis, first limitation is that concepts and discussions are very broad in this thematic area, and discussions are very new. Therefore, there is a lack in comprehensive literature; and majority of the existing studies in this subject focus on the problems of exclusion from migration related angle unlike this research focusing on more structural problems such as poverty and child labour. I will try to look into deeper throughout the thesis although the literature does not suffice to provide an extensive theoretical background. Second limitation is that Syrian children and their parents could not be interviewed due to COVID-19 measures as the pandemic

challenged the field studies and the target group might not have been appropriate group to conduct online interviews. However, various interviews from existing field studies and secondary data from the official publications have been used to stand behind the hypothesis empirically.

2.3. Data and Method of the Research

In order to answer the research questions listed in Chapter 2.1, the research will largely benefit from the secondary data and information including both qualitative and quantitative data. The methodology of policy analysis is mainly used to provide in depth analysis on education policies, strategies and programmes of national and international authorities towards Syrian children in Turkey. Moreover, document analysis will contribute to the thesis to a great extent through review on reports and articles on social inclusion, accession to basic rights and services, legal documents, international agreements, and socio-economic situation analysis of the migration. Moreover, the research benefits from large numbers of secondary qualitative and quantitative data published by academicians, governments, United Nation Agencies, NGOs and INGOs.

The research examines annual and thematic reports of the governments, European Union and United Nations; as well as legal documents such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Law No. 6458 Foreigners and International Protection Law and Temporary Protection Regulation of Turkey. Furthermore, policy papers, NGO and INGO reports, statistics of TUIK and other institutions, and relevant secondary data on education are looked into in detail.

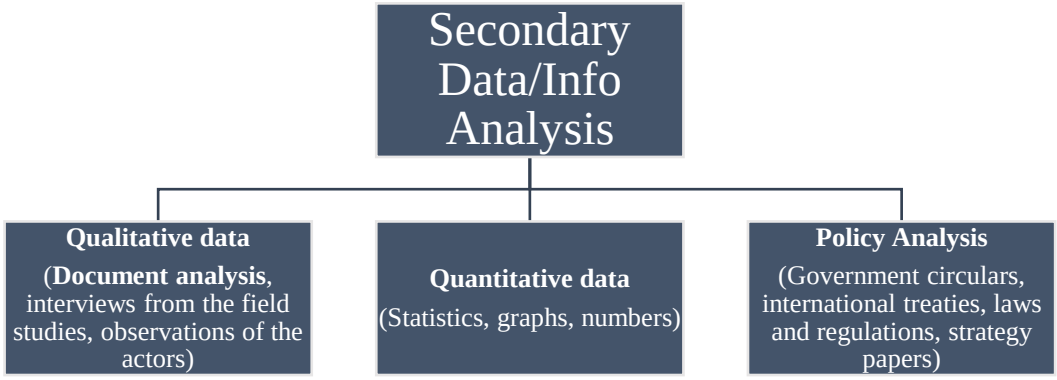

Figure 1: Methodology of the Research

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Social Exclusion

The term social exclusion started to be discussed more and more recently with the rise of globalisation, neoliberalism, urban chronic poverty, and so on. Social exclusion is defined as the dissolution and fragmentation of social links, and hence a loss of social cohesiveness, according to the European Commission's Program definition for "targeted socioeconomic research" (Walter et al., 2003). There are many descriptions of social exclusion; and majority of them are referring it as being excluded from decent income and labour, from public services and/or social links; and it is related to social, political and economic spheres. Although there emerged quite a number of definitions for social inclusion and exclusion, for the purpose of providing a limitation within the context of this research, Bill Reimer's definition on the subject will be used as mentioned in Chapter 1.2. Bill Reimer contributed to this definition considerably and he introduced new fields of social exclusion in addition to Polanyi's definition. He argues that social inclusion and exclusion are about having access to the resources and assets, which are crucial to well-being (Reimer, 2004). He goes on to add that access to these resources is organized through systems of rights, habits, and entitlements, which prioritize some over others, coordinate the actions required, and condition the inevitable disputes that arise (Reimer, 2004). These systems of entitlements and rights are organised within a wide range of norms, values, infrastructure, regulations and institutions. In these processes, he claims that certain people are denied access to these resources by design, consequence, force, or sacrifice (Reimer, 2004). He proposes that social exclusion can be best understood within the framework of four fundamental types of social relations: market relations, bureaucratic relations, associative relations,

and communal relations, and the processes of exclusion and inclusion can occur within any or all of these relationships (Reimer, 2004). These four fundamental types of social relations are well grounding the issue to understand root causes of the social exclusion as well as the dimensions; and "simultaneously creating both distributional and relational manifestations of the problem" (Reimer, 2004).

Firstly, market relations, within the scope of social inclusion and exclusion discussions of Reimer, represent a space where goods and services are exchanged with multiple ways throughout the history. In order to exchange, people need to have resources and assets, and a better integration into the market as such requires access to goods and services, information about the markets and good negotiation skills. Thus, people who have these qualities, goods and services will face fewer barrier into inclusion (Reimer, 2004). Secondly, Reimer describes bureaucratic relations as rational-legal relationships with the distribution of resources based on the status, not productivity (Reimer, 2004). A great emphasis can be made on rights and entitlements at this point as their allocation and how they are backed up with law and enforcement gain quite importance at inclusion and exclusion discussions. Reimer indicates that people who are able to be committed to personalised relations rather than organisational are possibly to be excluded from the distribution of services and resources that are controlled via bureaucratic relations (Reimer, 2004). This also means that individuals or groups who have difficulties of accessing those rights and entitlements may find themselves excluded from the bureaucratic relations. Thirdly, associative relations involve shared interests, goals and concerns and they are most likely to provide a social cohesion when time of a social crisis or disaster. According to Reimer, social exclusion in associative relations occur when interests diverge or there is not sufficient contribution to the objectives of the group from a member; and he included racism or stigmatisation under this category (Reimer, 2004). Lastly, Reimer bases communal relations on mainly shared identity as an assigned characteristic of ethnicity, birth or location(Reimer, 2004). We can easily think of family or tribe for this kind of relation, where bond among individuals and groups is maintained through symbols or rituals though not limited to those. Social exclusion from this type of relations occur, to Reimer, when there is mistrust, infrequent interaction or challenge to the identity.

Reimer's classification is used in this research to define the aspects of social inclusion and exclusion as I think that he discussed the issue in every angle. Apparently when it comes to be excluded in any of the domains in society, the results may easily be damaging. The ones with the most negative effects, nevertheless, are the exclusion from the market relations as it may lead to poverty – especially vicious circle of poverty across generations due to lack of goods, services and market skills; and bureaucratic relations in accessing basic public services and benefitting from the most crucial rights whose absence may cause not having a dignified life as a human being.

3.2. Migration

Migration is mostly defined as mobility of people from one place to another with certain intentions. International Organisation for Migration (IOM) defines migration as the movement of a person or group of people across an international border or inside a country, and it is the population movements in which people move regardless of their duration, structure and reason. This includes refugees, internally displaced persons, economic migrants, and those migrating for a variety of reasons, such as family reunification (IOM Dictionary). Migration emerges with different definitions as a concept in different branches of science. Migration is defined as individuals or communities relocating from one country to another, from one location to another, for economic, social, or political reasons, according to the Turkish Language Institution. In addition, migration can also be defined in terms of its outcomes as a population movement that alters society's structure through economic, cultural, social, and political components of the physical location change process (Özer, 2004). There are also different approaches to the categorisation of the migration such as primitive, forced, free, external or internal, according to the way it emerges. For Example, Okyayuz divides the phenomenon of global migration (in the most general sense) into two basic categories: voluntary migration and forced migration (Okyayuz, 2016). He argues that at least one-tenth of the 175 million people living outside their own country consists of the second type, that is, those who have been subjected to forced migration. I will mention 4 types of migrations which are internal and external migration as a

geographical classification, and voluntary and forced migration as economic, social and political categorisation.

Firstly, geographical space mobility takes place both within the country and between countries, individually and between groups. This classification is also made according to the direction of migration movements. 'Internal migration' indicates the mobility between settlements within the country; and mobility outside of the country is called 'external migration' and this is also expressed as 'international migration'. IOM defines internal migration as “migration of people from one part of the country to another for the purpose of obtaining a temporary or permanent new residence or resulting in a new residence” (IOM Dictionary) and external migration as “the departure of persons from their country of origin or their habitual residence to settle in another country, temporarily or permanently, by crossing an international border” (IOM Dictionary).

Secondly, voluntary and forced migration differs in terms of the individual's own desire of migration or not. While the causes of voluntary migration might include economic migration or labour migration, education-based migration, brain drain, or retirement migration; in the forced migration individual is forced to move to another place or even to other countries by the influence of other powers, especially by the state, out of their will and desire. Voluntary migration of the individual occurs mostly, albeit unwillingly, due to financial difficulties or the desire for a more comfortable life. Forced migration, on the other hand, may be the result of a political reason such as war.

3.2.1. Migrant Statuses

Individuals migrating to especially another country obtains immigrant statuses and this categorisation is made within the legal scope which means that it defines the level of access to certain rights or services. The statuses I will describe is as follows; asylum seeker and refugee, subsidiary protection, conditional refugee status, and temporary protection.

Asylum seeker is a person who aspires to be recognised as a refugee in a country under the terms of applicable international or national documents and is awaiting the

outcome of the application for refugee status (IOM Dictionary). If a negative decision come through, the applicants must depart the country. In case they are not permitted to stay in the country for any reason such as humanitarian, they may be deported like any foreigner in the country who resides in an irregular situation. Refugee, on the other hand, is a person who stays out of the country of citizenship and is unwilling or unable to seek protection from own country due to the incidents happening inside of the European countries and to avoid persecution for religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group; and after the process for the status determination is finished, this person will be given refugee status (DGMM). "Refugee" defined in Article 61 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection No. 6458 dated 04/04/2013 includes foreigners coming from the Council of Europe member countries and seek international protection in Turkey.

Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) in Turkey defines conditional refugee as a person who stays out of the country of citizenship and is unwilling or unable to seek protection from own country due to the incidents happening outside of the European countries and to avoid persecution for religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group (DGMM). A conditional refugee is allowed to temporarily stay in Turkey until their resettlement to a third country. Turkey is a side of 1951 Convention, and Article 1 of the Convention stipulates “geographical restriction” through using its right of choice for place. Therefore, a conditional refugee is a person who claims to be subject to the circumstances listed in the definition of refugee and seeks for international protection in Turkey until resettling in a third country as a result of events occurring outside European countries (DGMM).

Subsidiary protection is a status not qualifying as a refugee or conditional refugee, but if repatriated to the country of origin or country of residence would;

a) be sentenced to death or the death penalty execution,

b) be tortured or subjected to inhumane or humiliating treatment or punishment,

c) faces serious threats to itself through indiscriminate violence in situations of international or national armed conflict; and is therefore unable or unwilling to enjoy the protection of his country of origin or of his [former] habitual residence (DGMM).

Lastly, temporary protection is a type that is designed to provide immediate relief in the case of a large-scale influx. It is a practical and complementary approach that is adopted in the context of non-refoulement of the states to persons arriving at their borders without losing time with individual status determination procedures (DGMM) and this is a relatively new status. According to the United Nations Executive Committee Conclusion No. 100 in 2004, mass influx might have these characteristics; large number of people reach to an international border, a rapid arrival rate, and the host (receiving) state's inability to implement existing individual asylum procedures in the near term. Temporary protection is provided when the mass influx involving these elements becomes continues.

Forced international migration and temporary protection are within the scope of this thesis as these describe the situation and status of the majority of Syrians living inside the borders of Turkey.

3.2.2. Migration Causing Deeper Social Exclusion

In the age of globalization, we observe enormous increase in migration, both forced and "voluntary", and this phenomenon affected urban social relations with creating new distinctions between insiders and outsiders in societies. Insiderness and outsiderness are social practices and they happen in all societies among those who are part of us and those who are alien or foreign. Migrants, in particular, are subjected to being categorised as outsiders because their social position is frequently based on certain criteria such as ethnicity, race, and gender (Nhan & Chan, 2013). Many countries host migrants from varying countries and these migrants might be seen as "threats" by the host communities because migrants are considered as danger to the livelihood and social cohesion, and they are, in the simplest term, not "real citizens". Migrants are usually subjected to discrimination and exclusion, revealed through policies and laws that restrict business and residence opportunities, labour market

discrimination, restrictions towards accessing basic public services such as education, and limited political participation (Gradstein & Schiff, 2006). Below table also shows the risk of poverty or social exclusion based on persons' status for citizenship and we can say that non-EU citizens are, by far, more at risk of poverty or exclusion than EU citizens and nationals in almost all countries (EC, 2019). Turkey actually demonstrates closer rates of social exclusion and poverty for national and foreign residents, but this does not mean that Turkey achieved better compared to other countries because poverty rates of both citizens and foreign are high and they are "equally" poor.

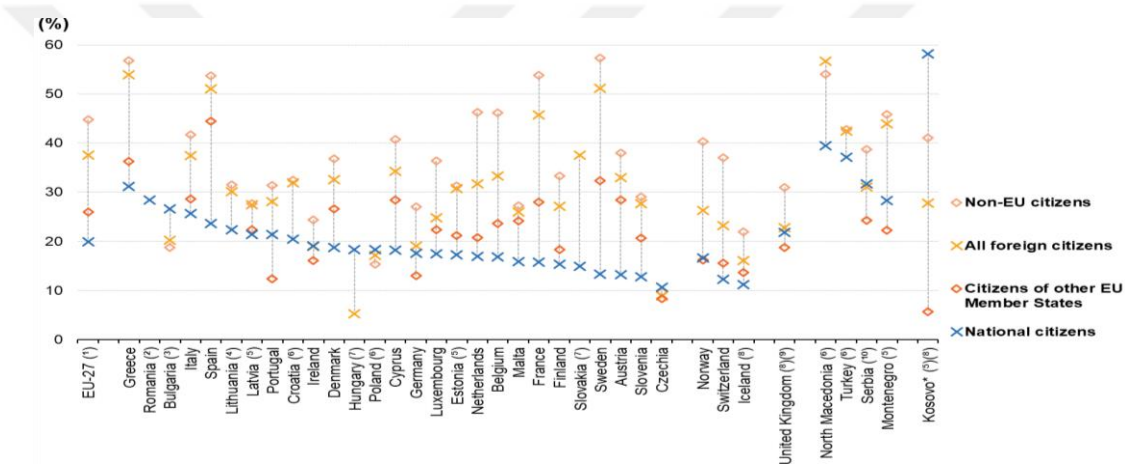

Figure 2: People aged 20-64 years at risk of poverty or social exclusion by citizenship

(EUROSTAT, 2019)

There are attempts to alleviate this exclusion by the state and civil society but social inclusion strategies in many countries give not enough consideration to fighting and preventing the risk of social exclusion and poverty among migrants (Social Platform, 2013). Especially in the countries facing economic risks, the financial share for the social protection of the migrants decrease extremely. Due to their initial vulnerable position, the share of migrants in a situation of poverty and social exclusion remain clearly higher than that of nationals. Usually, migrants are poorer and more excluded compared to host communities. When government strategies are not enough to fill the gap, situation gets worse; poverty and exclusion deepen. This might be the case even for policies and strategies of developed Western countries towards migrants. For example, UNDP underlines that refugees have exclusionary barriers in accessing the

paid work in many developed countries and they face labour exploitation in many developing countries (Davidson & Carr, 2012). Moreover, government and legislative policies in the United Kingdom have limited access of asylum seekers and refugees into various nonmonetary and monetary support only a few decade ago. It can be said that migrants are facing greater exclusion from labour market, state services, social relations and therefore, it is a high possibility that migrants would be excluded from all four domains Reimer indicated, even in developed countries.

Within the framework of Reimer's classification, we may say that migrants are often excluded from associative, market and bureaucratic relations. Migration causes the loss of associative bonds; migrants usually do not have either the means or the environment to use their skills in market relations; and they have problems in the bureaucratic affiliation due to the very nature of "being foreign" and to be excluded from the rights and services that citizens can access.

Migrants' communal relations, however, tend to be stronger compared to even their communal relations in their home countries. As migration is generally disruptive experience, a sense of insecurity emerges and it results in uprooting and marginality; thus, immigrants redefine their collective identities and national/ethnic/religious identifications are strengthened (Arif & Moliner, 2007).

3.3. Access to Basic Rights and Services within Migration Issue

Social, cultural and economic rights are the part of human rights and they are related to participation in the cultural life, social security, sufficient living standards, right to work, access to water, food, housing, healthcare and education. These are all at the core of human rights and all human beings are entitled equally to enjoy these rights without any discrimination.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been ratified on December 10, 1948 and it has been acknowledged as universal standards for all peoples. The importance of the Declaration comes from that the minimum rights of human beings have been spoken for the first time in the history and that social, cultural, civil, economic and political

rights belonged to all people to enjoy. This international human rights approach further argues that the human rights are "universal, inalienable, indivisible and interdependent" (OHCHR). When states become parties to treaties of international human rights, they may be responsible for consequences of their actions and they have obligations to install domestic measures as well as legislation matching with these obligations under international law. States that become parties to such treaties have duty in carrying out appropriate actions to prevent abuses of human rights, to investigate the abuses and to punish them, and last but not least, to provide reparation and remedies (OHCHR).

Human rights issues are widely spoken when it comes to the situation of migrant people as the migration may result in placing people in vulnerable situation, especially when migrants are outside of a fully entitled legal category, such as refugee status. It is particularly important to protect the human rights of the migrants and assure that these rights are respected and fulfilled since there may be some migrants who need specific protection. The International Bill of Human Rights allows a distinction between national and non-national in respect to two rights only, which are right to vote and take part in public affairs, and this is valid only in certain circumstances. Therefore, the framework of international human rights covers all migrants despite of their status and of where they are (OHCHR, 1948).

There is another important treaty concerning international human rights, which is European Social Charter (ESC) of Council of Europe. It has been opened to signature in 1961 and revised in 1996 with an aim to guarantee fundamental economic and social rights as a complementary to European Convention on Human Rights. The Charter secure human rights regarding employment, health, housing, education, welfare and social protection and even for those who are non-national. In the Charter, there are three categories for the non-nationals, which are refugees, migrant workers and stateless persons and they are as entitled as the nationals are for enjoying their human rights that are under protection of international human rights law. ESC proposes that everyone must have access to their rights without any discrimination and accessing to human rights is essential for human dignity (CoE, 1961). Moreover, ESC rights have

a specific focus on the most marginalised, discriminated and excluded groups in the society including migrants. Protecting people from discrimination cannot depend on conditions and states should provide access to services to both citizens and non-citizens in accordance with the law (CoE, 1961). Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights provide a group of key messages in the report "The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Migrants in in Irregular Situation" published in 2014. The messages provide a summary of main points for the rights of migrants – especially irregular migrants who need a legal protection the most. Some of the messages are;

- All economic, social, and cultural rights are guaranteed to irregular migrants under international human rights law.
- It is illegal for states to discriminate against irregular migrants based on their nationality or legal status.
- States must take specific actions to ensure that irregular migrants can exercise their economic, social, and cultural rights.
- As a vulnerable population, irregular migrants are entitled to special protection of their economic, social, and cultural rights (OHCHR, 2014).

In conclusion, human rights are universal; all people are entitled to international human rights law and states have the obligation to provide, protect and apply these rights within their territories regardless of people's origin or status. Authorities may even take further precautions in order to protect the basic rights of migrants due to their precarious position.

After discussing the basic rights of migrants as humans, there needs to make a special emphasise on the basic services that persons require to live in a dignified way as human beings. Basic services are described as health, education, housing, social protection, etc. and these are acknowledged as essential human needs for a worthy life, thus accessing to these services is quite critical. Access to basic services is so important that it constitutes a fundamental aspect to promote social, economic and territorial cohesion and sustainable development; therefore, state has the obligation to assure,

provide and regulate these services in the interest of promoting social wellbeing as well as social protection for its whole population (Plata et al. 2019).

Providing and receiving basic services assure social justice in the society and strengthen the equal treatment for all citizens. However, the problem begins when non-citizens, especially migrants face great difficulties in reaching these services even though they have rights to access basic services that are protected under international human rights law. The main reason for that does not work in practice is migrants facing discrimination in the host country. Although accessing to basic services is regulated under international law and put in action with treaties, some national laws may exclude non-citizens from accessing basic services such as health care, housing, education and social protection. In some cases, providing basic services to non-citizens may be included in the national law yet the problem continues in practice as migrants may be discriminated in their ability to access these services. States should ensure access to basic services for all migrants without any barrier and this should be regulated not only in national law but also in practical and operational regulations of the institutions. For example, he obligation to show a birth certificate in order to enroll a kid in school may discriminate against irregularly present migrants and their offspring in an indirect way (Refugee Law Initiative, 2019) or providing health and education services only in the provinces where the migrants are registered may cause delays and obstacles in reaching crucial services that are fundamental to human beings. Although accessing to basic rights and services are entitled to all persons without any discrimination, migrants face enormous difficulties in enjoying these rights in the domestic context.

Lack of access to basic rights and services can result in social exclusion in many ways. Especially right to education is very critical as it is fundamental for development humanly, socially and economically; and it is a core human right. Limited and no access to education creates problems both individually and socially. In the following chapters, I will elaborate more on the framework of social exclusion, migration and education relations.

3.4. Education

3.4.1. Education as a Basic Right

Education stands as a fundamental human right and it is primary for the exercise of other human rights as it promotes individual empowerment, freedom and development. Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 26 states;

> *Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. ... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (UN, 1948).*

Moreover, Geneva Declaration adopted in 26 September, 1924 by League of Nations states, "Mankind owes to the Child the best that it has to give, declare and accept it as their duty that, beyond and above all considerations of race, nationality or creed" (UN (League of Nations), 1924). Declaration of the Right of the Child has been adopted and extended in December 1959, and this document reaffirmed, "*The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stage (UN, 1959).*

Another important document on right to education is the World Declaration on Education for All which was adopted in March 1990 in Thailand. Article 5 of the document argues that all children, teenagers, and adults should receive a basic education and to this purpose, high-quality basic education services should be provided, and consistent steps to decrease inequities should be implemented (UNESCO 1990). Basing this essential Declaration, Education 2030 agenda came into force as part of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, which are the global commitments in different sectoral areas including education. Education 2030 promotes the importance of education beginning from early ages in the childhood to adult education and training. Sustainable Development 4 is the specific goal for the education and includes seven outcome targets and three means of implementation.

Despite of all these global efforts throughout the history, still many children are out of school due to many accession problems and obstacles. UNESCO states that nearly 258

million youth and children are out of school; and 59 million children who are at primary school age do not receive education (UNCESCO Data Tool). Besides, 8.2% of the children at primary school age are out of school and four in ten young people will not be finishing secondary school level in 2030 .

3.4.2. Education, Migration and Social Exclusion

When discussing the exclusion of migrants from especially labour market and state services, we end up with an intersection: education. In almost all countries, education is under the mandate of the state, regardless of if there is big or small budget share for education, so access to education is a matter of access to a state service. On the other hand, human capital often refers to knowledge or skills that have an economic value, and building the human capital is achieved through education. Therefore, inclusion or exclusion from the educational opportunities might have double effect for the migrants.

Migrant children need to be included in the national education system but there are several obstacles to overcome. These obstacles related to inclusion of refugees in national education systems are most severely felt in contexts where capacity is weak and the need for coordination and planning is high. Critical issues are ranging from lack of documents to limited language proficiency, and from interruptions of education paths to poverty (UN, 2019). In addition to these, bullying at schools or social isolation play a critical role, especially during adolescence times of migrant children. Considering all these, migrant children who are already at a disadvantageous position will be excluded more due to access to the social resources and they cannot benefit from their social associations to the same extent with children at an advantaged position, and stay behind even more (Raabe, 2018). There is a high possibility that these children will be affected negatively as a result of being excluded partly or wholly from educational opportunities and this will put them in a more difficult position compared to their peers from the host community. Examples of this to be more precise can be summarized as follow: legal barriers including different practices of compulsory education, administrative challenges including receiving residence permit or difficulties in school registration, insufficient guidance and trainings for related

government officials and teachers, lack of psychosocial support and social cohesion activities for the new comers (migrants), language difficulties, peer and teacher bullying, and discrimination faced at the schools, lack of information provided for the parents, lack of catch-up classes for those who lost years in education due to long migration route; and most importantly poverty limiting to cover the cost of school materials and clothing and turning those children to child labour.

Unfortunately, migrant child labour becomes the sad reality of the informal markets in the host countries. Migrant children are exposed to more exploitation due to their vulnerable position, and they have a risk to stay in poverty – extreme poverty in some cases. These children stay away from the formal education opportunities due to child labour and, in fact, lose their hope and chance to ever be included in this domain.

3.5. Child Labour

Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), also ratified by Turkey, defines everyone under the age of 18 as a “child”. International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines child labour as employing children in jobs that deprive them of their youth, reduce their potential and dignity, and impair their physical and mental development. In a broader term, work that is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children, jobs that prevent children from attending school on a regular basis, causing them to miss school or leave school early, and working children in long and heavy work while they are in school are all evaluated as "child labour" (ILO, 2021). Considering its most extreme forms, child labour enslaves children, isolates them from their families, exposes them to major risks and diseases, and abandons them on the streets of big cities at a young age. While child labour can take many different forms, the priority of the authorities is to end immediately “the worst forms of child labour” as defined in article 3 of ILO Convention 182. The worst forms of child labour include;

- Slavery and slavery-like activities, such as the sale and trafficking of minors, bonded or dependent employment, and forced or compelled labour, including the use of children in military engagements;

- Using, procuring, or presenting a kid for prostitution, in the production of pornographic publications, or in pornographic performances;
- The involvement, supply, or offering of a kid in illicit operations, particularly the manufacture and trade of narcotic substances as defined by relevant international agreements;
- Work that is hazardous to children's health, safety, or moral development due to its nature or the conditions under which it is conducted (ILO, 1999).

