



MATILDE

Migration Impact Assessment to Enhance
Integration and Local Development in
European Rural and Mountain Regions

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS BY MEANS OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND COMPANIES' STUDIES: TURKEY

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1. INTRODUCTION:

In 2019, 8.609 work permits, 1119 to female and 7.490 to male immigrants, were given in Bursa. All of them are for definite period and for dependent jobs (<https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/63117/yabanciizin2019.pdf>). They all work in the formal sector, but we cannot reach the details of these work permits. In terms of the number of work permits given to foreigners by type economic activity on the national level, 361 work permits are given for crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities, 2 are for forestry and logging, in total 363 out of 145,232 work permits given in the agriculture sector. Thus, we may estimate that migrants who are employed in the agriculture sector are mainly working in the informal sector.

The number of registered Syrians are 179.201 in Bursa. The number of work permit owning migrants, on the other hand, is just 8.609. And we don't know how many of them are Syrians. So in our field research, even though our theoretical focus was the migrants in general, people usually understood Syrians (or "the Balkan migrants" to a smaller extent) whenever we asked them about migrants.

Karacabey

At the local level (Karacabey) our initial aim was to reach food factories operating in Karacabey. We had heard that they might be employing a considerable number of Syrian migrants. For that purpose we contacted several factories. One of them was a factory producing paddy and fodder. The human resources official of the company told us that they had no migrant employees and could not be of help. The second factory we contacted was a producer of milker machines. The person in charge told us that they don't employ immigrants as a principle and that the same holds for other factories in the region. We also tried to contact three of the biggest food companies in Turkey which had factories in Karacabey but they did not respond to our persistent mails and phone calls. So the only success we had in this initial endeavor was with an integrated plant producing cows, baits and raw milk. We interviewed with the human resources manager of the company (**WP4TRB001**). The manager confirmed that they did not have any Syrian employers even though they had some Bulgarian migrants who came to Turkey in 1989. He explained that it was mostly because the Syrians refrained from applying thinking that they would be rejected anyhow.

At this point it became clear that it would be very difficult to reach either Syrian workers or employers in Karacabey. We already knew that the