“Dangerous jobs” are described as jobs that jeopardize a child's physical, mental, or moral well-being due to their nature or the circumstances in which they occur.

Among the main ILO conventions, Urgent Action Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour, and Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment also set the standards for working age in detail in line with the UNCRC. The “Minimum Age Convention” establishes a clear link between the minimum age for employment or working and the age for completing compulsory education; it also defines 18 as the minimum age for hazardous work (ILO, 1973). The main causes of child labour can be listed as poverty, inability to access free and quality education, immigration, unemployment of adult family members, traditional perspective and social exclusion, lack of control, informality and cheap labour demand.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Republic of Turkey and the ILO in 1992, and Turkey became one of the first 6 countries to participate in the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Over the years, significant progress has been made in the fight against child labour. Turkey ratified ILO's Minimum Age for Admission to Employment Convention No. 138 in 1998, and Convention No. 182 for Urgent Action on the Prohibition and Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. To translate political commitment into action, the Time-Bound National Policy and Program Framework on Worst Forms of Child Labour (2005-2015) has been established. The mentioned policy and program framework, which was completed in 2015, was updated by the Ministry of Family and

Social Services to cover the period of 2017-2023, and the National Program for Combating Child Labour (2017-2023) was prepared (ILO, 2021). In this framework, forms of work that require urgent intervention have been defined and a multidimensional, multilateral approach that takes the child into account with his/her social environment has been developed in the fight against child labour. The year 2018 was declared the Year of Elimination of Child Labour in Turkey, and the work gained momentum.

In Turkey's legal framework, the definition of child labour is made in Article 4 of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles of Employment of Child and Young Workers, which was enacted based on Article 71 of the Labour Law No. 4857. According to this Article, a child worker is someone who has reached the age of fourteen but has not yet reached the age of fifteen and has completed elementary education (MoFSS Child Labour Handbook). On the other hand, working age and restriction on the employment of children are defined under Article 71 of the Labour Law in Turkey. The Article states;

> *Employment of children who have not completed the age of fifteen is prohibited. ... The job the child performs must not bar him for attending school and from continuing his vocational training, nor impair his pursuance of class work on a regular basis (İş Kanunu [Labour Law], 2003).*

Child labour is a form of employment that harms children physically, mentally, morally, and deprives them of education. Child labour hinders the fundamental right of the child, the right to a healthy life and development, and the right to education. It threatens the physical, mental, emotional and social development of the child. Despite the efforts, a total of 152 million children, 64 millions of whom are girls and 88 millions of whom are boys, are working around the world. To put it another way, one out of every ten youngsters is currently employed as a child labourer. Nearly half of these children, which are 73 million children, work in dangerous jobs that negatively impact their health and development (MoFSS Child Labour Handbook). When we examine the distribution of child labour by sectors, agriculture has by far the largest share; 71% of the world's child workers and 108 million in absolute numbers. On the other hand, 26 million children work in the service sector and 18 million in industry.

Moreover, children between the ages of 5 and 11 make up the largest proportion of child workers, but also the majority of those who work in hazardous jobs. 48% of child workers are in the 5-11 age group, 28% are in the 12-14 age group and 25% are in the 15-17 age group (MoFSS Child Labour Handbook).

Syrian child labour becomes a critical issue in Turkish labour market – mainly in the informal market since the Syrian influx started in 2011. Although there is no official statistics for Syrian child labour in Turkey, many field studies, publications and news show that these children are exploited while working in bad conditions that affect their development mentally, physically and intellectually. Sadly, majority of these children remain out of the formal education opportunities and they are most likely to be the lost generations who continue living in poverty and have no chance of contributing to the society they live in.

CHAPTER 4

LEGAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF SYRIANS IN TURKEY

4.1. General Situation

Due to the armed conflicts began in March 2011 in Syria, thousands of people lost their lives, while almost 4.7 million endured displacement. More than 11 million people off a 22 million populated country were directly affected from the crisis, which turned out to be one of the biggest crises since the Second World War. The number of registered Syrian people in Turkey is over 3.5 million; with around 100.000 people living in the camps under temporary protection (UNHCR Data Portal). This number falls short when the number of unregistered Syrian people and displaced people of other nationalities (Afghans, Iraqis, etc.) are considered. Thus, Turkey has become the world's largest refugee/asylum seeking host country. As the situation in Syria becomes more uncertain and urgent, Turkey faces the risk of a larger and more unexpected inflow of individuals escaping the combat zone.

Turkey is a party to 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 protocol in Geneva; and maintains geographical limitation as in granting refugee status to only those who seek refuge because of crisis that occur within Europe and retaining resettlement of others to a third country (UNHCR). After the influx of Syrian people into the country, Turkey has started to undertake series of legislative and institutional reforms in order to structure an effective refugee response mechanism in line with the international standards. Turkey has issued the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in April 2014, which is the first asylum law of Turkish Government (UNHCR). The Law forms the framework for the asylum system, and it established the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) as the main body for the asylum policymaking.

In 22 October 2014, Turkish Government has ratified the Temporary Protection Regulation (instead of a refugee status due to Refugee Convention in 1951) that outlines the rights and obligations of those under temporary protection.

Throughout the history, Turkey has welcomed migrants especially from Middle East and Balkans even though this cannot be compared with the migration flow from Syria considering the scale of the migration. Turkey has issued an asylum regulation in 1994 as a result of migration from the Middle East and Balkans yet this only reflected the concerns over national security; not a comprehensive and coherent asylum or citizenship policy (Akdemir, 2019). Syrian migration, on the other hand, is much larger and substantial compared to migration from Middle East and Balkans because the number of asylum seekers are much bigger, and this has caused a political issue internally and externally.

The crisis is now in its tenth year and Turkey put a great effort to satisfy the requirements of Syrians and to eliminate the poverty of the migrants, though challenges in social, economic, and political inclusion continue. Migrants under temporary protection in Turkey are entitled to a variety of rights, services, and assistance. This encompasses, for example, education, health, psychological support, social aid, and labour market access. Chronic institutional and structural challenges in the economy, labour market, and general policy environment have inevitably influenced the process of absorbing millions of refugees and current efforts to meet the special needs of migrants. Because refugee services in Turkey are substantially incorporated into mainstream government services and existing social security systems, migrants' social and economic inclusion will ultimately necessitate tackling the institutional and structural drivers of economic and social inequity (Aslan & Whitaker-Yılmaz 2019). Benefiting from these rights and services and elimination of poverty and inequality is another story for Syrians living in Turkey, which will be detailed in Chapter 4.2 and 4.3.

4.2. Legal Status

4.2.1. A Brief Summary

For many years, Turkey has been the country of emigration, including migrant workers and asylum seekers to especially Western countries. However, due to changing patterns in the new era, Turkey has become the country of both immigration and transition over the past few decades. Syria war affected this situation and shifted the migration case to a completely different level in Turkey, particularly with the major migration influx from Syria to Turkey due to ongoing internal conflicts. Therefore, there emerged the need to develop a comprehensive legal framework in order to regulate the rights and obligations of as well as basic services for millions of Syrians and other migrants residing in Turkey. Within this context, the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LoFIP) was adopted in April 2013. In addition to LoFIP, Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) was issued in October 2014 for the further legal procedures including the ones for Syrians living in Turkey.

There are fundamental laws, regulations and policies applicable to migrants in Turkey throughout the history of Republic of Turkey. I would like to mention four major ones as these four play a crucial role in regulating the rights, obligations and policies in this subject. Mentioned four laws and policies are; Law on Settlement; Law on Foreigners and International Protection; Temporary Protection Regulation; and Law on Work Permits for Foreigners.

Law on Settlement – Law No. 2510; regulated the official settlement of non-citizens in Turkey and it restricted the rights only to Turkey descent and culture between 1934 and 2006; and a new Law on Settlement was issued in 2006 and the Law still included those with Turkish descent and culture (İskan Kanunu [Settlement Law] 2006). Although the Law was not inclusionary for all the foreigners in Turkey, it was critical to mention for it is the first legal migration rules of the Republic.

Law on Foreigners and International Protection is the most important and grounding legal framework for the migration in Turkey, and the Law is quite comprehensive and inclusive for all the non-citizens residing in Turkey. As also mentioned in the previous

chapters, Turkey joined the UN Convention Relating the Status of Refugees in 1951 as well as the Convention's 1967 Protocol. By then, Turkey had no legislation specific to migration other than the Settlement Law of 1934. As Turkey started the process of accession to the European Union in 1999, there needed to introduce new laws and policies, and 2005 National Action Plan for Adoption of Acquis on Asylum and Migration was one of these laws policies and regulations. However, there has been no solid legal structure until 2013 and it was then the Law on Foreigners and International Protection has been issued in April 2013, which was seen as the first inclusive legal act on migration management issues. Temporary Protection Regulation is the additional legal framework to LoFIP, and it has been issues on 22 October 2014. The Regulation covers all foreigners whose situation coincide with its framework but mainly Syrians come under this category. The Regulation is provided to;

> *…foreigners, who were forced to leave their countries and are unable to return to the countries they left and arrived at or crossed our borders in masses to seek urgent and temporary protection and whose international protection requests cannot be taken under individual assessment (Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği [Temporary Protection Regulation], 2014).*

Another important legislation is the Law on Work Permits for Foreigners, which was issued in February 2003. The Law enables the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to determine whether a foreigner's application for a work permit is granted. The Ministry decides the approval on the basis of specific evaluation criteria defined in the Law. Grounding of the Law on Work Permits for Foreigners, the Regulation for Work Permits of the Foreigners under Temporary Protection was adopted in January 2016 (Geçici Koruma Sağlanan Yabancıların Çalışma İzinlerine Dair Yönetmelik [Regulation for Work Permit of Foreigners under Temporary Protection], 2016). The Regulation is particularly critical as it allowed foreigners, especially Syrians, to work formally and helped start eliminating the informal work of migrants. The Regulation also represents that the assistance and services provided to Syrians are no longer in an emergency level; and longer-term solutions had been needed.

4.2.2. Turkish Citizenship Entitlement

According to Turkish Citizenship Law, Law No. 5901 issued in 2009, Turkish citizenship can be acquired by a foreign in the basis of the decision of the relevant authority, but "fulfilment of the stipulated conditions does not grant that person an absolute right in the acquisition of citizenship" (Türk Vatandaşlığı Kanunu [Turkish Citizenship Law], 2009). Turkish Citizenship Law includes also those recognised as immigrants within the category of "acquisition based on exceptional status"; and they can be naturalised without being subject to requirement of the five-year residency, and with the decision of Ministry of Interior. Syrians, too, can apply for citizenship in Turkey, and in fact, many Syrians migrated to Turkey after 2011 crisis acquired Turkish citizenship within the framework of Turkish Citizenship Law.

4.3. Social and Economic Situation of Syrians

4.3.1. Demographic Information

Turkey hosts the largest migrant population in the world, currently hosting more than 4 million migrants with 3,671,761 Syrians under Temporary Protection (UNHCR Data Portal). From 2011, Syrian population in Turkey grew gradually with more and more Syrians entering the borders of Turkey, legally or illegally.

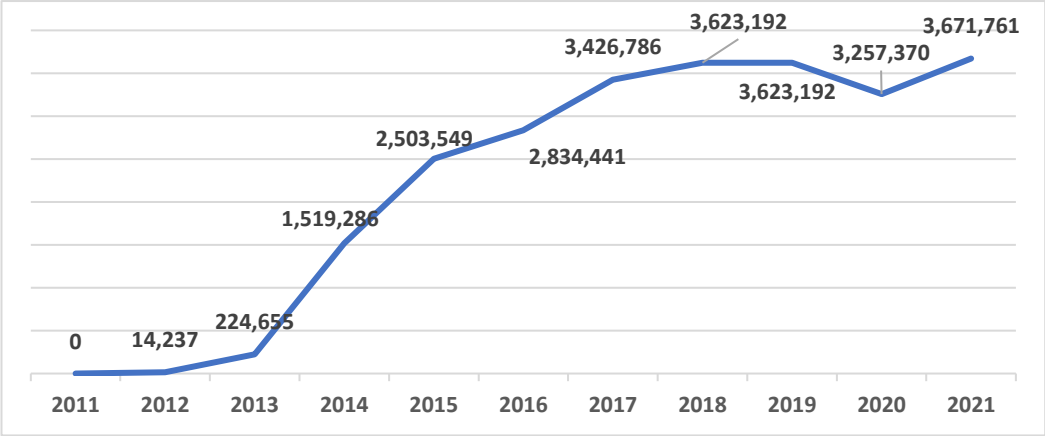

Figure 3: Syrian Population by Year

(DGMM, 2021)

Syrian people are mostly concentrated in İstanbul, İzmir and Bursa in the West; Konya in the centre Anatolia; and Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay, Adana, Mersin and Mardin in the south-eastern part.

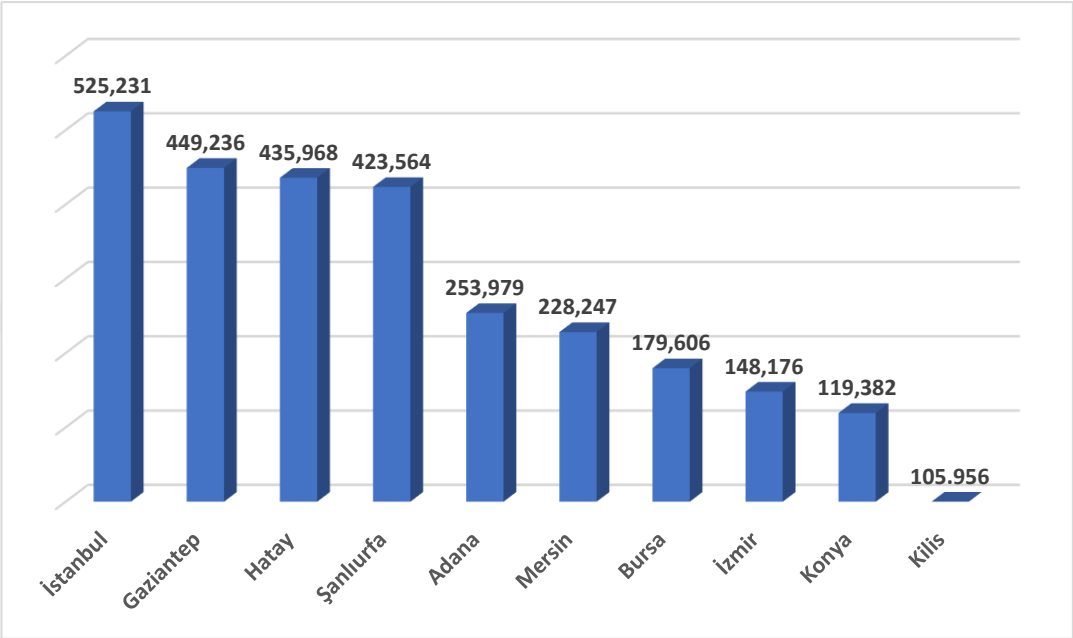

Figure 4: Population Distribution of Syrians in Top 10 Cities
(DGMM, 2021)

Syrians are mostly populated in these cities due to economic opportunities for the big cities in the West and to cultural closeness in the south-eastern Anatolia. In the cities like Gaziantep, Adana, and Hatay, Syrian population finds both cultural closeness and job opportunities. Along with the urban population, there are still Syrians living in the Temporary Accommodation Centres (TAC) of the DGMM even though the population in these places are decreasing gradually as the emergency phase of the crisis is coming to an end and Syrians living in TACs are encouraged to move in the urban areas in order to live a more "dignified" live. Current population in the Temporary Accommodation Centres are presented in the below table.

Table 1: Population of Temporary Accommodation Centres

CITY	TAC NAME	TAC POPULATION	TOTAL POPULATION
Adana	Sarıçam	19,651	19,651
Hatay	Altınözü	2,592	9,017
	Yayladağı	3,485	
	Apaydın	2,940	
Kahramanmaraş	Merkez	10,311	10,311
Kilis	Elbeyli	8,430	8,430
Osmaniye	Cevdetiye	9,174	9,174
TOTAL	**56,583**		

(DGMM, May 2021)

As for age and gender distribution of the population, 28.9% of the population are 18-59 years old males; and 22.9% is 18-59 years old females. 31.9% of the population are composed of 0-11 years old children while 13.2% of them are 12-17 years old youth, and the remaining 3.1% of the population is people aged 60 and more (UNHCR Data Portal). Detailed age and gender composition are presented on Figure 5.

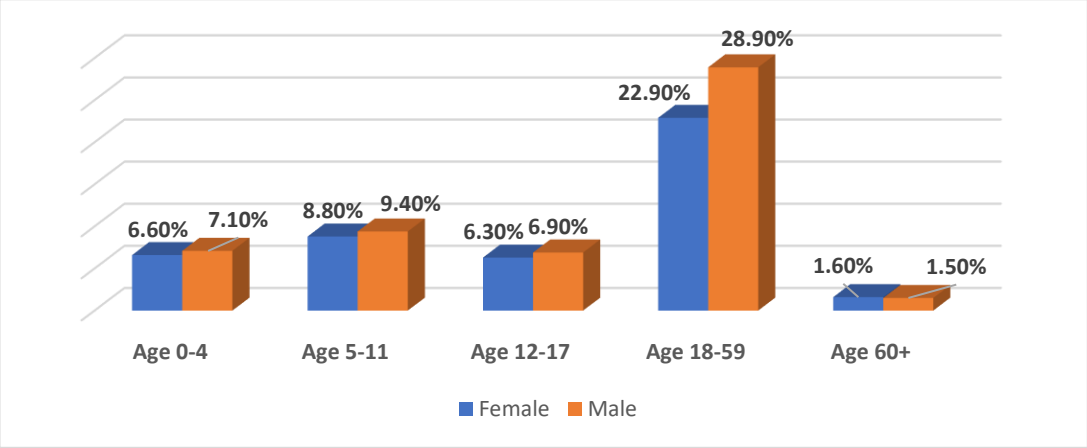

Figure 5: Age and Gender Distribution of Syrians in Turkey

(UNHCR, 2021)

In total, 45.1% of the Syrian population in Turkey are children and youth, 54.9% are adults; while 46.2% of them are female and 53.8% are males.

One of the most important issues regarding the demographic situation of the Syrians living in Turkey is the education level as the educational attainment effects both the socio-cultural and socio-economic level even in the times of migration. There is not much data on the educational level of the Syrians, but I will use two significant data which are Ministry of Development data from 2016 and Syrian Barometer study conducted by UNHCR support in 2019 in 26 cities with 3,689 people. Ministry of Development data reveals the following data presented on graph:

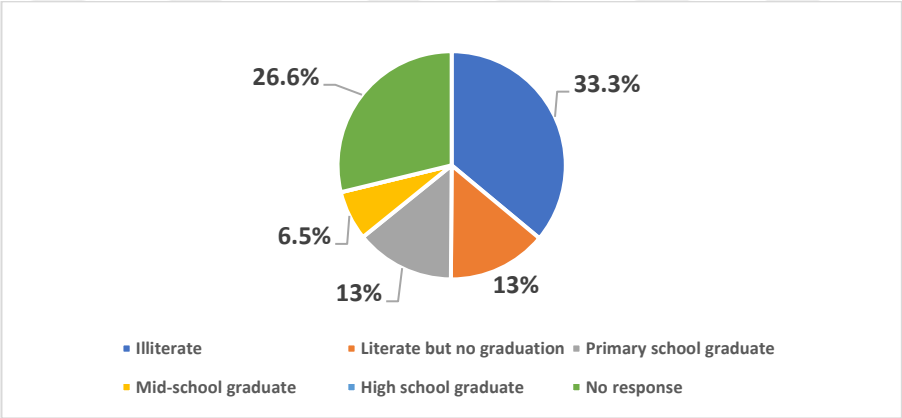

Figure 6: Educational Attainment of Syrians Living in Turkey (MoD data)
(Ministry of Development, 2016)

Syrian Barometer (SB) 2019 data, on the other hand, introduces the following data:

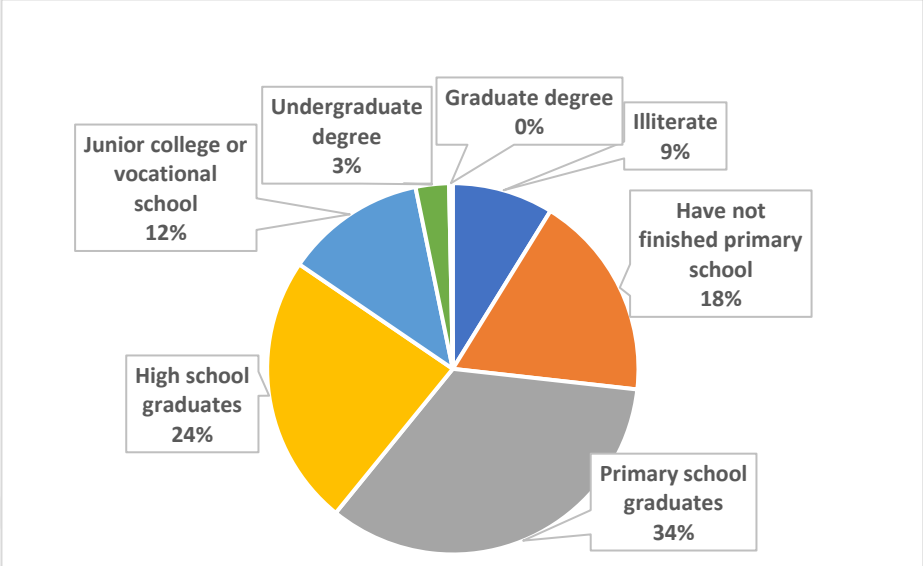

Figure 7: Educational Attainment of Syrians Living in Turkey (SB data)

(Syrian Barometer, 2019)

Both data show that the educational attainment of the Syrians is very low as the majority of people are illiterate, literate but no graduation or only primary school degree.

4.3.2. Social Assistance Provided to Syrians

Social assistance has been the primary component of service provision towards Syrians in Turkey from the beginning of the Syrian Crisis. Especially in the beginning of the influx, majority of the Syrians residing in the temporary accommodation centres of DGMM depended on the social assistance provided by national and international organisations. These accommodation centres have schools, markets, mosques, interpretation services, vocational courses, child friendly areas, meal services, and psychosocial support. Currently, 98.5% of the Syrians are living in the urban areas. Even after more than a decade, a remarkable number of urban Syrians still need social assistance in order to sustain their lives. Therefore, there are number of social and financial assistance granted to Syrians living in Turkey. The assistance is provided by five main institutions/instruments which also introduced by UNHCR (UNHCR). First one is Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation (SASF) of Ministry of Family and Social Services. Each province has a SASF and they receive the written petition of

request from the migrants in order to provide non-food items, one-time cash assistance, assistance for shelter, health and education, coal aid etc. The second institution is Social Service Centres of Ministry of Family and Social Services. This institution is present in each province and provides training and counselling, identification and referral services to the most vulnerable people, and psychosocial support. The third institution for social assistance towards Syrians is municipalities. Although the assistance provided by the municipalities may differ depending on the resources of each municipality, assistance usually includes food parcels, coal, clothing and other types of non-food items. The fourth and one of the biggest assistance instruments to Syrians is Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme. ESSN is a joint programme of Turkish Red Crescent, Ministry of Family and Social Services, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and funded by the European Union - European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). This unrestricted cash assistance that is designed to help 1.8 million vulnerable migrants and cover their basic needs. The assistance is provided to eligible families and each month the card is loaded with 120 TL per family member. The final one is the financial assistance for primary and secondary education. Similar to ESSN, financial assistance programme for education is also a joint programme and named "Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE)". The CCTE Programme is implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Services, Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF and funded by ECHO. The CCTE program gives financial assistance to eligible families conditional on their children's frequent attendance at school (from kindergarten to grade 12) (UNHCR).

4.3.3. Labour Market Accession and Economic Conditions of Syrians

4.3.3.1. Labour Market Situation of Syrians

According to LoFIP, migrants may apply for a work permit, yet this covers the ones who claimed an international protection; and the applicant may only apply six months after the claim (Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu [LoFIP], 2013). As an additional legal framework for the work permits concerning migrants under temporary protection, Work Permits of Migrants under Temporary Protection, including majority

of Syrians, has been issued on January 2015; but this permit would be granted under certain conditions and with certain restrictions. This regulation forbids migrants under temporary protection from being employed without a legal work permit and working independently (Geçici Koruma Sağlanan Yabancıların Çalışma İzinlerine Dair Yönetmelik [Regulation for Work Permit of Foreigners under Temporary Protection], 2016). Migrants under temporary protection apply to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in order to attain a work permit after six months from their registry as temporary protection status. According to the Regulation, the workplace where the work permit for a migrant under temporary protection is requested, the number of such workers cannot surpass 10% of the Turkish citizens who are employed yet if the employer justifies that no qualified Turkish citizen who can perform the job can be employed, the quota may be changed. Number of work permits issued by year can be seen in the below table.

Table 2: Number of work permit given to foreigners by types of permission and years

	Type of Permission			
	Independent	**Indefinite**	**Definite**	**Total**
2011	16	132	17.318	17.466
2012	9	79	32.191	32.279
2013	9	93	45.721	45.823
2014	3	95	52.197	52.295
2015	4	115	64.402	64.521
2016	24	115	73.410	73.549
2017	13	19	87.150	87.182
2018	7	4	115.826	115.837
2019	0	0	145.232	145.232

(MoLSS, 2019)

Note: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 data have been revised retrospectively as the official start date of the work permit grant is January 2015.

Economic integration of Syrians is crucial for the government because then they would not depend on social assistance and humanitarian aid; they would contribute to the economy and pay their taxes. UNHCR defines economic integration of migrants as

refugees gradually growing less dependant on aid from their host country or humanitarian relief, and more self-sufficient in order to maintain themselves and contribute to the local economy (UNHCR, 2011). Especially when there have been more and more Syrians living in the urban settings, the labour market integration of the Syrians has become a critical issue.

4.3.3.2. Syrians in the Informal Economy

Although the legislation allows Syrians to work in Turkey legally and both the government and non-state actors present various labour market policies regarding the inclusion of Syrians in the formal employment, the reality draws a different picture. Still, many of the Syrians are working in the informal sector in precarious jobs and without any social security as well as occupational safety. There is no national data on Syrians working on the informal sector but there is for Turkish citizens so that we can predict the facts of informal economy and also data of some large-scale studies can be used to present an evidence for this. According to TUIK, 33.9% of working Turkish citizens are working illegally which means that they are not covered by any social security (TUIK, 2020). The situation is even worse for Syrian workers too. Syrians Barometer study published in 2019 suggests that 40% of Syrians reported working, which makes 1-1.4 million Syrians in Turkey are actively working (Erdoğan, 2019) but only a few thousands of work permits issued for Syrians. This shows us the severity of the informal employment of the Syrians. Syrians become open to severe exploitation at work with long working hours, no payment on time or no social security especially when an occupational accident or unemployment happens. Unfortunately, this is the only way to survive for hundreds of thousands of Syrians to sustain their livelihoods as they cannot access the humanitarian assistance as much as they could living at the temporary accommodation centres and they need a regular income.

Considering that over a million Syrians in Turkey are living in poverty, social assistance through providing in kind and in cash humanitarian assistance would not be a longer term solution especially because of the fact that EU and other funds have an “expiration date”. Sadly, children of these people in poverty have little to no chance to change their fate as a result of being born in poverty and have limited access to

means for a decent life and decent future including formal education opportunities. Therefore, poverty alleviation and labour market programmes gain so much importance in addition to migration and education policies for Syrian people.

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDED TO SYRIAN CHILDREN IN TURKEY

As it was understood that the Syrians who refuged in Turkey would not return to their countries in the near future, more systematic regulations and adjustments were needed to be dealt with in the area of education through a systematic framework towards the end of 2014. Temporary policies and regulations were in place prior to 2014, based on the belief that Syrians will return soon, and these short-term measures were exclusively established for Syrian children in DGMM's temporary accommodation centres. For example, instead of teaching Turkish to Syrians or teaching them MoNE's curriculum, their education was supported by the Arabic curriculum in 2012 so that the Syrian children would not have any problems when they return to their country of origin. However, the civil war did not decrease over time and more Syrian people started to enter the borders of Turkey, and it was clearer that longer term policies were needed, including in education, in addition to focusing on emergency needs such as shelter and food. The summary of education policies and legal documents of the government towards the Syrian children are presented on the Figure 8. Details of the services and programmes of the government, international organisations and other non-governmental organisations will be introduced in the following chapters.

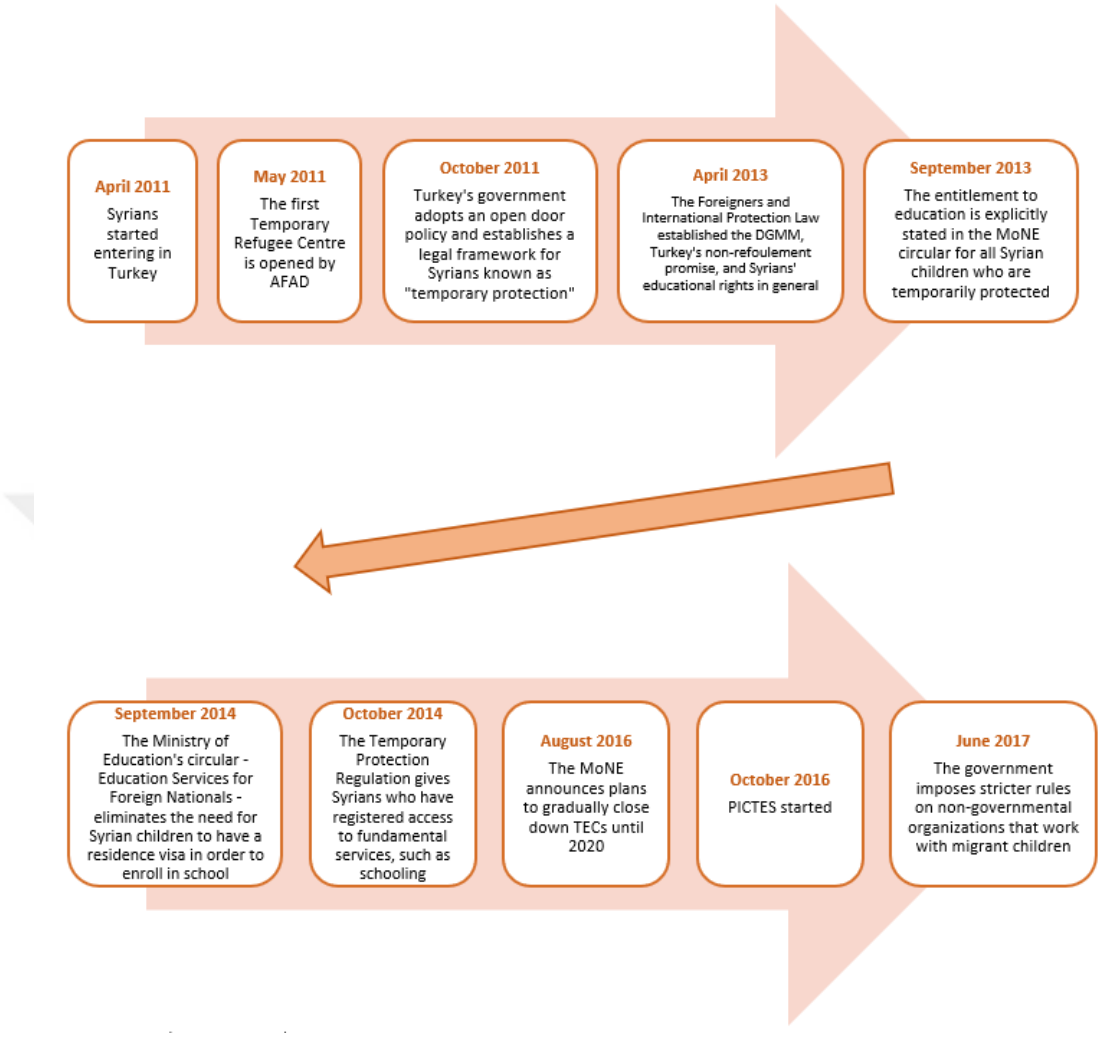

Figure 8: Evolution of the Turkish National Policies on Education of Syrians
(ERG, 2018)

5.1. Right to Education for Syrian Children in Turkey

As underlined in the Chapter 3.4.1, education is a fundamental human right and it is crucial to exercise other human rights because it promotes individual empowerment and freedom. Everyone should access to free education, according to Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, Syrian children who refuged in Turkey together with their parents should also have access to free education opportunities as right to education is not restricted by race, gender, nationality etc. Unfortunately, Syrian children in Turkey could not receive much of formal education until October 2014 but they have taken non-formal education in temporary education centres situated

in temporary accommodation centres of DGMM. October 2014 is the date when Government of Turkey issued Temporary Protection Regulation in order to regulate the rights and services of those migrants who are eligible for temporary protection status, including majority of Syrians. Article 28 of the Temporary Protection Regulation covers the education services and it indicates;

> *(Article 1) Educational activities of foreigners within the scope of this Regulation are carried out under the control and responsibility of the Ministry of National Education, inside and outside the temporary accommodation centres.*
>
> *…*
>
> *…*
>
> *(Article 4) Other procedures and principles regarding the educational activities of foreigners within the scope of this Regulation are determined by the Ministry of National Education (Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği [Temporary Protection Regulation], 2014).*

After 2014 with the Temporary Protection Regulation covering education, providing education services to Syrians accelerated, and many programmes and services have been developed and provided within this scope. Following chapters will examine these services and programmes by both government, national and international organisations.

5.2. First Temporary Policies

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, educational services initially covered only those inside the temporary accommodation centres and services were carried out in these centres. Due to the increase in the war and violence in Syria in the second half of 2012, Syrian population in Turkey increased gradually even in the settlements outside of the temporary education centres such as urban areas. Therefore, there emerged a risk that Syrian children inside and outside the TACs were not provided with adequate education services. Being aware of that, Ministry of National Education has sent circulars to the governorships dated 26 April and 26 September 2013 which covers the education for Syrians. The circular “Measures Regarding Syrian Citizens

Hosted Outside of Camps in our Country" issued in 26 April 2013 by MoNE requests inspections and detections regarding out-of-TAC education from the governorships, but does not include an important application for the solution of the problem (Seydi, 2014). Still, the circular is important, as it is the first legal documentation regarding the education of Syrians. On the other hand, the circular in 26 September 2013 named "Education Services for Syrian Citizens under Temporary Protection in our Country" is the most comprehensive document of all times published on the education of Syrians in Turkey with the aim of handling the education of Syrians in a wider framework and making it more systematic. This circular is important in that it binds the existing activities in practice to a standard, requires joint action, covers both inside and outside the TACs, and also refers to university education (Seydi, 2014). The circular included the following points;

- Providing education to Syrian children in the temporary accommodation centres who had to take a break from their education to not lose a year,
- Giving the responsibility to MoNE in the coordination of the educational services to be carried out in this context,
- Meeting the needs of teachers by MoNE for the tuition fee of the teachers who are more than the norm in that province, and if they are not sufficient, those who can speak Arabic in accordance with the conditions,
- Assigning teachers who want to educate children among Syrian citizens or those who are suitable for the conditions, on a completely voluntary basis, after being evaluated by the Ministry of National Education, but on the condition that they do not charge any fee,
- That the content of the training is prepared by the Syrian National Coalition Higher Education Commission under the control of the Ministry of National Education, in addition, Syrians of Turkish origin can receive education in the Turkish curriculum upon their request,
- Opening Turkish and vocational training courses in line with the facility opportunities for Syrians who want to learn Turkish,

- Ensuring that the Syrians who have a residence permit out of the camps are enrolled in school within the scope of the circular numbered 2011/48 on "Foreign Students" published on 16 August 2010 (Seydi, 2014).

Yet, the education of those who do not have a temporary residence permit, among those who make up the majority of the children and who are outside the camps, are left to local governments, voluntary national and international organizations.

In the following sub-chapters, Temporary Education Centres and Foreign Students Information Operating System (YÖBİS) will be explained in detail.

5.2.1. Temporary Education Centres

Temporary Education Centres (TECs) system is another example of the idea that Syrians would be residing in Turkey temporarily and would soon return to their country of origin. This is a new system to be applied with regards to the education of the migrants and Turkey has no example as such in the history. TECs have come into existence with the MoNE Circular "Education and Training Services for Foreigners Circular No. 2014/21" in September 2014, which will be elaborated in the following Chapter. These centres have been established to provide school-age foreign students who have massively immigrated to our country with the opportunity to continue the education they had to leave unfinished in their country. The main aim was to enable more Syrian children to participate in educational activities. TECs have been closed following the decision of the Province Commissions of the MoNE starting from the 2016-2017 academic year, after Syrian students in these centres were gradually included in the Turkish education system (UNICEF & MoNE 2019).

In the TECs, Arabic education has been given mainly to Syrian children of primary school age, both inside and outside the temporary accommodation centres, but there were students in the TECs from pre-school to the last year of high school. These centres used either school buildings or some special places at appropriate hours in the urban areas. In the temporary accommodation centres, mostly a container or a building has been used to conduct educational services of TECs. The most important feature of these centres is that they use Arabic as the language of education and their trainers are

Syrian. The curriculum used was the Syrian curriculum that has been partially modified by the provisional Syrian Government Ministry of Education. These centres have operated under Turkish Ministry of National Education and Syrian children were provided also with Turkish language trainings in these centres.

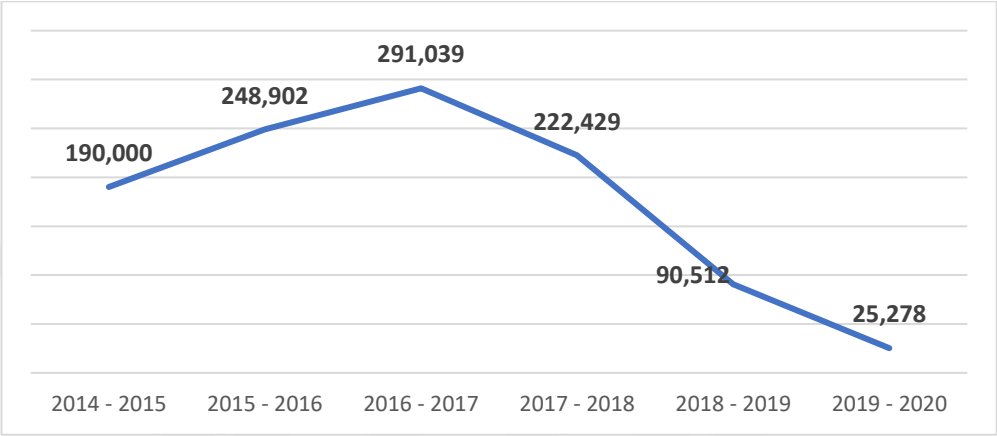

Figure 9: Number of students registered to TECs by year

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

Moreover, below table show the comparison of the number of Syrian children registered to public schools and the ones registered the temporary education centres. Here we can see how the number of public-school registrations go higher as the number of children in temporary education decreases.

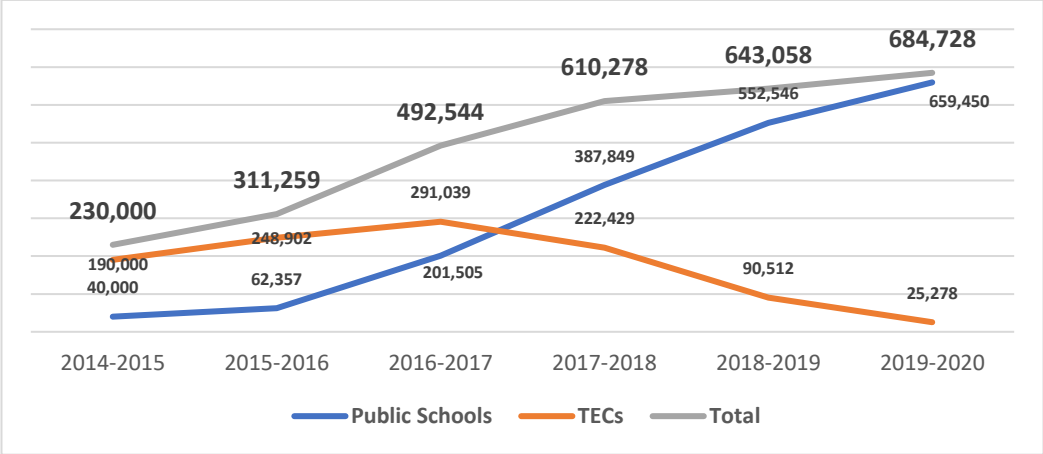

Figure 10: Number of Syrian children registered to public schools and temporary education centres

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

Another figure related to public school and TEC registration is the below table with gender disaggregation. The gender differences regarding the issue showed similarities and there is no meaningful difference to argue that the gender has an effect on the registration.

Table 3: Number of Syrian children registered to public schools and temporary education centres by gender

GENDER	TECs	%	Public Schools	%	Total	%
Female	12,181	48.2 %	324,541	49.2%	336,722	49.2%
Male	13,097	51.8 %	334,909	50.8%	348,006	50.8%
TOTAL	25,278	100%	659,450	100%	684,728	100%

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

Ministry of National Education Provincial Directorates of national education, Commissions formed by teachers and administrators have received the applications and students who want to study in these centres have taken level determination exams. Volunteer Syrian teachers have been teaching on a voluntary basis at TECs. A protocol was signed between the Ministry of National Education and UNICEF on 6 November 2014 in order to eliminate the financial problems of volunteer teachers who work without a certain fee; and UNICEF supported regarding the amount to be paid to volunteer Syrian teachers.

Table 4: Number of trained Syrian volunteer teachers

Female	Male	Total	Date
n/a	n/a	19,776	August – September 2016
10,201	8,415	18,616	January – February 2017
6,656	6,881	13,537	September 2017
GRAND TOTAL		**51,929**	

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

5.2.2 Foreign Student Information Operating System (YÖBİS)

A system called Foreign Student Information Operating System (YÖBİS – Yabancı Öğrenci Bilgi İşletim Sistemi in Turkish) was established in 2014 with the support of UNICEF in order to store information of foreign students under temporary protection status in Turkey; including Syrian children, and have the registration process done electronically. UNICEF has handed the System over to MoNE in 2016 yet continued providing technical support during the implementation through conducting seminars for MoNE staff in 23 provinces where Syrian population is relatively higher.

Students must have a temporary protection ID or residence permit records in order to enter data into YÖBİS and e-school. YÖBİS Students' educational status, attendance, absenteeism, grade achievement, reports and statistical information can be easily obtained through YÖBİS; and the System provides services in Turkish, Arabic and English to be more inclusive. Only after the establishment of the System, MoNE has started to provide reliable data on the education of migrant children and both national and international organisations could initiate results-based management through the data obtained from the System.

5.3. Transition to Longer Term Solutions and Policies

Despite all the efforts, the schooling rate of the students outside the TACs still remained low during the first few years of the Syrian influx. The total number of Syrians in November 2015 was 2,291,000 and 1,241,722 of them were children under 18 years old. While the number of school-age children were 783,522; and 504,632 of them were out of school (UNICEF, 2015). Moreover, the rate of students going to school in the temporary accommodation centres in the 2014-2015 academic year was 90.6%; yet the rate of students enrolled in school outside these centres was only 35.6%[1]. Therefore, more comprehensive regulations and policies regarding the education of Syrian children needed to be considered and developed. Developing an

[1] Calculated based on above publication.

education policy for Syrian children have become more and more important in the long run.

As stated before, in 2014, when the Syrian population approached 2 million, the first comprehensive legal regulation for foreigners, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers living in Turkey was prepared and entered into force in April 2014 with the Law on Foreigners and International Protection numbered 6458. The legal status and the legal framework that Syrians can benefit from within the scope of this Law have been established within the scope of the Temporary Protection Regulation, which came into force in October 2014. Thanks to the Temporary Protection Regulation, Syrians living in and outside the TACs have the right to access basic services such as health, education and social assistance services. Basing this Law, the Ministry of National Education has issued a new circular on the education of Syrians who have the right to education with temporary protection status, further expanding the scope of the circular issued in the previous year (September 2013). Therefore, an important circular has been issued in 23 September 2014 named "Education and Training Services for Foreigners Circular No. 2014/21". With this Circular, framework of education services provided to migrants, mostly to Syrians, started to be drawn in detail. The circular included the main objectives for the education such as regulating educational activities, especially for foreign students at the age of compulsory education, facilitating access to education for foreigners and accelerating their adaptation.

Some of the services defined under this Circular are indicated below;

- Students who complete the admissions requirements for registration are assigned to the school where they will study and get educational services based on their diploma and educational papers. E-school and extensive automation technologies are used to enter all types of data for foreigners with foreign identity numbers.
- Foreign students, including those without a residence permit, who are unable to get a foreign identity number, are registered by the relevant institution by providing a foreign identification document, and do not have a learning document, based on their statements, through an interview, if necessary, through a written or oral exam,

at the level of their education in their country. Equivalency is determined and directed to the educational institution where they will study. In addition, data of the Syrian students and teachers who do not have a foreign identity number but have a foreign identification document is made through the Foreign Students Information Operating System (YÖBİS).

- Necessary measures are taken to establish Temporary Education Centres in the provinces, in the event that shelter centres are established in the provinces hosting foreigners who came to Turkey with a mass influx.
- Turkish is taught in Temporary Education Centres established with all types and degrees of education institutions.
- Professional skills are gained through non-formal education institutions and courses with social and cultural content are organized. Non-formal education courses and extra-curricular activities are offered to demanded areas within the possibilities.
- School directorates may open supplementary courses in order to ensure that students coming from abroad adapt to our country and to the school, as well as to guide and educate them.
- Foreigners who voluntarily support the education and training activities carried out in Temporary Education Centres are given financial, moral and professional support in line with the agreements made with the stakeholders (MoNE Circular *"Yabancılara Yönelik Eğitim – Öğretim Hizmetleri"*, 2014)

With the circular issued, Syrian children were educated in schools of the Ministry of National Education or in Temporary Education Centres set up specifically for Syrians. This circular brought many innovations to the education of foreign students in Turkey such that Syrian children in Turkey have been legally entitled to enrol not only in Temporary Education Centres where Syrian students attend, but also in public schools in Turkey. Migrant children studying in Turkey have been granted access to most of their rights, including those in open education schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education, TECs, and those in need of special education. Especially with the foreign identification document, the problems experienced in the records have been overcome, and alternative solutions have been found for those who do not have an

identity card. From basic education to high school education, students are included in the e-school automation system with their foreign identity number Hence, the Circular is important for setting comprehensive standards for the education of foreign students living in Turkey.

Moreover, 2015-2019 Strategic Plan published by the Ministry of National Education in 2015 covered the education of migrants and asylum seekers under temporary protection and stateless people, and it was planned to carry out studies on adaptation to the Turkish education system. Strategic Goal 1, which is to ensure that all individuals have access to education and training under fair conditions, included strategies also for Syrians under temporary protection and other refugees. Particularly Strategy 7 indicated that the steps would be taken to ensure the integration of these students into the education system in order to make sure that refugees, foreigners under temporary protection or stateless people in our country receive education (MoNE, 2015).

It has been realised that social integration of the Syrian children could be achieved only through education and a regular education programme should be prepared and implemented by being aware of all the differences of the child. With this aim, various integration programmes have put into effect since 2016. In the 2020-2021 academic year, a total of 771,458 Syrian children under temporary protection – 64.4% of overall school age population –were enrolled in formal education programs. When this number is compared with the number of children enrolled in the school in the academic year starting in 2014, it is seen that the number has increased by 30% (MoNE, 2021).

Table 5: Number of Syrian children registered to public schools and temporary education centres and schooling rate by year

Education Period	Public School	TECs	Total	School Age Population	Schooling Rate
2014-2015	40,000	190,000	230,000	756,000	30.0%
2015-2016	62,357	248,902	311,259	834,842	37.0%
2016-2017	201,505	291,039	492,544	833,039	59.0%
2017-2018	387,849	222,429	610,278	976,200	62.5%
2018-2019	552,546	90,512	643,058	1,047,536	61.4%
2019-2020	659,450	25,278	684,728	1,082,172	63.3%

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

Moreover, when looking at the gender disaggregation of the number of students registered to formal education, we can obtain that similar number of boys and girls are in the formal education.

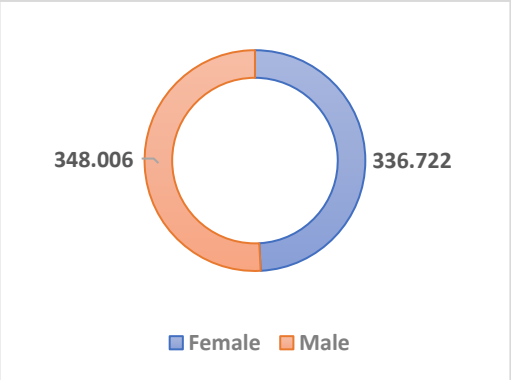

Figure 11: Number of Syrian children registered to formal education programmes by gender
(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

The policies of the integration of Syrian children into Turkish education system also includes the capacity building of the education staff –Turkish teachers, with the efforts from Turkish government and the international organisations such as UNICEF.

Table 6: Number of trained Turkish teachers

Female	Male	Total	Date
20,842	16,181	37,023	January – April 2017
42,360	28,555	70,915	September – November 2017

(UNICEF & MoNE, 2019)

5.3.1. European Union Financial Support (EU – Turkey Statement)

In March 18, 2016, Turkey and European Union Heads of State agreed to stop the irregular migration coming from Turkey to Europe, and provide legal channels of resettlement of the refugees and migrants under temporary protection in the European Union countries. The primary goal was to replace disorganized, chaotic, irregular, and risky migrant flows with organized, safe, and legal routes to Europe for individuals who were entitled to international protection under EU and international law (European Council, 2016).

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) was establish in order to respond European Council's call for additional funding for supporting refugees and migrants under the temporary protection residing in Turkey, with a budget of €3 billion for the years 2016-2017. €1 billion of the budget have come from the EU budget, and €2 billion from the European Union Member States. Focus areas of the FRiT are health, education, humanitarian assistance, socio-economic support and municipal infrastructure. Among this budget, European Union has initially contracted €270 million to improve the educational infrastructure for migrants living in Turkey (European Council, 2016). European Commission has initially signed contracts for equipping and construction of school buildings for Syrian children and also children from the host communities in Turkey. Up to date, the EU signed a €500 million worth of contract to continue its support in education for training education staff, constructing new schools, and hundreds of thousands of children benefited from back-up and catch-up classes (European Council, 2016).

5.3.2. Joint Programmes of the Government, NGOs and (I) NGOs

5.3.2.1. PICTES

PICTES is a project called “Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Turkish Education System” and it was signed between MoNE and the European Union Delegation to Turkey. The Ministry of National Education carries out this education project in order to contribute to the access of children under Temporary Protection to education in Turkey. The European Union covers the entire budget of PICTES with direct grant method within the framework of the "Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT)" agreement.

The first phase of the Project has started in October 2016 and the second one started in December 2018, and it continues in 26 provinces of Turkey with the highest Syrian population. As stated above, EU contracted assistance worth of €500 million to support education programmes especially through constructing school buildings and prefabricated schools. Implementation of the PICTES Project goes hand in hand with the education infrastructure and 400,000 students benefit from the Project (European Commission, 2019). The support within the Project includes training and employing Turkish teachers so that Syrian children would be able to learn Turkish and continue their education in public schools together with their Turkish peers. Moreover, compensation and support training are provided to children who have been out of school for a long time or who need additional support. Last but not least, Syrian children are assisted with guidance and counselling services at schools and support for overcoming cultural and social barriers for children affected by the trauma of war (EU Delegation to Turkey).

5.3.2.2. CCTE

The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) program aims to ensure that children attend school regularly. The scope of this national social assistance program, which has been implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Services since 2003, was expanded to include Syrian and other refugee families in mid-2017 (UNICEF, 2021). The program is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ministry of National Education, the Turkish Red

Crescent and UNICEF, with the financial support of the European Union, Norway and USA governments.

The CCTE assistance is two-folded; cash component and child protection component. Within the scope of cash component, which is nationwide, families can benefit from cash support every two months with their Kizilaykart (Red Crescent cards) if their children have attended school regularly in the past months (at least 80% attendance). The amounts paid vary according to the gender and class of the child attending school; boys receive 45 TL per month and girls 50 TL per month from preschool children from kindergarten to 8th grade, and among those who go to high school (grades 9-12), boys receive 55 TL per month and girls 75 TL (UNICEF, 2021). Payments are made bi-monthly. In addition, at the beginning of each semester, families are provided with an extra support of 100 TL per beneficiary child including kindergarten, 200 TL per each beneficiary child in secondary school, and 250 TL per each beneficiary child at high school or HEP level. In November 2020, an extra payment was made to families, on a one-off basis, affecting 518,794 children, in order to reduce the increasing socio-economic hardships faced by families due to COVID-19 (UNICEF, 2021).

On the other hand, child protection component of CCTE ensures that the most vulnerable migrant children are enrolled and regularly attended school, and are referred to child protection services when necessary. Service teams of social workers and interpreters working in the field visit the families of children who do not or are at risk of not meeting the school attendance requirement of the CCTE program, and these social workers assess and identify the needs of children and families individually and systematically. The main aim with the child protection component is to reduce the risks and violations of rights, such as school absenteeism, child labour, child marriage, physical and emotional violence, and family breakdown, which are affected by economic difficulties. This component is implemented in 15 provinces with the highest Syrian population.

So far, 685,977 children benefitted from the cash assistance in addition to 86,199 children benefitted from the child protection services of the CCTE (UNICEF, 2021).

5.3.2.3. ALP – HEP

The Accelerated Education Program (ALP – Hızlandırılmış Eğitim Programı (HEP) in Turkish) is implemented in 75 public education centres in 12 provinces with partnership of Ministry of National Education and UNICEF a part of non-formal education programmes (UNICEF, 2019). The Programme aims to refer 20,000 out-of-school migrant children to formal and non-formal education opportunities appropriate for their age after completing the relevant levels of ALP. Programme consists of two education levels: equivalency for primary school, which is completed in 8 months, and equivalency for secondary school, which also lasts 8 months. In addition, regardless of their previous educational standing, all ALP students enrol in intense Turkish language classes. After completing the relevant level of ALP, Provincial Equivalency Commissions of MoNE evaluate students enrolled in ALP and equivalency certificates are given to those who are successful. With these documents, students can join the formal education system and continue their education (UNICEF, 2019). Moreover, those who continue ALP are paid 75 TL per month regardless of gender.

With the policies and programmes developed especially after 2016 period – of which we see effects starting from 2017 – enrolment rates of Syrian children doubled in 2017 academic year from 30.42% in 2014 and 59.13% in 2017. However, the enrolment rate of these children did not rise much since then (see Figure 12). Therefore, we can say that the number of children who can be included in education through these migration and education policies mentioned previously have reached its capacity; and we need more multi-sectoral policy making including poverty alleviation policies in order to achieve beyond 60% of enrolment rate and in order to include children in poverty who have to work instead of going to school. In Chapter 6, I will provide a comprehensive situational analysis of the relation between the educational accession of Syrian children in Turkey and Syrian child labour as well as an in-depth policy analysis in order to present if current policy making suffices to tackle the problem from the root.

CHAPTER 6

SYRIAN CHILD LABOURERS IN TURKEY AND THE PROBLEM OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION

6.1. Question of Accession

Turkish Government, national and international actors show remarkable efforts to include Syrian children into education in Turkey so that they would secure their future, contribute to the society and not be lost generations. However, there are still many children left out of the education domain even after 10 years of the crisis due to many reasons related to migration and/or poverty.

According to the data published by the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, as of May 2021, there are 1.197.124 Syrian children at school age in Turkey (DGLLL, 2021). The overall enrolment rate was 62.5% in 2017-18; 61.4% in 2018-19; 63.2% in 2019-2020; and 64.57% in May 2021 as can be seen on Figure 12. After the 60% threshold in enrolment was exceeded in 2017-18, it is observed that the increase in the rate did not occur at a rate similar to the previous years, but remained close to 60% and increase rate did not grow much.

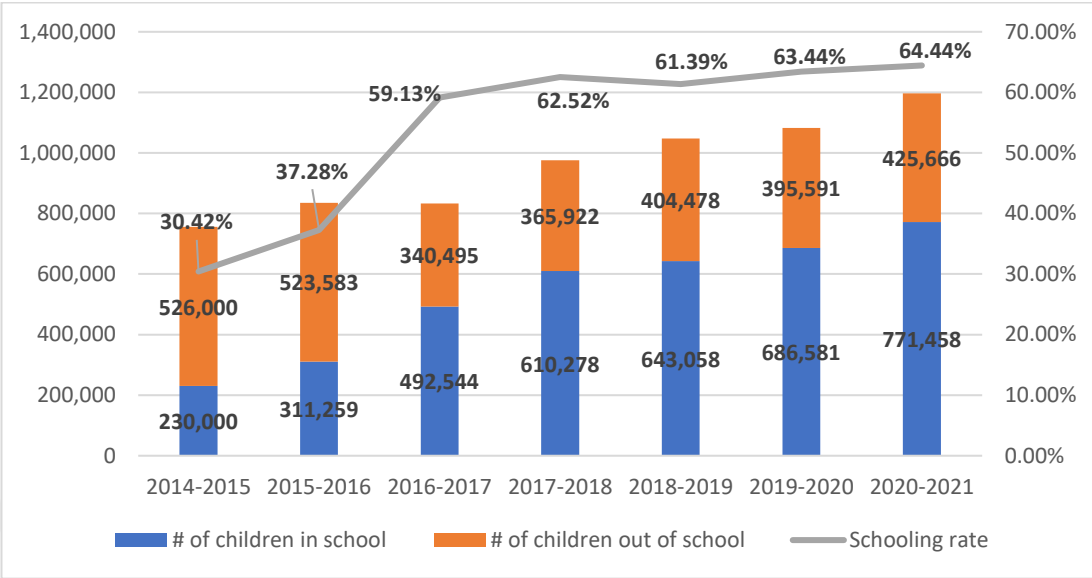

Figure 12: Number and ratio of Syrian children in and out of school
(DGLLL, 2021)

Many Syrian children are enrolled to schools with the efforts of the government, NGOs and INGOs even though it is still not enough as thousands of them are out of the system. Another problem is that there is quite remarkable number of them drop out for variety of reasons. Dropout generally happens during the transition of degrees; such as going to mid-school after primary or going to high school after mid-school. As below graph shows, absenteeism emerges as more prevalent among middle school student. This might be a signal for early entering in the labour market in those ages.

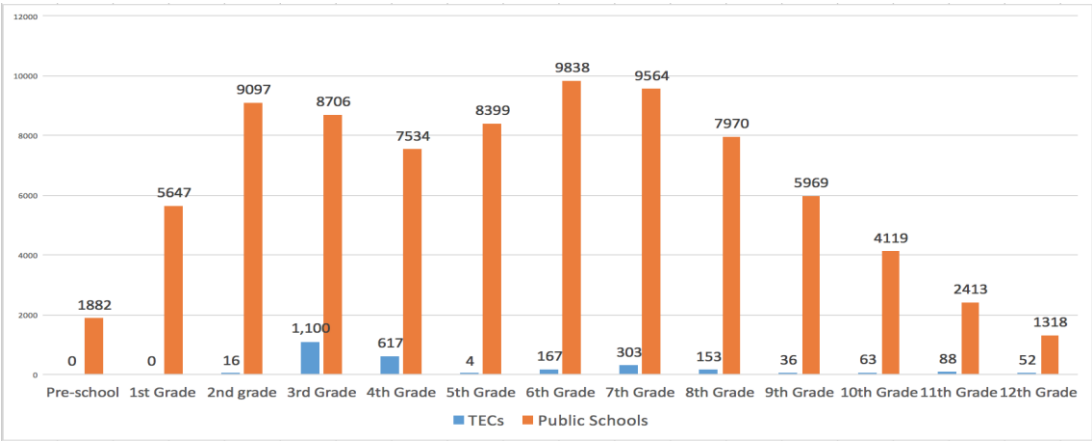

Figure 13: Number of Syrian students with more than 10 days of non-attendance by grade level
(ERG & UNESCO, 2018)

Even after 10 years of the crisis, schooling rate of Syrian children is not at the desired level. Main difficulties behind this fact are usually listed as language and integration barriers, physical access problems and the financial barriers (poverty).

Firstly, language and integration barriers of Syrian children en route to education emerge as a result of migration and being foreign in Turkey. The fact that Arabic and Turkish are quite different languages makes it very difficult for Syrian children to adapt to Turkish education. Not only bilingual learning creates a problem for children to adapt an entirely different curriculum, also racism and discrimination in the school environment related to Syrian children's immigrant backgrounds in addition to their social class are obstacles to an inclusive education. Discrimination by the peers or teachers and language barriers make Syrian children's adaptation to education difficult and one of the worst consequences of this situation is the alienation of children from the school climate, thus staying away from education and even dropping out of school afterwards.

Secondly, physical access to education usually represents difficulties in sufficient number of school/classrooms and lack of transportation services. Syrians with low socio-economic level mostly live in the disadvantaged urban areas that already have scarce number of school buildings or classrooms. With the arrival of the Syrian population to these urban areas, education opportunities generally are inadequate for the Syrian children. In other words, even before the Syrian conflict, Turkish schools experienced overcrowding and resource constraints, and they are now trying to absorb the additional students (Hauber Ozer, 2019). Therefore, Syrian children, who live far from schools, do not have schools close to their region and cannot access shuttle services, have problems in accessing school and this negatively affects their access to education.

Lastly, financial barriers stand as the biggest problem in accessing the education domain for Syrian children, which is also the main focus of this study. Around half of the Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey live under the poverty line with

thousands of them living in extreme poverty. The financial difficulties experienced by Syrian families also show the failure of migration and integration policies due to barriers to accessing the labour market. Many Syrian children cannot access education due to the lack of sufficient income of their families. Because of this, these children become child labourers, which is a serious problem that can cause Syrian children to become a lost generation. Most of the studies and publications regarding the education accession of Syrian children have not expressed that most serious and most encountered reason for Syrian children to stay outside of the education is the child labour as a result of poverty. This is an important obstacle to their education, which is caused by class inequalities as well as deficiencies in Turkey's migration policy that deepens the inequality problem.

Below table, I summarised the inclusion and exclusion mechanisms of Syrian children from the education domain in Turkey by using Reimer's inclusion and exclusion classification. As can be seen below, most of the forms of exclusion except the "exclusion from the market" cannot be the sole reason for being out-of-school yet "exclusion from the market" for the parents of these children are subjected to deeper and more structural problems.

Table 7: Inclusion and exclusion mechanism of Syrian children from education domain with the classification of Reimer

EDUCATION	**Forms of Inclusion**	**Forms of Exclusion**
Market *(Indirect; through older members of the family - breadwinner)*	With Regulation on Work Permit of Migrants under Temporary Protection, working age HH members could access to labour market, **child labour as negative inclusion**	Lack of ownership of property and productive capital (land, house etc.) of HH members; unequal distribution of resources and assets; being open to exploitation; **poverty**
Bureaucratic	Temporary Protection Regulation enabled children to access to public education in 2014; education together with all children; equal access opportunity	Ability to go to school only in registered city – missing school in case of moving to another city

Associative	Earlier taught by Syrian teachers in Temporary Education Centres; yet not valid now	Social isolation; lack of affiliations like parent teacher union, social clubs etc.
Communal	Social support mechanisms among Syrians; always living in the close neighbourhoods, strong communal ties between Syrians	Cultural devaluation disadvantage; lack of cultural capital

More information will be provided in regard to education and child labour relation in the following chapters.

6.2. Child Labour among Syrian Children

According to the latest 3RP Country Report, at least 1.8 million Syrians residing in Turkey under temporary protection, international protection applications, and status holders are poor, with 280,000 living in extreme poverty (Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, Turkey Country Chapter 2021-2022) which means that even the informal employment is not the darkest situation of Syrians. The same report argues that 71% of households could not access qualified or reliable jobs even before COVID-19. Due to financial difficulties, many families have to send their children to work and, children work in hazardous conditions as a result of lack of livelihood opportunities for their parents (Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, Turkey Country Chapter 2021-2022). Thus, children also are carrying the burdens of poverty and the informal economy includes many children working in harsh conditions. As a result of poverty among Syrians arising from lack of access to formal labour market, displacement, and lack of adequate social protection; migrants are unfortunately relying on the child labour. Although it is not the most prominent reason for child labour, migration has a significant effect in increasing child labour due to deepening the low socio-economic level of the family, limited or no access to education, lack of regulation causing unemployment of the parents. Large number of Syrian children are dropping out of school or do not enrol the school at all and take their position in Turkey's informal economy. Families allow their children to work for even a small income due to extreme poverty they face. As the majority of the Syrian community is vulnerable, children of

the community become open to all kinds of abuse and exploitation, particularly when they are child labourers. Syrian children are working in unhealthy environments and risky occupations with long working hours. The burden of contributing to the income of the family causes children to engage in dangerous and heavy jobs including services, seasonal migratory agriculture, street sales, and small industry.

TUIK published data on child labour in 2019 yet it does not quite reflect the current situation and migrant child labour. Hence, there is no up to date official national data on how many children are working in Turkey, and how many of them are migrant or Syrian, and which sectors or how many hours they work but some studies and reports present some information and data on this subject. According to a research conducted in 2016, at least one child is working in one-third of the Syrian households in İstanbul with half of the children are working in the textile industry; at least one child is working in 15% of the households with the average age of them is 14 in Şanlıurfa; nearly half of the children are working in Hatay and children are the one and only source of income in 48% of the Syrian households in Hatay (Herse, 2016). The same report shows that working children are facing abuse and physical violence at the workplace. Another study argues that the sectors in which Syrian children work may differ from Turkish children since approximately 50% of Turkish children participating in employment work in the agricultural sector, followed by the service and industry sectors, respectively while the main determinant of the sector in which Syrian children work is the city they live in, and it is seen that most of the Syrian children working in big cities such as İstanbul and İzmir work in the textile sector, which is a dangerous line of work (Bahadır & Demiral, 2019). Moreover, children working in very dangerous occupations such as the construction sector were also encountered, and that these children were employed without security for 11 hours a day, six days a week.

Child labour is also the biggest reason for Syrian children's obstacles in access to education. More than 35% of the Syrian children in Turkey miss out on education and it is largely because of the economic difficulties. As this aspect is the main pillar of the thesis, I will elaborate Syrian child labour and the link between child labour and

exclusion from the education in the following chapters but first a comprehensive policy analysis is needed to reveal the gaps between the strategy and reality in the field.

6.3. Relational Analysis between Child Labour and Education

After providing a comprehensive situation and policy analysis, I would like to go deeper into the relations between the child labour and educational accession because I defend that the main reason behind out-of-school problem of Syrian children is child labour caused by poverty. This thesis benefits from many field studies conducted around the country and voices of Syrian children and their parents from different cities are presented. Majority of the field studies are from İstanbul as the informal market in the city is unfortunately very large, so the migrant child labour is also widespread. In addition to the field studies, some official statistics are also used to support findings of the field studies.

As of June 2021; 771,458 Syrian children are enrolled in formal education in Turkey while around 400.000 of them are still excluded from the system for variety of reasons. Many reasons regarding excluded (or out of school) Syrian children are presented in the literature and these can be summarized as school space shortages, language and integration problems, obstacles in transportation and physical access to school, registration status, expenses, school environment, and so on. Policy considerations as for overcoming these obstacles mainly find the solution in access options such as improving school infrastructure; address physical barriers to education; design consistent quality, create additional shifts; make more use of available spaces. Moreover, access (as a too general concept), integration, quality education, partnership between institutions, community engagement and participation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes are suggested as a fix to the problem in most of the studies and publications regarding the subject. These problems followed by their solutions, and policies to solve the problems are quite critical especially to eliminate the education obstacles caused by migration. With a massive Syrian influx into the country, Turkey needed to improve and expand the educational capacity in order to

include migrant children into the education system. Therefore, many developments have been achieved in this area with the support from the European Union and United Nations agencies. However, still 35.6% of Syrian children are out of school after the 10 years of the influx. In addition, while analysing the schooling rates of children, we mainly see the enrolling rates, meaning that it is enough for a child to register to the school to be included in the statistics, but these statistics do not include the drop-out rates. Therefore, we may assume that more children are out of school than the ones included in the statistics. Unfortunately, there is not enough data or statistics about dropout rates of Syrian children and how many Syrian children are really out of school.

As stated above, some studies and publications base the obstacles in accessing education for Syrian children mainly on the reasons related to migration such as language and integration problems, obstacles in physical access to schools, and so on. These can be solved through shorter term policies of the national and international actors and a great improvement has been achieved in solving these educational accession problems as the school enrolment rates of Syrian children doubled after 2016 with the introduction of more permanent solutions. In other words, the schooling rate of Syrian children was 37.28% in the education term starting in 2015 and the number went up to 62.52% in the term starting in 2017 (MoNE, 2021). However, the main problem of access to education for Syrian children lies under the financial difficulties and poverty resulting child labour and they are harder to overcome. This problem has been a growing concern and it creates major obstacle for Syrian children to be included in education. Child labour constitutes an alarming problem that seriously affect Syrian children and their future prospects. According to field studies, statistics and secondary data examined within the scope of this thesis, the obstacles related to migration do not have a meaningful impact on including those 35.6% of Syrian children whose struggles are beyond the migration policy outlook.

As a known fact, child labour is illegal in Turkey. However, despite all legal measures and regulations, there are still thousands of children who are at school age continue to be in the labour market. For example, based on results of the Child Labour Survey by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) in 2019, number of children aged 5-17 working

in an economic activity is 720,000, and 34.3% of them do not continue their education. Among the reasons to work, "helping the economic activity of the household" was the first with 35.9%, followed by "learning a job, having a profession" with 34.4%, and "contributing to household income" with 23.2%. 6.4% of the children worked to meet their own needs (TUIK, 2019). It is important to point that the rate of children who state that they work in order to learn a job and have a profession has increased from 15.20% in 2012 child labour survey to 34.4% in 2019 child labour survey. This may be related to the deepening of inequality in access to education, the marketization of education and the decrease in the belief that investment in education will provide opportunities for participation in employment as a result of intense unemployment. Access to quality education is low for children especially in poor households and education costs are high. Although the situation most probably shows parallel trends for working Syrian children, it was not specified in the survey results whether the survey included Syrian households and their children who fled Turkey after the civil war in 2011. Therefore, the results of field studies conducted by various actors and secondary data regarding the topic are used within the scope of the thesis.

Informal market is a sad reality that exist in almost every country at different degrees, and unfortunately migrant child labour, mainly Syrian child labourers, is a big part of the informal market in Turkey as informal market activities tend to rise when regulatory bodies fail to monitor such activities and enforce law, and governments generally cannot respond to it on time due to several reasons such as lack of financial and human capital. Between 2011 and 2021, Turkey received and currently holding biggest Syrian migrant population, and the volume of the migrant flow in addition to fragility of Turkish economy expanded informal market including Syrian children. Children population of the migrant communities have directly become the victim and Syrian child labour has become a significant problem in the country. Considering the fact that education comes right after basic needs such as shelter and food, and it is crucial in terms of not only future of children but also future of entire country, that child labour became major obstacle for Syrian children to access education, creates multidimensional problems both individually and socially.

Although the range of work of Syrian migrants vary according to the regions, the sectors that they work are usually in independent businesses that do not require a lot of capital or skill such as garbage collecting, textile and weaving industry, auto repair, paint and whitewash, iron joinery and furniture production workshops the urban areas. They work in various jobs in the construction industry as well. In parallel, Syrian child labourers work in these sectors, mostly in precarious situations.

In most case studies used in this thesis, poverty is the primary factor why these children have to delay or are left out of education and their families cannot afford education or due to the lack of income of the family, they depend on the income coming from the working children. This thesis benefits from 7 different field studies conducted in İstanbul, İzmir, Mardin and Şanlıurfa. Within the scope of these field studies, over 1,200 children and some of their parents interviewed, and more than 200 interviews conducted with institution representatives. Moreover, the authors of the reports present the results of the interviews together with their observations, which are also benefited within the scope of this thesis.

There are many cases regarding the Syrian child labour occurring across the country, mostly İstanbul and South Eastern part of Turkey. Naturally, Istanbul has become focal point of Syrian labour including child labour for offering more job opportunities. Thousands of children work in under-the-counter textile workshops, in secluded industrial areas, on the streets, working in the fields and in various areas of the service sector under harsh conditions in İstanbul. Among these children population, Syrian migrant children have become main bulk of the child labour force. Due to socio-economic situation of their families, they must work in many sectors in precarious situations. This constitutes biggest challenge in terms of including them in education which can lead to serious long-term problems for both migrant population and host country due to the fact that education is crucial for social integration of these children in the society and for breaking the poverty cycle that goes for generations.

Hayata Destek Association conducted a study in İstanbul with Syrian families whose children are working. Respondents were asked why they could not send their children

to school, and 26.6% of them stated that their children contribute to family income by working, 20.3% of them stated that they could not afford education expenses while 14.1% of stated that local public schools had no sufficient quota for them (Hayata Destek Derneği, 2016). It is obvious that the major reason for these children working is the economic difficulties. Moreover, the vast majority of the migrants surveyed, in their answers to the question about their income sources in Syria, stated that they generally worked as low-skilled workers with regular salaries, while one fifth (22%) said that they work as skilled and unskilled salaried workers. This shows that the parents of the working children did not have much skills and social capital to bring from home and they were living in low socio-economic situations also in Syria (Hayata Destek Derneği, 2016). During the study, when the parents were asked where their children go to work, half of them stated that their children work especially in the sectors like ready-made clothing, shoes workshops and other textile branches. One-third of the Syrian child labourers in Istanbul work in kiosks, grocery stores, shuttle services, cafes and restaurants for employment in the service sector and close to one fifth of interviewed parents of working children stated that their children work in furniture production and automobile factories. Therefore, this supports that the majority of Syrian child labourers work in the precarious sectors that do not require much skills.

Another study conducted in Sultanbeyli confirms that being disadvantaged also in the home country in terms of lacking the skills for a better life in the country of destination, has an effect on financial problems leading to child labour. According to the survey held with Syrians adults whose children are working, 29.8% of the participants were primary school graduates, 11.5% were secondary school graduates, 4.3% of them are regular high school graduates, 0.5% of them are vocational high school graduates and 0.5% of them were university graduates (Süleymanov, 2016). With the low education level of the adults resulting in unstable jobs, low income or unemployment for them, Syrian children involve in working life in Sultanbeyli expectedly. Sultanbeyli is one of the districts in Istanbul with high concentration of migrant labour. The district also has child labour problem for a while due to hosting low income, low education population. District hosts diverse migrant population and one reason why it has

become one of the focal points of disadvantaged Syrian migrants is that there is a very strong textile and construction sector that benefits precarious migrant labour heavily, and a significant part of Syrian migrant families accept or even encourage their children to work due to financial deprivation. Financial difficulties faced by Syrian migrant families constitutes the primary reason why children do not go to school or have to quit and why their families encourage them to work. Syrian children are forced to participate in the labour market and in any sector where they can find employment due to the economic problems of their families.

Moreover, children, like adults, are working in extremely difficult and strict conditions. The study conducted by Lordoğlu and Aslan indicates that more than 70% of the interviewed children work 6 or 7 days a week and experience physical and verbal violence in workplace (Lordoglu & Aslan, 2018). 10- and 12-years old A. and M., who live in Istanbul and go to school in the morning then go to workshop between 13:00 and 20:00 in the afternoon, stated that they earn 10 TL in a week and they experience violence from their boss. Observations from this study on working migrant children indicate that these child workers work in small workplaces, in service jobs, or in small production areas (Lordoglu & Aslan, 2018). As it is illegal to employ them, those working children have no social security or other forms of benefits which led their exploitation in various forms. They have to agree to work under these situations and low wage because their families do not have sufficient means of financially stable income.

Above studies indicate that the Syrian child labour is prevalent particularly in socially and economically disadvantaged families. Lack of skills and financial income of the parents lead their children to work in unsecured jobs that are dangerous for their physical, mental and psychological development, and lead them stay out of education, which may be the only way for them to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Lortoğlu and Kurtulmuş states in their study that families of Syrian child labourers not only accept the fact that their children are working instead of going to school, but they also encourage it (Lortoğlu & Kurtulmuş, 2019). Significant portion of Syrian families

already come from low income and education, so child labour is not merely a dark side of migration; but poverty that migrated with them. In these cases, children of poor families are excluded from education not only in Turkey but also in Syria. For example, an 11 years old interviewee who is working in the textile sector states,

> *I studied until the fifth grade in Syria and then I did not. We needed money. I would have liked to continue studying. I would have liked to be a phone repair teacher.*

Within the scope of this study of Syrian child labour in textile industry in Cağlayan, Istanbul, Lortoğlu and Kurtulmuş interviewed with 12 Syrian child labourers working in the textile industry under 18 years old, with the youngest of the interviewee being 11 years old. As the authors of the study inform, textile sector has the highest concertation of informal/illicit employment since the informal employment rate in the sector is almost 80% and especially migrants and low-income part of the city constitute the main bulk of the sector (Lortoğlu & Kurtulmuş, 2019). The study introduces that the sector is suitable for employing informal labour, and Syrian child labour also goes under the radar of this. Unfortunately, illegal employment of Syrian children creates a big problem due to the precarious structure of the sector, bad wages, lack of social security. Two of interviewees of the study reported that they never attended any school neither in Turkey nor in Syria, only two of them finished primary school and rest seven quitted primary school. Only one of them continues his education in Turkey (Lortoğlu & Kurtulmuş, 2019). Children stated that they did not bring much with them to Turkey and they started from the bottom with lack of any resources. 14 years old interviewee informed that they experienced xenophobia as many landowners refused to give them accommodation due to the fact that they are Syrians. Because they are seen as “others”, and they need to make money to survive due to the ongoing poverty, they are forced to work in precarious conditions with no social security and little to no safety. Children also stated in the study that since they need the job to contribute to their families’ financial income, many business owners do not hesitate to exploit them financially and physically and they become open to exploitation. Sadly, many of these children had to quit school because they have to work long hours. In addition, they lose their hope to

continue their education due to ongoing financial problems, uncertainties regarding their future or whether they will be certificated and accepted to higher education. Authors of the study also noted that even if these children wish to continue their education, precarious economic situation and financial difficulties force them to choose work over education. All participants implied that they would attend school in Turkey, but economic conditions prevent them to realize their dreams. 16 years old interviewee stated that they have initially fled Lebanon where he started working to help his family and he continued working in Turkey after their arrival here because their economic situation did not improve (Lortoğlu & Kurtulmuş, 2019). All of the interviewees are from very poor families where especially male children have to work because of cultural reasons. Female children also have to take care of elders or infants at home if their fathers and mothers are working, which constitutes the domestic labour and still counts as child labour. Lortoğlu and Kurtulmuş remind that businesses, especially in textile sector tend to prefer children rather than their parents because children are cheaper labour. Furthermore, some of the interviewed children stated that it was easy to find job at textile. For example, a 14 years old interviewee stated that when he is in search of the job, he spontaneously goes to a textile workshop and find jobs there (Lortoğlu & Kurtulmuş, 2019). Based on the interviews, textile appears to be easiest sector for Syrian children to work as many indicated that it was harder to find jobs in other sectors that require skills and education.

The problem for difficult economic conditions of the families in question are the same in all of these studies: it hinders the education of children. Looking back to the study by Lordoğlu and Aslan, many interviewed families send their children to work instead of school for economic reasons and they declared that they had to (Lordoglu & Aslan, 2018). The study suggests that there is no difference encountered between boys and girls in the families regarding whether or not the child is working as the determining factor here is the economic situation of the families. Families whose financial situation is not sufficient for them to sustain their lives force their children to work, regardless of their gender. The results of this study also show that children are working in very difficult situations leaving no time for their education. According to this study, working hours of migrant child workers are between 12 and 14 hours a day. For

example, two young girls of the same family, aged 14 and 17 living in Mardin, work 12 hours a day. Likewise, a 14-year-old youth living in Şanlıurfa said that she works 12 hours a day in the cosmetics shop. Tare and Aram brothers' working hours at the bakery start at 07:00 in the morning and finish at 21:00. He does all kinds of work in the bakery shop during these long working hours such as serving bread to the houses, carrying wood, serving tea to other employees, washing the dishes and cleaning the floors. In the same way when his brother Dara had finished weighing the lumps of dough, he serve bread to houses, carries wood inside, serves tea to workers, washes the glasses, and washes the dough bowls. Children receive very low wages for long working hours. For example, F.'s son, who lives in Şanlıurfa, works at the bakery for 20 TL per week; another 12-year-old T. like him, work from 08:00 in the morning to 12:00, serve bread to the houses in the bakery for 4 TL per day. 14-year-old L. works in a textile workshop from 10:00 in the morning until 17:00 in the evening and receives 65 TL per week. R.'s 14-year-old his sister works in the packaging business at the pasta factory, starting from 18:00 and leaving work at 06:00 in the morning for 35 TL per day. Aged 15, a young girl named R. is working as a clerk in a store sometimes six days in a week, sometimes seven days, starting work at 08:00 in the morning and leave at 20:00 in the evening and receives 60 TL per week (Lordoglu & Aslan, 2018).

In a field study conducted in Izmir with Syrian children demonstrate that most of the Syrian children have to choose work over education (Bahadır & Uçku, 2016). Within the scope of the study, 164 Syrian children aged 6-17 have been interviewed and the average of the interviewees is 12 years old. While only 11.0% of children continue their education; 15.9% of them do not have official registration in any province. 25.6% of the children in the study group are working and 9.8% are looking for a job. None of them who are working continue education in Turkey. In the group where the youngest working child is 9 years old, 54.8% of the children work in jobs such as ironing and sewing in tailors in the region, the rest work in scrap shops, construction sites, and some of them contribute to their household income by selling cigarettes or doing the dishes (Bahadır & Uçku, 2016).

These children are not only excluded from the education but also the low wages and working conditions prevent them to have a decent life. First of all, these children start working at a young age which adversely affects their development and health. Besides, working deprives them of access to basic education they are entitled to and working at an early age instead of studying allows them becoming insecure precariat in working life also in their adulthood. Consequently, they suffer both physically and mentally, and they miss out their chance to intellectual improvement that education brings. As a result, vicious cycle of poverty cannot be broken in their case.

Observations and interviews made in the fieldwork through various studies show that very few Syrian migrant children reach university level, in Turkey, and sometimes they cannot even attain the high school level. Many of them work in informal short-term jobs and so they can be unemployed at any moment, and only a small percentage of young people go to university-level education or at least can continue their education consistently. These vulnerabilities draw very unfortune picture for their future. Employers takes advantage of Syrian migrant workers between the ages of 10-14 who dropped out of school because they are obedient, and they create a very cheap labour category. Below table shows the comparison of number of Syrian children in total and number of Syrian children who are registered to formal education in Turkey by education level. In parallel to what was stated above, Figure 14 shows us that more children are out of school starting from mid school and the gap gets bigger in high school. Therefore, we can say that more children start dropping out the school after primary level.

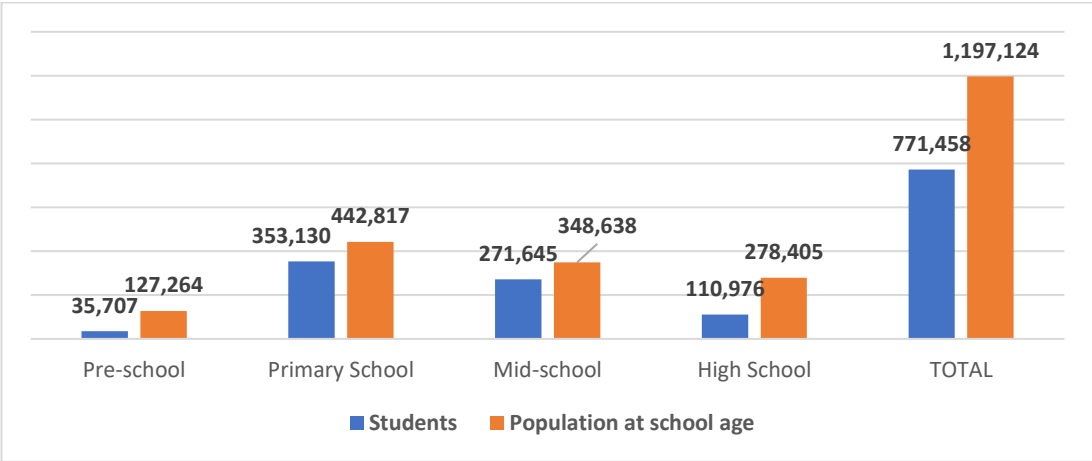

Figure 14: Number of Syrian children registered to formal education programmes compared to children at school age by education level
(MoNE, 2021)

Adult workers, native or migrant, are those who have relatively more bargaining power in the context of some personal rights compared to children. Children, on the other hand, do not have this power and are unprotected against all kinds of threats and risks. The primary reason for child labour might be the poverty but being a migrant deepens the problem as migrant children living in countries of which they are not citizens are even more disadvantaged than native children. It can be said that those at the bottom of the informal labour market hierarchy are migrant children. Syrian migrant children have become a big issue for the informal Turkish economy and labour market, as one of the areas where migrant child labour focuses on the increasing demand for cheaper and more precarious labour. It is not a surprising fact that these children are deprived of formal or even non-formal education opportunities. Looking at the, MoNE statistics, the schooling rate of Syrian children did not go much beyond 60% since 2016. One of the biggest reasons for this is child labour as the problem is much more structural than solely the migration issue.

In addition to all these, distant education starting in 2020 due to COVID-19 made the situation even worse for disadvantaged migrant children as many of them have limited access the physical means for online education. According to newly released data from UNICEF, more than 168 million children's schools around the world have been closed

for almost a year due to COVID-19 related measures, and around 214 million children worldwide, or 1 in 7, missed more than three-quarters of face-to-face education (UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, children in the most vulnerable groups and those without access to distance education are at increased risk of not returning to school and even being forced into child marriage and child labour. Another report published by UNHCR shows that migrant children are much more disadvantaged as children in all countries are struggling with the effects of COVID-19 on their education (UNHCR, 2020). Report argues that before the pandemic, a migrant child was twice as likely to be out of school as a non-migrant child, and the situation is getting worse – many may not be able to continue their education because of school closures, not being able to pay for tuition, uniforms or books, not having access to necessary technology, or having to work to support their families (UNHCR, 2020).

As part of the measures taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic, formal education was suspended also in Turkey and distant education was started as of March 23, 2020, and is carried out over the Education Information Network (EBA as Turkish acronym of Eğitim Bilişim Ağı). EBA system has been established by MoNE and it provides online course content to both teachers and students. Course contents are delivered to students through television broadcasts and an online education platform accessible over the internet. However, not all students have equal access to the system due to the fact that the system requires TV, tablet or computer and not all children have these equipment or have limited access because there are more than one children at school age in the household. One of the most disadvantaged groups whose access to EBA is restricted due to lack of technological equipment and large household population is Syrian children. Some studies conducted regarding the impact of the pandemic on Syrian children's education accession have found that nearly half of the migrant children do not have sufficient technical equipment at home; they live in families that do not have sufficient knowledge of using the systems; they have difficulty in following the lessons and they cannot benefit from distance education (SGDD Göç Akademisi, 2020). Moreover, it has been revealed that 50% of the Syrian children who attended school in the pre-COVID-19 period could not access education now. In addition, more than half of the families of children who have difficulties in

participating in distance education stated the inadequacy of technical facilities such as television and computers as the reason for not benefiting from distance education (SGDD Göç Akademisi, 2020). Another report published by SGDD-ASAM has revealed that 48% of the children enrolled in the school cannot benefit from distance education (SGDD, 2020), so the results of this study also shows parallel trend.

Financial situation, unfortunately, affects the education accession of Syrian children also during the times of distant education. It is a massive question whether or not these children will continue their education when face-to-face education starts, but urgent actions are needed in order not to lose any more children in education.

6.4. Assessment of the Strategies of the Responsible Actors

6.4.1. Policies of Turkish Government

There are four important strategy documents of the Turkish Government to analyse regarding the education accession of Syrian children and child labour, which are 11th Development Plan; 2019 – 2023 MoNE Development Plan; 2023 Education Vision; and National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

6.4.1.1. 11th Development Plan

The Development Plan envisages an economic and social development process that aims to create more value for the country to increase its efficiency in all areas and to gain competitiveness at the international level with the national technology move. In the plan, the fundamental rights and freedoms protected and developed by the rule of law and strong democracy are claimed to be adopted as the carrier pillars of the development effort. Moreover, the Plan puts forward the stability and sustainability in the economy, increase in welfare in the fields of human, social and spatial development and a continuous development orientation with its fair share as a priority goal.

In the Development Plan, the emphasis on the education of children under temporary protection, child labour and children under temporary protection in general, have been made in several chapters. The numbers and the strategies with respect to these issues are listed below.

- 548.5. Access of persons under temporary protection to education opportunities will be increased.
- 609.1. Social awareness will be developed in the field of combating child labour.
- 609.2. Units for Combating Child Labour will be expanded in 81 provinces, and they will be made more effective in order to develop cooperation and coordination with relevant institutions and organizations working in the field of combating child labour.
- 609.3. Mobile teams will be strengthened within the scope of protective and preventive services for children working on the street or at risk of being employed.
- 609.4. Activities that will contribute to the development of children of families working in seasonal mobile agriculture will be made regular and continuous, and children's access to these opportunities will be increased.
- 616. Programs that will increase life skills and intercultural interaction will be continued in order to enable children under international or temporary protection to integrate into society and establish partnerships with their peers.
- 616.1. Social adaptation programs for children under international or temporary protection will be expanded (Presidency Strategy and Budget, 2019) (The Presidency of Turkish Republic, 2019)

Syrian children’s access to education is only mentioned in the strategy number 548.5 and no specific details are provided on how this will be achieved under sub-strategies. On the other hand, combating child labour has more attention with 4 strategies defined and focusing on awareness raising (no. 609.1), stakeholder approach (609.2), and operational details (609.3 and 609.4) aspects, which are grasping the problem from different angles. Moreover, Strategy Number 616 and 616.1 gives important to life skills gaining and social adaptation of Syrian children but there is no specific strategy on the details like the ones regarding the child labour.

6.4.1.2. 2019 – 2023 MoNE Strategic Plan

As changes in the field of management in the 21st century information society have brought an accountable and transparent management approach to the agenda, where public resources are used effectively, economically and efficiently. Public Financial Management and Control Law No. 5018 was put into practice in order to structure the public financial management in accordance with this understanding. Public administrations are required by law to develop a strategic plan using participatory methods in order to develop their future mission and vision within the framework of development plans, national programs, relevant legislation, and the basic principles they have adopted, to set strategic goals and measurable targets, to measure their performance using predetermined indicators, and to monitor their progress. Ministry of National Education also prepares and implements strategic plans starting from the years 2015-2019 with the participation of the Ministry's central and provincial units and relevant stakeholders (MoNE, 2019). MoNE argues that in the light of the data obtained by PESTLE, SWOT and internal analysis, problem and development areas related to the education and training system were detected; and accordingly, objectives, targets, strategies, indicators and actions were determined for the strategic plan covering 2019 – 2023. In this direction, MoNE defined five-year targets and strategies and actions to achieve these targets under seven objectives. Moreover, based on the approximate costs of the strategies, the estimated resource needs of the goals and targets were calculated by MoNE. A strategic plan monitoring and evaluation model has also been created in order to monitor the realization of the goals and objectives in the plan.

Since the document is a strategic plan for education, there is only focus on education, not child labour. Syrian children's education accession is mentioned under Goal 6, Target 6.4 with the performance indicator 6.4.4; and a specific strategy as well as need are defined. Goal, target and others are described below.

- Goal 6: Vocational and technical education and lifelong learning systems will be arranged in accordance with the needs of the society and the requirements of the labour market and the information age.

- Target 6.4: In order to increase the quality of work and life of individuals, lifelong learning qualifications, participation and completion rates will be increased, and educational activities for our citizens abroad will be continued.
    - Performance Indicator 6.4.4: Schooling rate of foreign students aged 5-17 under temporary protection in Turkey (%) Target for 2020 is 66%; 2021 is 69%; for 2022 is 72%; for 2023 is 75%.
    - Strategy 6.4.1: By improving the quality of lifelong learning programs, participation and completion rates in lifelong learning will be increased, and the access to education and training of children of foreigners under temporary protection in our country will be increased (MoNE, 2019).

MoNE also sees "accelerating the policy, strategy and legislation development and update studies aimed at increasing the access to education of students under temporary protection in our country" as a need.

Performance indicator 6.4.4 clearly defines the target of MoNE in terms of increasing the schooling rate of Syrian children, which was 61.4% at the time of release of the Development Plan in 2019. Unfortunately, the schooling rate of Syrian children remained only at 63.3% as of 2019 – 2020 education term even though it was aimed to increase the rate to 66% in 2020.

6.4.1.3. 2023 Education Vision

According to MoNE, the main purpose of the 2023 Education Vision is "to raise qualified, moral individuals who are equipped with the skills of the the future and who can use this equipment for the good of humanity, who loves science, and who are curious and sensitive to the culture". Moreover, it is argued that the 2023 Education Vision "reveals the determination to realize the quality revolution for the coming period, in these days when many of the problems related to quantity and access of the Turkish National Education System are left behind" (MoNE, 2018).

Objective 3 of the "Early Childhood" section of the Vision claims that the quality of education will be increased in groups with difficult conditions and accelerated,

intensive and supportive curricula will be created in schools where immigrants, children under temporary protection and seasonal agricultural workers and children in unschooled villages and sub-village settlements are located.

The 2023 Education Vision only includes increasing Syrian children's education opportunities along with other disadvantaged children living in our country in the "Early Childhood" section, and the efficiency of the strategies and objectives in this section is another story. There is no other strategy or objective defined for the education of disadvantaged children in other sections on primary education, secondary education, upper secondary education, special education, vocational education and so on. The Vision document clearly ignores education of over 1.1 million school-age Syrian children and thousands of other refugee children. Moreover, the Vision argues that the accession problems to Turkish National Education System are left behind yet thousands of migrant and local children are still out of school.

6.4.1.4. National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

This policy document is the most comprehensive government document that goes under the scope of this thesis. The National Programme was released by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in 2017. In line with the views of relevant public institutions and organizations, social partners and international organizations, the Programme aims to eliminate child labour, starting from the worst forms of it, within the 7 years period through combating poverty, which is the main reason for children to enter the working life, increasing the quality and accessibility of education, developing social awareness and sensitivity, with comprehensive measures described below.

National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour also includes parts regarding Syrian child labourers. The Programmes argues that the children of the people who migrated to our country, who are granted "Temporary Protection Status", also face the risk of child labour. Therefore, National Programme indicates that the problem of foreign child labour is combated through mechanisms that will enable immigrants to enter working life, support themselves and direct their children to education, so it is

aimed that all children benefit from all the policies and measures included in the "National Program for Combating Child Labour" covering the period of 2017-2023, without any discrimination (MoLSS, 2017).

National Programme envisages the elimination of child labour through seven main objectives, which are implementation and updating of legal regulations and legislation; strengthening existing institutional structures and creation of new institutional structures; raising awareness; ensuring the participation of social parties and the community; expansion of social protection and social security network; education and improvement; and elimination of poverty (MoLSS, 2017). I will explain these including the action plan of the objectives "education and improvement" and "elimination of poverty", which I see as the most important ones. All objectives, in fact, have action plans in detail including strategies and activities but the objectives of "education and improvement" and "elimination of poverty" are the most relevant ones within the scope of this study; thus, only the action plans of these two will be explained and reflected here.

The first objective *"implementation and updating of legal regulations and legislation"* mentions that Turkey is a member of many international organisations and has rapidly adapted to the international decisions taken by these organizations on children's rights and child employment, and has created its own laws and legislation in line with the realities and needs of the country with these international decisions. The issues of reviewing the legislation on the prevention of child labour, making new legislative arrangements if necessary, implementing the existing legislation and supervising the implementation are seen of great importance by the Ministry in terms of placing the fight against child labour on a solid legal basis (MoLSS, 2017).

Second objective is *"strengthening existing institutional structures and creation of new institutional structures"*. According to the Ministry, in addition to strengthening the capacities of existing institutions working to combat child labour, new institutional frameworks to prevent child labour, particularly in its most severe forms, are required.. Within the framework of the National Program, it is defined critical for public and

private institutions and organizations to have a structure in place that allows them to combat child labour in a systematic and long-term manner. In this framework, priority strategies include expanding successful institutional structure models across the country and enriching the national database, as well as increasing the efficiency and efficacy of current mechanisms and institutions by building new mechanisms (MoLSS, 2017).

The third objective *"raising awareness"* indicates that it is of great importance to increase social awareness to prevent child labour. It is seen necessary to take the necessary measures and carry out the activities under the supervision and guidance of experienced persons and organisations in order to increase the sensitivity of the society on the causes of child labour and its effects on children (MoLSS, 2017).

The fourth objective of the National Plan is *"ensuring the participation of social parties and the community"* which argues that ensuring the participation of social partners and society in the prevention of child labour is one of the absolute necessary factors for the activities carried out and to be carried out to achieve the intended results (MoLSS, 2017).

Fifth objective *"expansion of social protection and social security network"* claims that there is a major structural issue which is the social security system's inability to cover the entire population. Because the social safety net does not protect everyone in society, families are more likely to employ children, which leads to an increase in child labour. In this respect, it is critical to broaden the scope of social security, to use social security as an effective tool for poverty reduction, and to provide effective and high-quality health care to all segments of society., according to the Ministry (MoLSS, 2017).

Now, I will mention the two most important objective under this study that are "education and improvement" and "elimination of poverty".

"Education and improvement" as the sixth objective argues that education is one of the most effective solutions for preventing child labour and it seems possible to remove

children from working life only by creating attractive alternatives. This option involves directing children to formal or non-formal education facilities as part of a program that is linked to a poverty reduction approach. Apprenticeships and vocational training are a very appealing option for children who have been deprived access to formal schooling. The Ministry believes that initiatives to boost vocational and technical education are necessary, especially because poor families cannot afford long-term education and the country's industry requires intermediate workers. In addition, the rehabilitation of working children and children who withdraw from working life so that they can communicate with their school life, their peers and adapt to their new lives is also considered as an important issue for these children to continue their future lives in a healthy way. Because children are exposed to a variety of health and safety risks while working; the health and safety of children who are still working and who are expected to be withdrawn from working life within a certain period of time within the scope of the National Program should be considered as a precaution. It is also recognised as necessary to carry out the necessary treatment and health checks of the children who, although removed from the working life, have been adversely affected in terms of health during their working life, so that they can lead a healthy life in the future and are not exposed to negative health risks that prevent them from continuing their education. The strategy and activities to be carried out for the purposes of directing working children to education and rehabilitating them to integrate them into social life are listed in the below table (MoLSS, 2017).

Table 8: Measures for Education and Improvement

Strategies	Activities	Responsible Institution	Supporting Institutions
1. Integrating child labour-related issues into education policies and programs in order to ensure harmonization between child labour prevention policies and education policies	(1.1) Ensuring that education inspectors, teachers, provincial and district directors and administrators are informed and trained on the fight against child labour through in-service training	MoNE	Ministry of Development
	(1.2) Making pre-school education compulsory	MoNE	MoLSS, MoNE, MoFSS
	(1.3) Declaring year 2018 as “the Year of Combating Child Labour"	The Presidency	MoLSS, MoNE, MoFSS
	(1.4) Dissemination of the transported education system and mobile/prefabricated schools and development of alternative applications by the Provincial Directorates of National Education in order to ensure the attendance of children of seasonal agricultural workers to school.	MoNE	Governorates
	(1.5) Preparation and implementation of training programs that are complementary to their developmental needs of working and out-of-school children	MoNE	MoFSS
	(1.6) Arrangements on camps and summer school for the children	MoNE	Ministry of Youth and Sports
	(1.7) Planning of make-up trainings for students who are behind their peers in terms of acquiring gains for various reasons despite continuing education	MoNE	-

2. Making sure that working children obtain vocational training	(2.1) Working towards strengthening the access of children at risk of employment to vocational education and directing working children to vocational education	MoNE	Municipalities, Vocational Organisations, Social Partners
	(2.2) Promoting scholarships and other forms of support for adolescents referred to vocational education	MoNE	MoFSS, Municipalities
	(2.3) Conducting research to improve the quality and capacity of apprenticeship training and to make apprenticeship training more accessible to working children	MoNE	Vocational Organisations, Social Partners
3. Coordinating remedial action, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction and education	(3.1) Through Social Service Centres, assisting youngsters who are facing physical and psychological challenges	MoFSS	MoNE, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth and Sports

(MoLSS, 2017)

Finally, as the seventh objective *"elimination of poverty"* argues that poverty remains as the most important cause of child labour, and it is a social and economic problem that should be addressed first so that the child labour may be prevented. According to the Ministry, the economic empowerment of families, in particular, is an extremely important factor in preventing child labour; thus, It is vital to undertake initiatives that will allow more family members to work, and to prioritize families whose children are at risk of working in poverty-reducing and income-generating activities, as well as in obtaining financial resources. Strategies and activities to be carried out to eradicate poverty are listed in the below Table as the action plan (MoLSS, 2017).

Table 9: Measures for Elimination of Poverty

Strategies	Activities	Responsible Institution	Supporting Institutions
1. Taking steps to improve child worker families' access to basic services, as well as their income and living situations	(1.1) Increasing agricultural and non-agricultural employment opportunities in provinces with seasonal agricultural migration, creating income areas, supporting labour-intensive production-based enterprises	Small and Medium Industry Development Organization (KOSGEB)	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Development
	(1.2) Developing support and incentive mechanisms to increase participation in education for families in poverty for the aim of battling child labour in education policies	MoFSS	MoNE, Governorates
	(1.3) Making sure that child labour is taken into account in regional action plans and prioritizing child labour prevention in already presented programs of support	Development Agencies	Ministry of Development, MoLSS, Governorates, Local Administration
	(1.4) Improving seasonal agricultural workers' living conditions of in the places they go/immigrate (sewage, drinking water, electricity, etc.)	MoLSS	Governorates, Local Administration
2. Prioritising all groups requiring special policy (working children, urban poor, women, nomads, disabled, immigrant children, etc.), especially single-parent families, and	(2.1) Providing priority to families who decide to withdraw their children from working life by starting their own business as a small and medium-sized enterprise, and facilitating their access to credit and marketing services	Small and Medium Industry Development Organization (KOSGEB)	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

families whose children have to work or are at risk of working in income-generating, poverty-reducing activities and accessing to financial resources	(2.2) Focusing on vocational guidance programs and projects that will increase the working efficiency of the rural population and related to agricultural production, processing and evaluation.	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	KOSGEB, Development Agencies, Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR)
	(2.3) Granting priority to the families whose children are working in accessing vocational training programs and finding employment	İŞKUR	MoFSS, MoLSS, MoNE, Ministry of Interior Affairs
	(2.4) Expanding program opportunities in improving seasonal agricultural workers' occupational skills	İŞKUR	Ministry of Development, KOSGEB, MoNE, Development Agencies, Municipalities, Vocational Organisations, Social Partners

(MoLSS, 2017)

It is promising to see that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security sees the poverty as the biggest reason for child labour and that the Ministry prepares a comprehensive action plan to cope with the problem. I think that the objective regarding the poverty alleviation is the most critical one, and the objective for the educational development is the second most important and also the complementary to the poverty alleviation objective. This National Plan is important not only because it puts the poverty centre as a main reason for the child labour and provides a comprehensive action plan within this context as well as six other action areas, but also because it defines the roles and responsibilities of the other stakeholders – mainly relevant state authorities in all seven action areas. Like other development or strategy plans of other ministries and state institutions, the deadline for these actions and targets are the end of the year 2023.

Ministry of Labour and Social Security published a progress report in 2020 regarding the National Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour in order to show the

improvement as of 2020. I will elaborate the Objective for “Education and Improvement” and Objective for “Elimination of Poverty”

The progress presented in the report on “Education and Improvement” is summarised on the below table.

Table 10: Progress for Objective on “Education and Improvement”

Activity Number and Name	Actions
(1.1) Ensuring that education inspectors, teachers, provincial and district directors and administrators are informed and trained on the fight against child labour through in-service training	There was no development regarding the measure in the relevant period.
(1.2) Making pre-school education compulsory	**MoNE:** Although the pre-school education is not compulsory yet, to ensure that all children have access to pre-school education, education is offered free of charge to children who only get education and do not receive nutrition from their schools.. Conditional Cash for Education are also given to children aged 48-66 months who attend pre-school education institutions.
(1.3) Declaring year 2018 as “the Year of Combating Child Labour"	The measure has been completed.
(1.4) Dissemination of the transported education system and mobile/prefabricated schools and development of alternative applications by the Provincial Directorates of National Education in order to ensure the attendance of children of seasonal agricultural workers to school.	Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, education and training activities continued remotely via TV and the internet. In this process, education service could not be provided to the students by transportation due to the closed schools.
(1.5) Preparation and implementation of training programs that are complementary to their developmental needs of working and out-of-school children	**MoNE:** Within the framework of the need assessments created as part of the Education Programme in Primary Schools, training activities will be carried out for children who have learning deficits despite their school attendance.
(1.6) Arrangements on camps and summer school for the children	Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and the prohibition of children aged 18 and under to go out without the presence of their parents, the study could not be carried out in the relevant period.

(1.7) Planning of make-up trainings for students who are behind their peers in terms of acquiring gains for various reasons despite continuing education	**MoNE:** Within the framework of the need assessments created as part of the Education Programme in Primary Schools, training activities will be carried out for children who have learning deficits despite their school attendance. *The progress here is indicated same as 1.5.*
(2.1) Working towards strengthening the access of children at risk of employment to vocational education and directing working children to vocational education	**MoNE:** Vocational education was included in the scope of compulsory education by making arrangements in the Vocational Education Law No 3308. The Department of Workplace-Based Vocational Education was established under the responsibility of the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education of the Ministry of National Education.
(2.2) Promoting scholarships and other forms of support for adolescents referred to vocational education	**MoNE:** State Incentive for Skills/Vocational Education in Enterprises has been introduced. Regardless of the number of employees in the enterprise, students who receive vocational training in enterprises are paid not less than 30% of the net amount of the minimum wage. State support is provided at the rate of 2/3 of the minimum amount to be paid to students for enterprises employing less than 20 personnel, and 1/3 for enterprises employing 20 or more personnel. The state contribution is covered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and students who do internships are paid and insured.
(2.3) Conducting research to improve the quality and capacity of apprenticeship training and to make apprenticeship training more accessible to working children	**MoNE:** The Department of Workplace-Based Vocational Education was established under the responsibility of the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education of the Ministry of National Education. Apprenticeship training, which is outside of compulsory education, is included in this scope. Apprentices who graduate from the 4-year program will graduate with a mastery certificate. Thus, the master-apprentice relationship, which is an important deficiency in employment, will be tried to be re-established. Students in vocational education centres will be able to obtain a vocational high school diploma by completing the difference courses through face-to-face education at vocational education centres.
(3.1) Through Social Service Centres, assisting youngsters who are facing physical and psychological challenges	No reference is given to this activity in the progress report.

(MoLSS, 2017)

The progress presented in the report on “Elimination of Poverty” is summarised on the below table.

Table 11: Progress for Objective on "Elimination of Poverty"

Activity Number and Name	Actions
(1.1) Increasing agricultural and non-agricultural employment opportunities in provinces with seasonal agricultural migration, creating income areas, supporting labour-intensive production-based enterprises	**Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry:** The relevant units of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry continue to work on increasing employment opportunities in agriculture, creating income areas and supporting labour-intensive enterprises in provinces with seasonal agricultural migration. In this context, the "Sage is in Mardin by the Hands of Women Farmers" project is carried out in cooperation with the Aegean Agricultural Research Institute, in order to ensure the development of sage cultivation in the villages of Mardin province and its districts and to carry out activities that will generate income for both local farmers and our country. With the "Golden Tubers of the Soil Project" carried out in cooperation with the Iğdır Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry and the Directorate of Eastern Anatolia Agricultural Research Institute, it is aimed to generate economic income by cultivating the potato, which is not widely grown in the province. With the "Healthy Blackberry Project" carried out in cooperation with Batman Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry and GAP International Agricultural Research and Training Centre Directorate, it is aimed to make blackberry cultivation economically by taking the necessary trainings, to set an example for the surrounding villages, to increase the income of women farmers by ensuring their participation in the economy. With the "Silkworm Breeding with Seasonal Agricultural Worker Women" project, which was started to be carried out in Şanlıurfa in 2017 for seasonal agricultural workers, women who want to do farming will continue to take part in an economically income-generating activity by breeding silkworms in the "Insect Care Homes" established in their living spaces.
(1.2) Developing support and incentive mechanisms to increase participation in education for families in poverty for the aim of battling child labour in education policies	**MoFSS:** Poor people (including foreign nationals) will continue to benefit from the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme (CCTE) in return for sending their children to regular school. In addition, within the scope of the European Union, Employment and Social Policies 2014-2020 Sectoral Operational Program (IPA-II), the "Increasing the Effect of the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme in Turkey on High School Attendance Rates II" Project carried out by our General Directorate, it is aimed to prevent school dropout rates with social assistance and social service activities. As part of the project, two additional supports were provided to eligible high school students for the 2019-2020 academic year, 315.77 TL in September 2019 and 214.44 TL in January 2020. In addition, examining the active measures and problems that are expected to have a direct or indirect effect on the risks of early school leaving of the beneficiaries with scientific methods; and activities such as training, consultancy, guidance, survey, workshop, impact assessment studies are planned to start in October 2020.

(1.3) Making sure that child labour is taken into account in regional action plans and prioritizing child labour prevention in already presented programs of support	No reference is given to this activity in the progress report.
(1.4) Improving seasonal agricultural workers' living conditions of in the places they go/immigrate (sewage, drinking water, electricity, etc.)	**MoLSS:** The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Project (METIP) was implemented within the scope of the Prime Ministry Circular on "Seasonal Agricultural Workers" numbered 2017/6, which was prepared by MoLSS and entered into force in 2017. With the aforementioned Circular carried out under the coordination of the Ministry, the duties and responsibilities of the relevant institutions were determined in order to solve the problems experienced by our seasonal agricultural workers and their families, and it was foreseen that the studies on the measures to be taken at the provincial level would be carried out under the supervision and control of the governors. In this context, an action plan is prepared by the Governorships every year and resources are allocated by our Ministry within the budgetary possibilities. Since 2017, implementation is carried out in 11 provinces in total, namely Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Eskişehir, Konya, Manisa, Ordu, Giresun, Düzce, Sakarya and Samsun, where seasonal agricultural labour is concentrated. With the "Seasonal Agricultural Workers Information System (e-METIP)" established within the scope of the circular, it was ensured that numerical data on seasonal agricultural workers could be obtained and a seasonal migration map of our country was created in line with the information collected by the General Directorate of Security and the Gendarmerie General Command. Moreover, integration studies were carried out with the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health within the scope of the system, and information on the health status of seasonal agricultural workers and their children's school enrolment status can be followed through the system. In addition, the Ministry carries out many projects with international and national resources, in cooperation with international organizations, NGOs and the private sector, in order to combat child labour in seasonal agriculture and to improve the working and living conditions of those working in seasonal agriculture. Within the scope of the projects implemented, field studies and agricultural work activities aimed at combating child labour are carried out. Also, services such as providing registered employment of seasonal agricultural workers working in hazelnut orchards and improving their working conditions, especially in the provinces of Mardin, Diyarbakır, Giresun, Ordu, Sakarya, Zonguldak, Şanlıurfa and Düzce, where seasonal agricultural labor is intense, and certification of intermediaries are provided. In addition, the project proposal prepared with the funds of the European Union (EU) for the purpose of combating child labor in seasonal mobile temporary agriculture was accepted by the EU Delegation to Turkey.

	Ministry of Health: Health services are provided to seasonal agricultural workers and their families with 620 mobile teams established in the field under the coordination of the Ministry of Health, General Directorate of Public Health. As of the end of June 2020, 123,737 seasonal agricultural workers were provided with preventive and curative health services in the field. In the upcoming period, health services will continue to be provided with 680 teams to all disadvantaged groups in towns, villages, hamlets, remote neighbourhoods and similar settlements where access to health services is difficult in our country.
(2.1) Providing priority to families who decide to withdraw their children from working life by starting their own business as a small and medium-sized enterprise, and facilitating their access to credit and marketing services	**MoFSS:** Social Economic Support is provided by Social Service Centres (SHM) to families who are eligible in accordance with the legislation in order to reduce child labour. Child labour cases encountered during visits between January 2020 and June 2020 were provided with necessary guidance by MoFSS personnel.
(2.2) Focusing on vocational guidance programs and projects that will increase the working efficiency of the rural population and related to agricultural production, processing and evaluation.	**Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry:** In order to increase the knowledge and skills of women farmers at every stage of the agricultural production process, to carry out sustainable agricultural activities and to increase quality products, trainings are given in 81 provinces by using various extension techniques on many agricultural subjects from viticulture to animal husbandry, from fruit growing to greenhouse cultivation, and from beekeeping to silkworm breeding. In the first 6 months of 2020, 47,096 women farmers were trained in 4,017 activities. The "Women Farmers Meet with Agricultural Innovations" program is run in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Research Institute Directorates and Provincial Directorates, and agricultural extension projects are carried out within the scope of this program to ensure that agricultural innovations are learned, implemented, and disseminated by women farmers. With the aim of disseminating agricultural innovations in 30 selected provinces in 2020, women farmer trainings are carried out with 30 different projects.
(2.3) Granting priority to the families whose children are working in accessing vocational training programs and finding employment	**İŞKUR:** In the activities carried out by the Provincial Directorates of Labour and Employment Agency, it is ensured that those receiving social assistance participate in vocational training programs and individual counselling services.
(2.4) Expanding program opportunities in improving seasonal agricultural workers' occupational skills	**İŞKUR:** As of 2020 (January-June) within the scope of Active Labour Force Services, 608 people benefited from vocational training courses in the agricultural sector. In the same period, 652 people benefited from on-the-job training programs in the agricultural sector.

(MoLSS, 2017)

As presented on the above tables, some measures are taken by the relevant state authorities to eliminate child labour, especially in the areas of developing education opportunities and poverty alleviation. Considering that it has been four years since the commencement of this strategy, there is still no remarkable progress in elimination of the child labour. Strategies are well defined under the National Programme but taking the necessary actions aligning with the strategies are missing as also can be seen from the results from above monitoring report published in 2020. Moreover, according to TUIK data on child labour published in 2019, number of children aged 5-17 working in an economic activity is 720,000, and only 65.7% of them continue their education (TUIK, 2019). Considering that child labour is usually a part of informal market, this number is most probably much more when invisible child labour is also included. In addition to these, the national children's rights strategy and action plan was prepared in 2013 and this strategy's policy actions should be viewed as a collection of disjointed and fragmentary state initiatives that have had minimal success to date. Therefore, Turkish government fails to protect the rights of the child – citizen or non-citizen.

6.4.2. Policies and Programmes of United Nations

There are two essential United Nations document to be analysed for assessing the UN policies towards Syrian children's education in Turkey, which are 3RP Turkey Country Chapter and UNICEF Turkey Country Programme.

6.4.2.1. Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP): Turkey Country Chapter

3RP stands as Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan and it is defined as a platform of coordination, advocacy, planning, fundraising and strategy for "development partners to respond to the Syria crisis" (3RP Website). It is one regional plan with five country chapters including Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq. In the Turkey chapter, the Plan is designed on the basis of the Foreigners and International Protection Law and the Temporary Protection Regulation of the Republic of Turkey, and provides access to national services to Syrians under temporary protection, international protection applicants and status holders (Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, Turkey Country Chapter 2021-2022 (3RP Turkey)). In the coordination of UNHCR Turkey, partners of 3RP in Turkey are comprised of public institutions and

organisations, non-governmental organisations and international organisations that are working to expand the health, education and social services access of migrants under temporary and international protection as well as of status holders. Within the scope of this thesis, I will focus on education and child labour emphasises on the 3RP Turkey Plan 2021-2022.

The 3RP Turkey Plan indicates that as of the start of the 2020/21 academic year, more than 768,000 Syrian children under temporary protection were enrolled in formal education in Turkey, according to the Ministry of National Education, which continues to encourage the inclusion of Syrians under temporary protection, applicants of international protection, and other status holders in the national education system. As for the needs in the education sector, the Plan argues, "*35% of school-age children are still out of school and do not have access to educational opportunities. ... Socioeconomic factors have a significant impact on school enrolment, participation and attendance" (3RP Turkey).*

The Turkey plan of the 3RP underlines the important impact of socio-economic factors on accessing the education opportunities. Although there is not a quite strong emphasis on child labour, the problem of child labour is listed among main child protection risks causing lack of access to education. Moreover, the Plan argues that limited livelihood opportunities increase the risk of families including their children in the workforce, and children are seen working on the streets and in dangerous conditions, including in industrialized areas of major cities such as Istanbul and also seasonal agriculture according to field observations (3RP Turkey).

The strategic objectives of the 3RP have been revised for the period 2021-2022 in order to overcome the needs in line with the strategic priorities regarding inclusion in national systems, promoting self-sufficiency and promoting social cohesion.

The three main strategic goals in this regard are as follows:

(1) Contributing to the protection of refugees and migrants holding different statuses;

(2) Encouraging participation and access to health, education, and social services, as well as services, such as municipal services and local solutions;

(3) Promoting harmony, self-sufficiency and solutions (3RP Turkey, p. 13).

Parallel to these three strategic objectives, resettlement in a third country, equal participation of women and girls and response to COVID-19 are listed as permanent solution strategy in the 3RP Plan. As important as these are, no main sub-strategy is defined regarding the battle with poverty, child labour, or education.

In the 3RP Turkey Country Chapter, different sector responses are defined in detail, including the targets, budget and main stakeholders of the sector. The sectors in the 3RP are food security and agriculture, basic needs, health, education, protection and livelihoods. In the framework of this thesis, I will elaborate the education sector response mainly but there will also be references to protection and livelihoods response. Protection and livelihoods responses are also within the scope as they give reference to child labour elimination policies and objectives. Education sector primarily aims to ensure that all children aged 5-17 have access to a variety of relevant educational opportunities that are linked to and support formal education enrolment. The summary information of the education sector of 3RP is shown on the below table:

The Plan gives reference to current situation for education by indicating,

> *Out-of-school children also include working children, children with disabilities and children at other protection risks. A recent survey conducted … revealed that 14% of the children identified in provinces with a high population under temporary protection and international protection were not enrolled in school for the 2020-2021 academic year, while 66% of the parents interviewed answered that they did not think of sending their children to school this year. 28% of the respondents stated that the financial barriers faced by the family were the main reason for not registering to schools (3RP Turkey, p. 13).*

This picture shows that more than half of the children researched are not enrolled to schools due to financial reasons or child labour, which is also the result of financial difficulties. However, strategic direction and response plan of 3RP Turkey mainly focus on supporting distant education programmes due to COVID; encouraging

greater participation of women and girls in activities in order not to deepen social inequalities; assisting the integration of Syrian students into the Turkish education system and promoting social cohesion inside and outside the school (3RP TR). These points as response plan are quite important and valuable especially battling with educational obstacles due to COVID, gender-based disadvantages and integration problems caused by migration, but still there is no specific focus on children in poverty and child labourers.

The indicators and targets of the Education Sector are indicated on the below table.

Table 12: Education Sector Logical Framework

Indicators	Target for 2021	Target for 2022
Number of children enrolled in formal education (Grades 1-12) (1.2.1)	800,000	800,000
Number of children enrolled in accredited nonformal education (1.3.1)	39,010	40,020
Number of children enrolled in informal nonaccredited education (1.4.1)	31,944	20,580
Number of back-to-learning campaigns conducted (1.7.1)	7	7
Number of children reached through back-to-school campaigns (1.7.2)	811,200	811,200
Number of children receiving support for enrolment to education (1.7.3)	61,375	70,925

(3RP Turkey Chapter, 2021)

Although indicators above include targets and outputs regarding out-of-school children, supposably including child labourers, it is not clear how the sector will respond to eliminate the child labour so that more children will access to education opportunities. In addition to Education Sector response, Protection and Livelihoods sector response of 3RP will be looked at since child protection and child labour issues are emphasised under these two.

Firstly, Protection Sector response places particular emphasis on integrated programming with other sectors to address the root causes of protection problems such as child labour, in addition to preventing violence and providing appropriate response to women, girls, men and boys at risk and other individuals with special needs. The Protection Sector suggest,

> *Gender equality will be promoted throughout the sector strategy to ensure that women and men have the right to good nutrition and a healthy diet and equal access to decent employment opportunities in the agri-food sector. Thus, child labour in the agricultural sector will be reduced by promoting women's empowerment and combating discrimination against women, girls and other vulnerable individuals (3RP Turkey, p. 44).*

I believe that this "targeting" is very problematic not only because it provides no direct response to child labour as a socio-economic problem but also it grounds the problem under gender inequalities as if women are solely responsible from the childcare and as if the reason for child labour is lack of childcare. It is undeniable that childcare opportunities are extremely important to eliminate child protection risks especially during seasonal agriculture labour of both parents yet providing such opportunities neither proposes a permanent solution to the problem nor lack of childcare is the reason for child labour.

Objective 4 of the Protection Sector response covers the child protection and the objective is to provide equal access to quality child protection interventions and protection from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect for girls and boys affected by the Syrian crisis (3RP Turkey) and detailed indicators and targets regarding this objective are shown on the below table.

Table 13: Protection Sector Logical Framework

Indicators	Target for 2021	Target for 2022
Number of children assessed for protection needs (4.1.1)	86,519	86,019
Number of children referred to specialized services (4.1.2)	39,375	38,825
Number of individuals reached with positive parenting programmes (4.2.2)	22,130	22,480
Number of individuals reached through information campaigns and awareness raising initiatives on child rights and protection (4.2.3)	15,860	25,860
Number of individuals trained on child protection mechanisms and PSS in emergencies (4.3.1)	4,100	4,170
Number of government and non-government actors supported for child protection specific activity programming (4.3.2)	276	278

(3RP Turkey Chapter, 2021)

As can be seen on the above table, there is no specific indicator regarding child labour as one of the most critical child protection risk.

Secondly, the Livelihoods Sector of 3RP argues that 16% of Syrians and international protection applicants and status holders do not have any working members in the family. Among the households where women are responsible, this figure rises to 31% and in some cases, these risks can lead to negative coping strategies such as child labour (3RP Turkey) The Sector aims to support cooperation addressing the

occupational safety and health risks and precarious working conditions, including workplace discrimination, informal work and child labour, facilitate access to work permits, support social security payments and encourage formal work, in order to mitigate the negative socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19. Although it is not clear how it will be solved, Livelihoods Sector, too, gives reference to child labour. Child labour issue is also mentioned in the indicator table of the Sector, but no specific indicator is defined here either.

Table 14: Livelihoods Sector Logical Framework

Indicators	Target for 2021	Target for 2022
Number of youth and individuals identified at risk benefiting from training and awareness raising disaggregated by gender (1.1.1)	9,480	8,925
Number of youth and individuals identified at risk gaining income through employment or business, disaggregated by gender (1.1.2)	2,945	4,250
Number of individuals who are survivors of gender-based violence receiving livelihoods support, including psychosocial and specialized support (1.1.3)	985	1,017

(3RP Turkey Chapter, 2021)

When looked at the general picture via searching the word “child labour” on the one-hundred-and-eight (108) pages document of 3RP Turkey Chapter (ENG), the word has only been encountered fourteen (14) times. This fact alone indicates that the whole response coordination mechanism/platform gives little reference and emphasis on child labour. Moreover, when the targets are examined, it can be easily seen that only few of the out of school children are included and no specific target regarding eliminating the child labour is set.

6.4.2.2. Turkey - UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation 2016-2020

There are 3.6 million Syrian migrants under temporary protection status in Turkey, of which 1.6 million are children. In addition, nearly 400,000 persons are registered as asylum seekers and refugees from other countries, with roughly a third of them being children. UNICEF indicates that a great deal of effort is still needed to meet the protection and access to services needs of all these children. Moreover, due to their families' high poverty levels, ongoing trauma from war and lengthy displacement, language barriers, and lack of social inclusion, these children face unique and critical challenges (UNICEF, 2019).

In order to tackle these problem, Turkey-UNICEF 2016-2020 Country Programme has been developed in line with 2016- 2020 United Nations Development Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS), 10th National Development Plan (2014-18), UNICEF Strategy Plan and other relevant documents.

The Country Programme is shaped around four intersectoral outcomes, which are:

- Equal opportunities through social inclusion and resilience building,
- Quality data, information and advocacy for children's rights,
- Gender equality among both children and adolescents,
- Extended cross-border partnership between Turkey and UNICEF (UNICEF, 2019).

Moreover, UNICEF underlines that the Programme is implemented in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Turkey and through numerous partnerships with relevant ministries and institutions, municipalities, universities, civil society and private sector organizations, and a wide range of strategies are used to achieve program objectives, from service provision to strengthening national systems and policy dialogue (UNICEF, 2019).

In this thesis, I will reference from the Annual Report in 2019 as there has been no report published for the 2020 progress. The Country Programme of UNICEF claims

to contribute to the increase in the number of Syrian children attending formal education. The most important achievements are presented as;

> *With the regular growth of the CCTE programme for refugees, the number of children benefiting from the program increased to 410,740 in December 2018 and 562,016 in December 2019, thus 80% of the refugee children attending school are included in the programme. Taking into account the needs of older children, additional payment has been initiated for children attending secondary and high school. Incentives and training continued for 12,245 Syrian Volunteer Education Personnel (SVEP). Moreover, 26,195 girls and 28,079 boys out of school were identified through community-based campaigns and referred to the most appropriate educational opportunities (UNICEF, 2019, p. 11).*

Regarding the child labour efforts of UNICEF, the work to eliminate child labour is based on 5 key components:

- To improve access to child protection, social protection, education, and health services for Turkish or migrant children and their families who have been identified as child workers or who are at risk of becoming child workers.;
- To build the capacity of Vocational Technical Education and apprenticeship programs, as well as the development of vocational skills and the transfer to qualified work through formal education;
- To contribute to the building of the ability of institutions responsible for battling the child labour and national coordination of actions;
- To alter the mindsets and social stereotypes that normalize and perpetuate child labour; and
- To generate data and facts to support policy advocacy and social protection measures aimed at ending child labour (UNICEF).

In line with these, UNICEF argues to support the National Plan of Action to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Within this scope, trainings on child labour were organized for Ministry of Labour and Social Protection employees, including 90% of labour inspectors in Turkey, together with vocational training centres, municipalities, Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK) and non-governmental organizations (UNICEF, 2019). Moreover, training was provided for the private sector

and non-governmental organizations on mobilizing agricultural intermediaries to prevent child labour; and psychosocial support is provided to 1,197 migrant and Turkish (693 boys, 504 girls) children at risk of child labour in Adana, Şanlıurfa, Hatay and Diyarbakır, in collaboration with the civil society partners (UNICEF, 2019). Child labour reference is also given in the Social Policy chapter of the Country Programme of UNICEF with indicating that UNICEF provides support for national efforts to support social protection systems, strengthen child-friendly governance at the level of local governments, and eliminate child labour (UNICEF, 2019). UNICEF continued to support the implementation of the National Plan of Action to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour also by building the capacities through trainings, workshops and consultation meetings, adapted to local needs, and by developing provincial level need/service mapping. Furthermore, within the framework of the cooperation with the Ministry of National Education and TESK, 350 counselling teachers, coordinator teachers and master trainers working in Technical and Vocational High Schools and MEMs were trained on the prevention of child labour and the prepared guidebooks were distributed at the national level (UNICEF, 2019).

In 2016, the start of the current Country Programme, it is argued in the Report, only 36% of the school-age migrant population were enrolled in school, but by the end of 2019, the school enrolment rate for migrant children reached 89.3% in primary school and 63.3% in total. It is clear that together with MoNE, UNICEF contributed massively in progress on the sustainability and quality of education provided by including these children in public schools.

The same document argues that the relative poverty rate in Turkey (the proportion of households with an income below 60% of the equivalent median household income) is 21.2%, and relative poverty among children was encountered higher with 32.1%, according to TUIK statistics (UNICEF, 2019). Moreover, monitoring studies of the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) for Syrian migrants found that 11.7% of the migrant households benefiting from the ESSN were extremely poor and 59.18% were moderately poor (UNICEF, 2019). When considering the poverty rates among children and Syrian population and considering that one of the biggest reasons for the child

labour is poverty, UN maybe needs to take bigger steps than providing trainings in the combating child labour.

6.4.3. Policies and Programmes of the European Union

The biggest EU policies and implementations regarding the response to Syrian crisis within Turkey's border are grounded to EU – Turkey Joint Action Plan, which has emerged as a result of the Turkey EU working dinner held on 17 May and the informal meeting held on 23 September 2015 with the participation of EU heads of state and government, where EU leaders called for the strengthening of dialogue with Turkey at all levels. This Action Plan reflects the agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the EU to support Syrians under temporary protection through coordinated efforts to address the crisis caused by the situation in Syria, and to increase cooperation on migration management issues (European Commission, 2015). Moreover, the Action Plan identifies a series of joint actions that should be urgently implemented by the Republic of Turkey and the European Union (EU) to support Turkey's efforts to manage the situation caused by the massive influx of people in need of temporary protection.

The European Union gives commitment to support Turkey in terms of dealing with the massive influx from Syria. To financially assist Turkey's efforts to deal with the crisis, the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) came into force in March 2016. FRiT is the response for additional fund in supporting refugees and migrants under the temporary protection in Turkey, and it is the result of the call of European Union member states. The response is planned to ensure addressing the needs of both migrant and host communities in six priority areas: migration management, socio-economic support, health, municipal infrastructure, humanitarian assistance and education (EU Delegation to Turkey Website). The implementing agency of the humanitarian assistance actions is ECHO; and implementing agency of the non-humanitarian assistance are IcSP (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace), IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession), and the EUTF (EU Regional Trust Fund for Syrian Refugees).

The FRiT manages 6 billion in total in two tranches and provides a joint coordination mechanism in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. The FRiT projects focus on migration management, socio-economic support, health, municipal infrastructure, humanitarian assistance and education (EU Delegation to Turkey Website). Within the scope of this study, I will focus on education projects of the FRiT.

There are three main education projects under FRiT concerning the scope of this study, which are PICTES, as also mention in the Chapter 5.3.1.1, Education for All in Times of Crisis, and Education Infrastructure for Resilience Activities in Turkey. These projects are implemented under IPA, and the first two projects have been extended in the second tranche of the funds (IPA I and IPA II).

One of the biggest efforts of the EU in terms of the education of the Syrian children in Turkey is the PICTES project. The contracting agency of the Project is the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. The first phase of the Project is implemented for 33 months, starting in 4 October 2016 and the second phase for 36 months, starting from 21 December 2018. EU contribution is 300,000,000 Euro for the first phase and 400,000,00 for the second, from the FRiT funds (EU Delegation to Turkey Website). The Project covers 26 locations, which are Sakarya, Kocaeli, Bursa, Ankara, Konya, Kayseri, İzmir, İstanbul, Antalya, Adana, Mersin, Hatay, Kilis, Osmaniye, Mardin, Şanlıurfa, Kahramanmaraş, Diyarbakır, Batman, Gaziantep, Malatya, Adıyaman and Siirt; and for the second part Samsun, Yalova, Eskişehir and Çorum. The Project aims to support the access to education of the Syrian population under temporary protection in Turkey through supporting the efforts of the Ministry of National Education to integrate Syrians under temporary protection into the Turkish education system.

Another important FRiT Project in the sector of education is Education for All in Times of Crisis. This Project is also implemented in 2 phases; first one is for 55 months, starting from 5 December 2016 and second one is for 42 months, starting from 10 August 2019. The contracting agency for the Project is Kreditanstalt Für Wiederaufbau - KfW (German Development Bank) and implementing one is the MoNE. EU contributed 255,000,000 for the first phase and 100,000,000 for the second

one, from FRiT funds. The main objectives of the Project are; to improve access to inclusive and high-quality primary and secondary education for Syrian and Turkish children and youth; and to strengthen MoNE's implementation and management capacity in order to collaborate with international financial institutions and donors, as well as to build common design criteria for schools (EU Delegation to Turkey). The Project is implemented in the cities of Turkey that are most affected by the Syrian crisis, and the main activity of the Project is to provide technical support to MoNE with the construction and equipment of new schools.

Last but not least, the Project Education Infrastructure for Resilience Activities in Turkey also contributes significantly to the efforts of Turkey in responding the education needs of Syrian children in Turkey. The contracting agency of the Project is the World Bank and EU contribution is 150,000,000 Euro. The Project is implemented for 54 months, starting from 22 December 2016, and aims to support investments in education infrastructure such as building schools, equipping schools and increasing the capacity of the Ministry of National Education in these areas, in Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Hatay, İstanbul, İzmir, Kahramanmaraş, Kayseri, Kilis, Konya, Mersin, and Osmaniye (EU Delegation to Turkey Website).

The European Union provides immense support to education services for both vulnerable host communities and Syrian children in Turkey so that these children do not end up as lost generations. EU not only gives financial assistance but also contributes to policy making efforts of Turkey in this area along with other 5 areas listed above in this Chapter. Therefore, many Syrian children are included in the Turkish national education system thanks to the funds coming from the EU. On the other hand, not many specific emphasise regarding the elimination of the obstacles in accessing the education such as child labour are encountered. One reference is given to prevention of child labour in conditional cash transfer assistance report (European Parliament, 2016).

However, we may say that as a higher body, the European Union focus more on broader sectors like livelihood support, strengthening economic opportunities and

providing protection for Syrians, so the EU gives space for expert agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR to deal with the specific problems in coordination and collaboration with the local formal and nonformal actors.

6.4.4. Discussing the Policies and the Strategies

When it comes to the education policies – citizen or non-citizen – Turkish government pulls the strings and coordinates the education programmes and activities of other actors. As can be seen in the above chapters, the UN and the EU organisations do not have any strategy, programme, project or policy without the MoNE and they plan and hold all these activities in coordination and cooperation with the MoNE and the Presidency of Turkey. Therefore, the policies of Turkey in this field are very critical and international organisation's policy making should be in line with the Turkish government for effective implementation; but this does not mean that the UN and the EU cannot support the education strategies of the Turkish government. For example, Turkish education policies for the inclusion of Syrian children accelerated after 2016 EU support. With this support, UN agencies also strengthened to provide more financial and technical assistance to MoNE.

Taking into account of all these policies, programmes and strategies, national and international bodies work/have worked immensely in order to include more Syrian children into education domain in Turkey. We clearly see that the Turkish government, the UN and the EU have strategies to include more and more Syrian children in education until all of them are schooled, and to tackle the problem of Syrian child labour. However, considering that the school enrolment rate of Syrian children does not much go up than 60%, are these policies and strategies enough? Turkish government, as a holder and controller of the education policies and implementation in the country, needs to define clearer pathways to involve Syrian children – especially those stay out of school for many years; those live in poverty and has to work instead of getting education; and those who cannot be reached even after 11 years. Moreover, policies and strategies of the UN and the EU do not seek the solutions for schooling problem much beyond migration and education policies; and even within these policies, the UN does not advocate enough to eliminate child labour as a result of

extreme poverty. Therefore, we need policy making above and beyond already existing ones: we need comprehensive, multi-sectoral poverty alleviation strategies and policies.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING REMARKS

7.1. Findings of the Study

Migration is a multi-cause social phenomenon and it has a wide variety of effects on both for the immigrants and for the countries of immigration. It is very important to ensure that the migrants can continue their lives in harmony in the places they are settled, and this is achieved through granting them accession of basic rights and services. In this sense, the necessity of educating migrant children is very crucial in order them to adapt to society and most importantly, secure their future to benefit both themselves and the society they live in. This also covers millions of Syrians who fled to Turkey after the internal conflicts inside Syria; and around 1.2 million children at school age. However, it is clear that the inclusion of such a large population in the Turkish education system is not easy due to several reasons. Education, which is one of the most basic human rights, is the process of acculturation or the process of bringing cultural values to the individual. In addition, education is also necessary for the physical, mental, emotional, social and moral development of people. The educational situation of Syrian children presents an extremely complex and comprehensive picture as many of them are still out of school due to various obstacles.

This study aimed to analyse the relation between the child labour and educational accession; the inclusion and exclusion mechanism of Syrian children from the national education system in Turkey and most importantly; if education policies and programmes are effective and inclusive to battle accession obstacles, mainly child labour. I addressed how poverty and economic difficulties affect the educational accession; to what extent migration deepens exclusion and inclusion dynamics especially regarding access to basic rights and services; level of educational accession

of Syrian children in Turkey; what the barriers are to their education; to what extent child labour has influence on accession; and how education policies could address (or not) the needs in this area. In this study, I tried to discover education policies and strategies of the responsible actors, policy gaps compared to the needs in the field, policy limitations, and what is required to go further to include remaining almost 40% of Syrian children who are left out-of-school.

Many studies regarding the education access of Syrian children focus on the obstacles related to migration such as language and integration problems; but I think that the problem is greater than that – child labour as a result of poverty. Many Syrian children have gone to school either in Syria or Turkey, especially to primary level schools but they have to drop to work. When considering the field studies presented in the above chapters, almost all of the working children are from very poor families and they have no choice but work. Majority of them are working in the textile industry; and İstanbul and İzmir are the cities with many out of school children who are working. Those working children face many forms of exploitation (low wage, long hours, and heavy work for their little bodies such as using big and dangerous machines), generally work in very bad conditions which affect their health negatively just to earn few hundreds lira monthly and they are at risk of staying in chronic poverty. This harms children's physical, mental, psychological and social wellbeing, and depriving them of the essential elements for their growth. It is also clear that child labour is a common problem in underdeveloped or developing countries. Short-term policies in Turkey are being planned and implemented to tackle child labour problem but the shortcomings of the legislation or the lack of effective implementation of the legislation along with implementation of solid social and public policies prevent this problem from being completely prevented. Ongoing child labour in Turkey for many years are growing even more with the inclusion of Syrian children. Children who are forced to work in low-paid, long-term working environments, lack of job security have risks in their development both physically and mentally and they are burdened with responsibilities they cannot bear; they become more vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Syrian children can receive public education in Turkey legally with the regulations of MoNE but ongoing poverty prevent them to reach this domain. Moreover, COVID-19 pandemic

makes it more difficult for the disadvantaged Syrian children to access online education and there is a risk of losing already enrolled Syrian children. Therefore, more comprehensive and multi-sectoral policy making becomes a significant necessity in order to overcome the schooling problems of Syrian children living in Turkey.

As presented earlier in this thesis, only 64.44% of school-age Syrian children have access to education in Turkey though it has been more than 10 years since the beginning of the Syrian population influx. Even though Syrian children have the legal right of education, the economic burden of schooling and poverty resulting with child labour impede children's basic right of going to school. Because of long working hours, low wages or any other reason, children realize that they will not be able to improve their circumstances, and many of them express a desire to return to school, but it gets too late. These are the primary reasons why these children stay out-of-school and existing education inclusion policies fail to include the most vulnerable Syrian population. School enrolment rates of Syrian children did not go beyond 60% since 2017 because education and migration policies within this context reached its natural limit; so there is a need to solve the problem from different angles through more inclusive policies.

7.2. Policy Recommendations

In the beginning of the Syrian crisis, it was expected that Syrians would return to their countries after the conflict and they were referred as "temporary guests" for a long time. Therefore, in the early years of the conflict, there was no clear objective of integrating Syrian students into the Turkish national public school system. During the first years, schools for Syrian children were primarily established in temporary accommodation centres (TACs) of DGMM. However, as the population grew, they began to open schools outside of the TACs in cities where Syrian population is relatively higher. In 2012 and 2013, 60% of children living in the TACs were enrolled in school but only 14% of children living in the city centres attended school. This risk took attention, including MoNE's attention, and there were several policies developed and programmes started after. In 2014, all of the non-public schools accredited as

Temporary Education Centres (TECs) so that Syrian children can complete their education in Turkey before returning to Syria, and despite the fact that the number of Syrian kids enrolled in school has risen in the previous four years, about 40% of them remain out of school. In August 2016, The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) promised that all Syrian children will be integrated into Turkish public schools, and that TECs would be phased out by 2020. Education policies and programmes have accelerated from this point, yet it did not suffice to solve the out-of-school Syrian children problem.

Schooling policies – both public and social policies – for Syrian children centre the solutions like granting access to school, teacher or parent training, ensuring social cohesion among the peers etc. and these are surely valuable progress but one of the biggest problems regarding exclusion of these children from education is child labour as a result of poverty, and the solution of it might not be found only in migration and education policies because these policies could only schooled around 60% of Syrian children in Turkey and could not exceed this number for many years. Poverty alleviation policies and strategies towards migrants in Turkey are needed to be discussed. Social protection is composed of three pillars as social assistance, social insurance and labour market programmes but there is only one pillar of it is effective in Turkey; which is social assistance. It is obvious that social assistance provided to families whose children remain out of school due to poverty, will not be enough to find long term solutions. Conditional Cash Transfer For Education Programme, for example, provides only 90 to 100 lira per child in every two months and considering the current economic crisis in the country and the inflation, this money will not even be enough for their daily meal costs; let alone the costs of school materials or transportation. CCTE provides 45 to 50 TL monthly but school expenses are 251 TL monthly according to Eğitim-Bir-Sen Report (Eğitim Bir Sen, 2019). Social assistance mentality in this case is mostly based on cash transfer and there is not much social insurance, labour market programmes or any other poverty alleviation policies in plans which would create longer term solutions.

Although there are efforts in these 10 years and the situation got improved but there are still thousands of out of school Syrian children, and apart from the National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour of MoLSS of Turkey; no comprehensive, multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional policy has been encountered during the policy analysis of the thesis. Most of the UN policies and programmes, for example, focus on shorter term solutions such as providing cash assistance or training public official for capacity building purpose. On the other hand, the EU has been a major actor from the beginning with the funds provided, but the EU agencies such as ECHO have no detailed policy making impact in poverty alleviation and they play role in only general policy decisions. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy on elimination of child labour is needed to be developed and implemented by the UN, Turkish government, and other actors in the field.

As stated, MoLSS of Turkey has comprehensive and cross-sectional policies on combating child labour, but more monitoring needed, and they should act upon those strategies. The only monitoring report they published is from mid-year 2020 and no other monitoring report since then; and the only monitoring report published do not include concrete solutions and actions in line with the strategies defined.

EU and UN should focus more on inter-sectoral policies to include children in poverty into education. Conditional cash transfer programmes for education might not be enough to solve the poverty related problems. Moreover, poverty causes children to enter labour market instead of going to school, so more poverty alleviation strategies should be defined by the UN. Lastly, the UN agencies in Turkey should also do more than organising workshops and a few day trainings for the relevant government officials; but should work on establishing stronger advocacy and monitoring mechanisms in terms of poverty alleviation policies.

Legal framework should be strengthened to monitor and eliminate the child labour both for local and migrant children. Labour laws often fail to protect the value and conditions of child labour even though it is forbidden to employ children before the age of 15 according to Turkish Labour Law. There should be a better system of

penalties for those who benefit from precarious child labour; and the inspection systems of the relevant government bodies should be strengthened.

A better and stronger coordination mechanism of the all actors is needed. For example, the Presidency of Turkey has a FRiT office to follow and monitor how FRiT funds are spent, but they are not doing anything more than receiving reports on the projects quarterly. Furthermore, more dialogue is needed between the government and organisations working in the field during the policy making process.

There is a massive need to establish system for the reliable data on migrant child labour and data/information on out of school children. Studies conducted locally by the different actors are not enough to grasp the whole picture. Officials need to conduct all-inclusive studies to provide more concrete data on the issue nationwide for results-based policy making.

One of the most important issues to consider within the subject is that compensation education programmes should be extended to include more disadvantaged Syrian children who are at risk of dropping school.

As underlined many times before during the thesis, thousands of Syrian children are at risk of being a lost generation due to the obstacles to education. Efforts to include out of school Syrian children mostly fail when it comes to reaching the most vulnerable out – the children in extreme poverty leading them to work instead of studying. Although the official actors, national and international organisations have worked tremendously over the last 10 years to include more Syrian children into education domain in Turkey, policies and strategies do not suffice to overcome the problem fully. Therefore, solutions should be sought thoroughly, including all the political actors into extensive and multi-sectoral policy making.

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A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Nisan 2011'de Suriye'de yaşanan iç çatışmalar nedeniyle binlerce insan hayatını kaybetmiş, milyonlarca insan da krizden etkilenmiştir. Çatışma sonucunda çok sayıda insan Türkiye'nin de aralarında bulunduğu komşu ülkelere sığınmıştır. Türkiye'de şu anda 3,5 milyondan fazla Suriyeli göçmen yaşamakta ve bu da Türkiye'yi dünyanın en büyük göçmen barındıran ülkesi yapmaktadır. Çatışmanın ilk yıllarında Suriyelilere yönelik politika önerileri kısa vadeliydi, çünkü bu göçmenlerin kısa sürede ülkelerine dönecekleri tahmin edilmekteydi. Bu nedenle başlangıçtaki politikalar yalnızca bu göçmenlerin güvenliğini ve temel ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasına yönelik olmuştur. Ancak, akının ilk birkaç yılından sonra, eğitim politikaları da dahil olmak üzere uzun vadeli, entegrasyon odaklı planlar ve düzenlemeler uygulamaya konulmuştur.

Göç, çok nedenli bir toplumsal olgudur ve hem göçmenler hem de göç alan ülkeler açısından çok çeşitli etkileri bulunmaktadır. Göçmenlerin yerleştikleri yerlerde uyum içinde yaşamlarını sürdürebilmelerinin sağlanması çok önemlidir ve bu da temel hak ve hizmetlere erişimlerinin sağlanmasıyla gerçekleşmektedir. Bu anlamda, göçmen çocukların topluma uyum sağlamaları ve en önemlisi geleceklerini güvence altına almaları için, hem kendilerine hem de içinde yaşadıkları topluma fayda sağlamaları adına eğitime erişimleri oldukça önemlidir. Eğitim yalnızca geleceklerindeki finansal gelir araçları değil; aynı zamanda bireylere toplumda özgürlük, özgüven ve statü kazandırır. Dezavantajlı gruplar için eğitim olanaklarına erişim, nesiller arası yoksulluk döngüsünü kırmanın tek yolu olabileceği ve hayatı daha onurlu bir şekilde yaşamaları için tek yol olabileceği için daha da kritiktir.

Eğitim, temel bir insan hakkıdır ve bireysel yetkilendirmeyi, özgürlüğü ve gelişmeyi teşvik ettiği için diğer insan haklarının uygulanması için birincil öneme sahiptir. İnsan Hakları Evrensel Beyannamesi 26. Maddede şöyle belirtilmektedir;

Herkesin eğitim hakkı vardır. Eğitim, en azından ilk ve temel aşamalarda ücretsiz olmalıdır. İlköğretim zorunlu olmalıdır. (UN, 1948)

Ne yazık ki, çok sayıda çocuk hala tüm dünyada eğitim alanından dışlanmaktadır. UNESCO'ya göre, yaklaşık 258 milyon genç ve çocuk 2018'deki eğitim yılı için hala okula gitmemekte ve eğitim fırsatlarının dışında kalmaktadır. Göçmen çocuklar okulu bırakma veya hiç başlamama riski en yüksek olan gruplardan biridir. Uyruğu, hukuki durumu veya etnik kökeni ne olursa olsun her çocuğun eğitim hakkı olmasına rağmen, bunun uygulamaları farklı bir gerçeklik sergilemektedir. 2015 yılında 28 milyondan fazla çocuk savaş veya çatışma nedeniyle yerinden edilmiştir ve bunların 27 milyonu okula gitmemiştir (UNICEF, 2017).

Türkiye'de 1,6 milyondan fazla Suriyeli çocuk yaşamaktadır. Bu çocukların eğitime erişimlerinin ve katılımlarının sağlanmasına yönelik çalışmalar Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ile diğer ulusal ve uluslararası kuruluşların destekleriyle devam etmektedir. Ancak 2016 yılına kadar okul çağındaki Suriyeli çocukların sadece %37,28'i okula devam etmekteydi ve 2021'de bu sayı %60'ı ne yazık ki geçememiştir. 2014 yılından sonra eğitimi kapsayan Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği ile Suriyelilere eğitim hizmeti verilmesi hızlanmış, bu kapsamda birçok program/ hizmet geliştirilmiş ve sunulmuştur. Buna rağmen, krizin üzerinden 10 yıl geçse dahi, daha fazla Suriyeli çocuğu eğitim alanına dahil etmeye yönelik pek çok politika ve program hala çoğunlukla göçle ilgili engellere odaklanmaktadır. Ancak sorun daha derinde, çoğunlukla çocuk işçiliğinden kaynaklanan sosyo-ekonomik engellerde yatmaktadır. Zorunlu göç, tahmin edilebileceği gibi dezavantajlı kesimlerin işini daha da zorlaştırmıştır. Bu nedenle, eğitime erişim sorunuyla mücadelede temel dayanak olmasa da göç odağının da dikkate alınması önemlidir. Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimleri ile ilgili pek çok çalışma, dil ve entegrasyon sorunları gibi göçle ilgili engellere odaklanmaktadır; ama sorun bundan daha büyüktür: yoksulluktan kaynaklanan çocuk işçiliği.

Bu tez, Suriyeli çocukların Türkiye'deki ulusal eğitim sistemine dahil edilme ve dışlanma mekanizmaları ile eğitim politikaları ve programlarının başta çocuk işçiliği olmak üzere katılım engelleriyle mücadelede etkili ve kapsayıcı olup olmadığını

incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma boyunca, yoksulluk ve ekonomik zorlukların eğitime erişimi nasıl etkilediği; özellikle temel haklara ve hizmetlere zamanında erişim konusunda göçün dışlanma ve içerme dinamiklerini ne ölçüde derinleştirdiği; Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişim düzeyi; eğitimlerinin önündeki engellerin neler olduğu; çocuk işçiliğinin katılım üzerinde ne ölçüde etkisi olduğu; ve eğitim politikalarının bu alandaki ihtiyaçları nasıl karşıladığı (ya da karşılamadığı) gibi konular ele alınmıştır.

Bu tezin temel amacı, Suriyeli çocukların okullaşma sorunlarının arkasındaki temel nedenleri keşfetmek ve eğitime erişimde ana sorun olarak çocuk işçiliği arasında bir bağlantı kurmak için kapsamlı bir eğitim politikası ve program analizinin yanı sıra Suriyeli çocukların durumsal bir analizini sunmaktır. Bunu yaparken öncelikle sosyal içerme ve dışlama kavramları; temel haklar ve hizmetler; göç; sosyo-ekonomik dışlanma, çocuk işçiliği ve eğitim hususları tartışılmaktadır. İkinci olarak, sorunun kökünden kavranabilmesi için Suriyelilerin hukuki, sosyal ve ekonomik açılardan durum analizine yer verilmektedir. Üçüncü olarak, Türk hükümetinin Suriyeli çocuklara yönelik eğitim hizmetleri gözden geçirilmekte ve analiz edilmektedir. Dördüncü olarak, hem Türk Hükümeti'nin hem de uluslararası kuruluşların eğitim politikaları, programları ve stratejileri incelenmektedir. Son olarak, yayın ve araştırmalardan elde edilen ampirik bulgular ve sonuçlar sunulmaktadır.

“Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocukların eğitime dahil edilmesi, mevcut politika oluşturma yoluyla ne ölçüde sağlanabilir?” araştırma sorusuna cevap verebilmek için araştırma, büyük ölçüde hem nitel hem de nicel verileri içeren ikincil verilerden ve bilgilerden yararlanmaktadır. Politika analizi metodolojisi esas olarak ulusal ve uluslararası yetkililerin Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocuklara yönelik eğitim politikaları, stratejileri ve programları hakkında derinlemesine analiz sağlamak için kullanılmaktadır. Ayrıca belge analizi, sosyal içerme, temel hak ve hizmetlere erişim, yasal belgeler, uluslararası anlaşmalar ve göçün sosyo-ekonomik durum analizine ilişkin rapor ve makalelerin incelenmesi yoluyla teze büyük ölçüde katkı sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca araştırma, akademisyenler, hükümetler, Birleşmiş Milletler Ajansları, STK'lar ve INGO'lar tarafından yayınlanan çok sayıda ikincil nitel ve nicel veriden

yararlanmaktadır. Bu çerçevede araştırma, hükümetler, Avrupa Birliği ve Birleşmiş Milletler'in yıllık ve tematik raporların; 1951 Mülteci Sözleşmesi ve 1967 Protokolünün, İnsan Hakları Evrensel Beyannamesi, 6458 Sayılı Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu ve Türkiye Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği gibi yasal belgelerin analizine yer vermektedir. Ayrıca politika belgeleri, ulusal ve uluslararası sivil toplum kuruluşlarının raporları ile TÜİK ve diğer kurumların istatistikleri ve eğitimle ilgili ikincil veriler ayrıntılı olarak incelenmektedir.

Araştırma, Türkiye'deki Suriyeli çocukların eğitim alanındaki uygulamalarına ve eğitime erişimlerine ilişkin kapsamlı bir durum ve politika analizidir. Araştırma, ülkelerinde devam eden çatışmalar nedeniyle Türkiye'den aileleriyle birlikte kaçan Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimlerini, kentsel çocuk işçiliğinin eğitimde içerme ve dışlanma üzerindeki etkisini; ve bunların dahil edilmesine yönelik ulusal politikaları kapsamaktadır. Bu nedenle, çalışmanın zaman odak noktası 2011 ve 2021 yılları arasındadır; mekansal/bölgesel odak ülke çapındadır; kurumsal odak, başta Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı olmak üzere kamu kurum ve kuruluşları, başta UNICEF ve Avrupa Birliği olmak üzere uluslararası kuruluşlardır; son olarak, analitik odak, çocuk işçiliği ve eğitime katılımı kapsamaktadır.

Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişiminin önündeki engeller literatürde farklı açılardan incelenmekte ve bu engellerin nedenleri farklı yayın, rapor ve akademik makalelerde sunulmaktadır. Suriyeli çocukların eğitimden dışlanma nedenleri bu yayınlarda genellikle uyum sorunları, fiziksel erişim, bilinçsizlik vb. olarak sıralanmaktadır. Çok az sayıda yayın, eğitime erişimde sorun olarak çocuk evlilikleri ve çocuk işçiliğinden bahsetmektedir. Çocuk yaşta evlilikler de Türkiye'deki Suriyeli topluluktaki özellikle kız çocukları için endişe verici bir sorundur, ancak bu tezin kapsamı, okula gitmeme nedeni olarak çocuk işçiliği sorununu kapsamaktadır. Ayrıca Suriyelilerin eğitime erişim sorunu üniversite düzeyinde de yaşanmaktadır, ancak tez çocukları, yani 18 yaş altı Suriyelileri kapsamaktadır.

Tezin sınırlılıkları ile ilgili olarak; ilk sınırlılık, bu tematik alanda kavram ve tartışmaların çok geniş olması ve tartışmaların çok yeni olmasıdır. Bu nedenle,

kapsamlı literatürde bir eksiklik vardır: bu konudaki mevcut çalışmaların çoğu, yoksulluk ve çocuk işçiliği gibi daha yapısal sorunlara odaklanan bu araştırmanın aksine, göçle ilgili dışlanma sorunlarına odaklanmaktadır. Literatür kapsamlı bir teorik arka plan sağlamak için yeterli olmasa dahi, tez kapsamında daha derine bakmaya çalışılmaktadır. İkinci sınırlama, pandemi saha çalışmalarını zorladığı ve hedef grubun çevrimiçi görüşme yapmak için uygun grup olmayabileceği için COVID-19 önlemleri nedeniyle Suriyeli çocuklar ve ebeveynleri ile görüşülememesidir. Bununla birlikte, deneysel olarak hipotezin arkasında durmak için mevcut saha çalışmalarından çeşitli röportajlar ve resmi yayınlardan ikincil veriler kullanılmıştır.

Tezin incelediği tematik alana gelecek olursak; çocuk işçiliği ve eğitime erişim sorunu arasındaki ilişkiyi daha da derinleştirmek bu tezin ana eksenindedir, çünkü Suriyeli çocukların okul dışı kalma sorununun temel nedeninin yoksulluktan kaynaklanan çocuk işçiliği olduğu savunulmaktadır. Bu tez, ülke çapında gerçekleştirilen birçok saha çalışmasından yararlanılarak, farklı şehirlerden Suriyeli çocukların ve ebeveynlerinin sesleri sunulmaktadır. Şehirdeki kayıt dışı pazar ne yazık ki çok büyük olduğundan, göçmen çocuk işçiliğinin de yaygın olması nedeniyle tez kapsamında faydalanılan saha çalışmalarının çoğu İstanbul'dandır.

Haziran 2021 itibariyle; Türkiye'de 771.458 Suriyeli çocuk örgün eğitime kayıtlıdır ve yaklaşık 400.000'i halen çeşitli nedenlerle sistemden dışlanmaktadır. Literatürde dışlanan (veya okula gitmeyen) Suriyeli çocuklarla ilgili birçok neden sunulmakta ve bunlar okul yer sıkıntısı, dil ve uyum sorunları, ulaşım ve okula fiziki erişimdeki engeller, kayıt durumu, masraflar, okul ortamı olarak sıralanmaktadır. Bu engellerin üstesinden gelinmesine yönelik politika değerlendirmeleri, esas olarak, okul altyapısını iyileştirmek; tutarlı kalite, resmi alternatifler tasarlamak; ek vardiyalar oluşturmak gibi erişim seçeneklerinde çözüm bulmaktadır. Ayrıca konuyla ilgili pek çok çalışma ve yayında erişim (çok genel bir kavram olarak), entegrasyon, kaliteli eğitim, kurumlar arası ortaklık, toplum katılımı, programların izlenmesi ve değerlendirilmesi soruna çözüm olarak önerilmektedir. Bu sorunların listelenmesi, göç odaklı sorunların çözümüne yönelik politikaların sunulmasını takip etmektedir. Ülkeye yoğun bir Suriyeli akını ile Türkiye'nin göçmen çocukları eğitim sistemine

dahil etmek için eğitim kapasitesini iyileştirmesi ve genişletmesi gerekmekteydi. Bu nedenle Avrupa Birliği ve Birleşmiş Milletler ajanslarının desteğiyle bu alanda birçok gelişme sağlanmıştır. Ancak, 10 yılın ardından Suriyeli çocukların hala %35,6'sı okul dışı kalmaktadır. Ayrıca çocukların eğitime erişim oranlarını analiz ederken ağırlıklı olarak okullaşma oranlarını görmekteyiz, yani bir çocuğun okula kayıt olması istatistiklere dahil olmak için yeterli olmaktadır; ancak bu istatistikler okulu bırakma oranlarını içermemektedir. Bu nedenle, istatistiklere dahil edilenlerden daha fazla çocuğun okula gitmediğini varsayabiliriz. Ne yazık ki, Suriyeli çocukların okulu bırakma oranlarına ve kaç Suriyeli çocuğun gerçekten okula gidemediğine dair yeterli veri veya istatistik bulunmamaktadır.

2015 yılında başlayan eğitim döneminde Suriyeli çocukların okullaşma oranı %37,28 iken 2017 yılında başlayan dönemde bu sayı %62,52'ye yükselmiştir. Ancak, Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimindeki temel sorun, çocuk işçiliğinden kaynaklanan maddi zorluklar ve yoksulluktan kaynaklanmaktadır ve bunların üstesinden gelinmesi daha zordur. Bu sorun giderek artan bir endişe kaynağı haline gelmiştir ve Suriyeli çocukların eğitime dahil edilmesinin önünde çocuk işçiliği büyük bir engel oluşturmaktadır. Çocuk işçiliği, Suriyeli çocukları ve onların gelecek beklentilerini ciddi şekilde etkileyen endişe verici bir sorun teşkil etmektedir. Bu tez kapsamında incelenen saha çalışmaları, istatistikler ve ikincil verilere göre, göçle ilgili engeller, mücadeleleri göçten kaynaklanan sorunların ötesinde olan yoksul Suriyeli çocukların %35,6'sının dahil edilmesinde anlamlı bir etkisi bulunmamaktadır.

Bilindiği gibi Türkiye'de çocuk işçi çalıştırmak yasa dışıdır. Ancak tüm yasal önlem ve düzenlemelere rağmen halen okul çağında olan binlerce çocuk işgücü piyasasında yer almaya devam etmektedir. Örneğin, Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) tarafından 2019 yılında yapılan Çocuk İşçiliği Araştırması sonuçlarına göre 5-17 yaş arası ekonomik bir faaliyette çalışan çocuk sayısı 720.000 olup, bunların 34,3'ü eğitimine devam etmemektedir. Çalışma nedenleri arasında ilk sırayı %35,9 ile "hanenin ekonomik faaliyetine yardımcı olmak", %34,4 ile "iş öğrenmek, meslek sahibi olmak" ve %23,2 ile "hane gelirine katkıda bulunmak" izlemiştir. Çocukların yalnızca %6,4'ü kendi ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için çalışmaktadır. İş öğrenmek ve meslek sahibi olmak

için çalıştığını ifade eden çocukların oranı 2012'de gerçekleşen bir önceki araştırmada %15,20 iken %34,4'e yükselmiştir. Bu durum, eğitime erişimdeki eşitsizliğin derinleşmesi, eğitimin piyasalaşması ve yoğun işsizlik sonucu eğitime yapılan yatırımın istihdama katılım olanağı sağlayacağı inancının azalmasıyla ilgili olabilir. Özellikle yoksul hanelerdeki çocukların kaliteli eğitime erişimleri düşüktür ve eğitim maliyetleri yüksektir. Durum büyük olasılıkla çalışan Suriyeli çocuklar için paralel eğilimler gösterse de, anketin 2011 yılındaki iç savaştan sonra Türkiye'den kaçan Suriyeli haneleri ve onların çocuklarını kapsayıp kapsamadığı anket sonuçlarında belirtilmemiştir.

Suriyeli göçmenlerin çalışma alanları bölgelere göre farklılık gösterse de çalıştıkları sektörler genellikle çöp toplama, tekstil ve dokuma sanayi, oto tamir, boya ve badana gibi çok fazla sermaye veya beceri gerektirmeyen bağımsız işletmelerdir. Buna paralel olarak, Suriyeli çocuk işçiler bu sektörlerde, çoğunlukla güvencesiz koşullarda çalışmaktadır. Yetişkin işçiler, yerli veya göçmen, çocuklara kıyasla bazı kişisel haklar bağlamında pazarlık gücüne sahip kişilerdir. Çocuklar ise bu haklara sahip değildir ve her türlü tehdit ve riske karşı korunmasızdır. Çocuk işçiliğinin birincil nedeni yoksulluktur ancak göçmen olmak, vatandaşı olmadıkları ülkelerde yaşayan göçmen çocukların daha dezavantajlı olması sorunu fazlasıyla derinleştirmektedir. Kayıt dışı işgücü piyasası hiyerarşisinin en altındakilerin göçmen çocuklar olduğu söylenebilir. Suriyeli göçmen çocuklar, göçmen çocuk işçiliğinin giderek artan ucuz ve güvencesiz işgücü talebine odaklandığı alanlardan biri olarak kayıt dışı Türkiye ekonomisi ve işgücü piyasası için büyük bir sorun haline gelmiştir.

Pek çok Suriyeli çocuk, ya Suriye'de ya da Türkiye'de okula gitse dahi, çalışmak için okulu bırakmak zorunda kalmaktadırlar. Tez kapsamında incelenen saha çalışmaları dikkate alındığında, çalışan çocukların tamamına yakını çok yoksul ailelerin çocuklarıdır ve çalışmaktan başka çareleri yoktur. Bu çocukların çoğunluğu tekstil sektöründe çalışmaktadır. İstanbul ve İzmir, mevcut sanayi ve ticaret hacmi nedeniyle okula gitmeyen çocukların çokça çalıştığı illerdir. Çalışan çocuklar, birçok sömürü biçimiyle (düşük ücret, uzun çalışma saatleri, büyük ve tehlikeli makineler kullanmak gibi küçük bedenleri için ağır işler) ile karşı karşıya kalmakta, genellikle sağlıklarını

olumsuz yönde etkileyen çok kötü koşullarda, sadece ayda birkaç yüz lira kazanmak için çalışmaktadırlar. Fiziksel, ruhsal ve mental gelişimlerine ket vurarak eğitimden de uzak kalmalarına neden olan çocuk işçiliği; bu çocukların kronik yoksulluk içinde kalma riskini de doğurmaktadır. Çocuk işçiliğinin az gelişmiş veya gelişmekte olan ülkelerde yaygın bir sorun olduğu da açıktır. Türkiye'de çocuk işçiliği sorununun çözümüne yönelik kısa vadeli politikalar planlanmakta ve uygulanmaktadır, ancak mevzuattaki eksiklikler veya mevzuatın etkin bir şekilde uygulanmaması bu sorunun tamamen önüne geçilmesini engellemektedir. Türkiye'de uzun yıllardır devam eden çocuk işçiliği, Suriyeli çocuklarla daha da artmaktadır. Düşük ücretli, uzun süreli çalışma ortamlarında çalışmaya zorlanan, iş güvencesi olmayan çocuklar; hem bedensel hem de zihinsel gelişimlerinde riskler barındırmakta ve taşıyamadıkları sorumlulukların altına girmekte; istismar ve ihmale karşı daha savunmasız hale gelmektedirler.

Suriyeli çocuklar MEB düzenlemeleri ile yasal olarak Türkiye'de eğitim alabilmektedir ancak süregelen yoksulluk bu alana ulaşmalarına engel olmaktadır. Yine tezin çerçevesinde incelenen saha çalışmaları ve istatistikler düşünüldüğünde çalışan çocukların hemen hemen hepsinin eğitime erişimi mümkün olmamaktadır. Saha çalışmalarında hem çocuklar hem ebeveynleri ekonomik sıkıntılar nedeniyle çocuklarının okula gitmek yerine çalıştıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bir diğer göze çarpan bilgi de yoksul ailelerin çoğunluğunun Suriye’de de yoksul ve düşük vasıflı işlerde çalıştıkları ve eğitim düzeylerinin düşük olduğudur. Dolayısıyla çocuk işçiliği ile sonuçlanan yoksulluk, göç nedeniyle derinleşse de daha sistematik ve kuşaklar arası süregelen bir problem olmaktadır. Bu çocukların örgün ve hatta yaygın eğitim olanaklarından mahrum olmaları şaşırtıcı değildir. MEB istatistiklerine göre Suriyeli çocukların okullaşma oranı 2016 yılından bu yana %60'ın üzerine çıkmamıştır. Bunun en büyük nedenlerinden biri çocuk işçiliğidir çünkü sorun sadece göç meselesinden çok daha yapısaldır.

Tüm bunlara ek olarak, COVID-19 nedeniyle 2020'de başlayan uzaktan eğitim, dezavantajlı göçmen çocukların durumunu daha da kötüleştirdi çünkü birçoğu çevrimiçi eğitim için fiziksel araçlara sınırlı erişime sahiptir. Ayrıca, en savunmasız

gruplardaki ve uzaktan eğitime erişimi olmayan çocuklar, okula geri dönmeme ve hatta çocuk yaşta evliliğe ve çocuk işçiliğine zorlanma riskiyle karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. UNHCR tarafından yayınlanan bir rapor, tüm ülkelerdeki çocukların COVID-19'un eğitimleri üzerindeki etkileriyle mücadele etmesinde göçmen çocukların çok daha dezavantajlı olduğunu göstermektedir (UNHCR, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemisi nedeniyle alınan tedbirler kapsamında Türkiye'de de örgün eğitime ara verilmiş ve 23 Mart 2020 tarihinden itibaren uzaktan eğitime geçilmiş olup, eğitim, Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (EBA) üzerinden yürütülmektedir. Ancak sistemin TV, tablet veya bilgisayar gerektirmesi nedeniyle tüm öğrencilerin sisteme eşit erişimi olmamaktadır ve hanede okul çağındaki birden fazla çocuk olduğu durumlarda tüm çocukların bu donanıma sahip olmaması veya sınırlı erişimi olması sorunu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Teknolojik donanım eksikliği ve hane halkının büyük olması nedeniyle EBA'ya erişimi kısıtlanan en dezavantajlı gruplardan biri de Suriyeli çocuklardır. Salgının Suriyeli çocukların eğitime katılımı üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin yapılan bazı araştırmalarda göçmen çocukların yaklaşık yarısının evde yeterli teknik donanıma sahip olmadığı, sistemleri kullanma konusunda yeterli bilgiye sahip olmayan ailelerde yaşadıkları, dersleri takip etmekte zorluk yaşadıkları ve uzaktan eğitimden yararlanamadıkları belirtilmiştir (SGDD Göç Akademisi, 2020). Ayrıca COVID-19 öncesi dönemde okula devam eden çocukların %50'sinin şu anda eğitime erişemediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Maddi durum ne yazık ki Suriyeli çocukların eğitime erişimlerini uzaktan eğitim dönemlerinde de etkilemektedir. Yüz yüze eğitim başladığında bu çocukların eğitimlerine devam edip etmeyecekleri büyük bir sorudur ve eğitimde daha fazla çocuğu kaybetmemek için acilen harekete geçilmesi gerekmektedir.

Konuya ilişkin politika analizine gelecek olursak; Suriye krizinin başlangıcındaki çatışmalardan sonra Suriyelilerin ülkelerine dönmeleri beklendiği için çatışmanın ilk yıllarında Suriyeli çocukları Türk ulusal devlet okul sistemine dahil etme konusunda net bir niyet yoktu. İlk yıllarda Suriyeli çocuklara yönelik okullar öncelikle geçici barınma merkezlerinde kurulmuş, ancak sayıların artmasıyla birlikte Suriyeli nüfusun görece daha yüksek olduğu illerde geçici barınma merkezleri dışında okullar da açılmaya başlanmıştır. 2012 ve 2013 yıllarında geçici barınma merkezlerinde yaşayan

çocukların %60'ı okula kaydolurken, şehir merkezlerinde yaşayan çocukların sadece %14'ü okula devam etmiştir. Bu risk MEB'in de dikkatini çekmiş; sonrasında birçok politika geliştirilerek eğitim programlarına başlanmıştır. 2014 yılında, Suriyeli çocukların kendi ülkelerine dönmeden önce Türkiye'de geçirdikleri sürede eğitimlerine devam edebilmeleri için resmi olmayan okulların tamamı Geçici Eğitim Merkezleri (GEM) olarak akredite edilmiştir. Sonrasında Ağustos 2016'da MEB, tüm Suriyeli çocukların Türk devlet okullarına entegre edileceğini açıklamış ve 2020 yılına kadar GEM'leri kademeli olarak kapatma planlarını açıklamıştır.

Suriyeli çocuklara yönelik hem kamu hem de sosyal politikalar olan okullaşma politikaları, okula erişim, öğretmen veya ebeveyn eğitimi, akranlar arasında sosyal uyumun sağlanması vb. çözümleri merkeze almakta ve bunlar kuşkusuz değerli ilerlemeler olsa da, Suriyeli çocukların eğitimden dışlanmasıyla ilgili en büyük sorun yoksulluk sonucu çocuk işçiliğidir ve bunun çözümü sadece göç ve eğitim politikalarında bulunmayabilir. Türkiye'deki göçmenlere yönelik yoksulluğu azaltma politikaları ve stratejileri tartışılmalıdır. Sosyal yardım, sosyal güvence ve işgücü piyasası programlarından oluşan sosyal koruma ayağı Türkiye'de etkin olan tek ayağı sosyal yardımdır. Yoksulluk nedeniyle çocukları okula gitmeyen ailelere sağlanan sosyal yardımların uzun vadeli çözümler bulmaya yetmeyeceği açıktır. Örneğin Şartlı Eğitim Yardımı Programı, her ay çocuk başına sadece 45-50 lira sağlamaktadır ve ülkedeki mevcut ekonomik kriz ve enflasyon göz önüne alındığında, okul malzemeleri veya ulaşım masrafları bir yana, bu para günlük yemek masraflarına bile yetmeyecektir. Bu durumda sosyal yardım anlayışı daha çok nakit transferine dayalıdır ve planlarda daha uzun vadeli çözümler yaratacak sosyal sigorta, işgücü piyasası programları veya başka bir yoksulluk azaltma politikası bulunmamaktadır.

Aradan geçen 10 yılda konuya ilişkin çabalar olmasına ve durumun iyileşmesine rağmen halen okula gitmeyen binlerce Suriyeli çocuk vardır ve Türkiye ÇSGB'nin Çocuk İşçiliği ile Mücadele Ulusal Programı dışında; tezin politika analizi sırasında, kapsamlı, çok sektörlü ve çok boyutlu bir politikaya rastlanmamıştır. Örneğin, BM politika ve programlarının çoğu, nakit yardımı sağlamak veya kamu görevlilerini kapasite geliştirme amacıyla eğitmek gibi daha kısa vadeli çözümlere

odaklanmaktadır. Öte yandan AB, sağlanan fonlarla başından beri önemli bir aktör olmuştur, ancak ECHO gibi AB kurumlarının ayrıntılı bir politika oluşturma etkisi yoktur ve önemli politika kararlarında rol oynarlar.

Belirtildiği gibi, Türkiye ÇSGB'nin çocuk işçiliği ile mücadele konusunda kapsamlı ve kesitsel politikaları vardır, ancak daha fazla izleme yapılması gerekmektedir ve bu stratejilere göre hareket etmelidirler. Yayınladıkları tek izleme raporu 2020 yılının ortalarına aittir ve o zamandan beri başka bir izleme raporu bulunmamasının yanı sıra; yayınlanan tek izleme raporu ise tanımlanan stratejiler doğrultusunda somut çözümler ve eylemler içermemektedir.

AB ve BM, yoksulluk içindeki çocukları eğitime dahil etmek için sektörler arası politikalara daha fazla odaklanmalıdır. Eğitime yönelik şartlı eğitim yardımı programları, yoksullukla ilgili sorunları çözmek için yeterli olmayabilir. Suriyeli çocuklar için Şartlı Eğitim Yardımı Programı aylık 45 ila 50 TL arası yardım sağlarken, Eğitim-Bir-Sen raporuna göre Türkiye’de okul giderleri aylık 251 TL'dir (Eğitim Bir Sen, 2019).

Üstelik yoksulluk, çocukların okula gitmek yerine işgücü piyasasına girmesine neden olmaktadır, bu nedenle BM tarafından daha fazla yoksullukla mücadele stratejileri tanımlanmalıdır. Türkiye'deki BM Kuruluşları da ilgili hükümet yetkilileri için çalıştaylar ve birkaç günlük eğitimler düzenlemekten fazlasını yapmalı; daha güçlü savunuculuk ve izleme mekanizmaları oluşturmaya çalışmalıdır.

Hem yerel hem de göçmen çocuklar için çocuk işçiliğinin izlenmesi ve ortadan kaldırılması için yasal çerçeve güçlendirilmelidir. Türk İş Kanunu'na göre 15 yaşından önce çocukların çalıştırılması yasak olmasına rağmen, iş kanunları genellikle çocuk işçiliğinin değerini ve koşullarını korumamaktadır. Güvencesiz çocuk işçiliğinden yararlananlar için daha iyi bir ceza sistemi olmalıdır ve ilgili devlet kurumlarının teftiş sistemleri güçlendirilmelidir.

Daha iyi ve daha güçlü bir koordinasyon mekanizmasına ihtiyaç vardır. Örneğin, Cumhurbaşkanlığı'nın FRiT fonlarının nasıl harcandığını takip eden ve denetleyen bir

FRiT ofisi bulunmaktadır, ancak üç ayda bir projeler hakkında rapor almanın dışında çok fazla bir faaliyeti bulunmamaktadır. Ayrıca, politika oluşturma sürecinde hükümet ve sahada çalışan kuruluşlar arasında daha fazla diyaloga ihtiyaç vardır.

Göçmen çocuk işçiliğine ilişkin güvenilir veriler ve okula gitmeyen çocuklara ilişkin veriler/bilgiler için bir sistem kurulmasına büyük ihtiyaç vardır. Farklı aktörler tarafından yerel olarak yürütülen çalışmalar resmin tamamını kavramak için yeterli değildir. İhtiyaçların tespiti ve buna paralel sahadaki gereklilikleri karşılayacak bilgilerin üretilmesi adına yetkililerin konuyla ilgili ülke çapında daha somut veriler sunması için kapsamlı çalışmalar yapması gerekmektedir.

Bu konuda üzerinde durulması gereken en önemli konulardan biri de telafi eğitim programlarının okulu bırakma riski olan daha dezavantajlı Suriyeli çocukları da kapsayacak şekilde genişletilmesi gerektiğidir.

Türkiye'de okul çağındaki Suriyeli çocukların sadece %64,44'ü eğitime erişebilmektedir. Suriyeli çocukların yasal eğitim hakları olmasına rağmen, okullaşmanın getirdiği ekonomik yük ve çocuk işçiliğinin yol açtığı yoksulluk, çocukların temel okula gitme hakkını engellemektedir. Uzun çalışma saatleri, düşük ücret ya da başka bir nedenle çocuklar daha iyi koşullara kavuşamayacaklarını fark etmekte ve birçoğu okula geri dönme arzusu geliştirse de çok geç olmaktadır. Ayrıca COVID-19 pandemisi, dezavantajlı Suriyeli çocukların çevrimiçi eğitime erişimini zorlaştırmakta ve halihazırda kayıtlı olan Suriyeli çocukları kaybetme riski bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, Türkiye'de yaşayan Suriyeli çocukların okullaşma sorunlarının aşılabilmesi için daha kapsamlı ve çok sektörlü politika yapımı önemli bir gereklilik haline gelmektedir. Binlerce Suriyeli çocuk, eğitimin önündeki engeller nedeniyle kayıp bir nesil olma tehlikesiyle karşı karşıyadır. Okula gitmeyen Suriyeli çocukları eğitime dahil etme çabaları, iş en savunmasız kesimlere, yani aşırı yoksulluk içindeki çocuklara ulaşmak söz konusu olduğunda çoğunlukla başarısız olmakta ve bu durum onları okumak yerine çalışmaya yönlendirmektedir. Resmi aktörler, ulusal ve uluslararası kuruluşlar son 10 yılda Türkiye'de daha fazla Suriyeli çocuğu eğitim alanına dahil etmek için muazzam çalışmalar yapsa da, politika ve stratejiler sorunu

tam olarak aşmak için yeterli değildir. Bu nedenle, tüm siyasi aktörleri kapsamlı ve çok sektörlü politika oluşturmaya dahil ederek kapsamlı bir şekilde çözüm aranmalıdır.

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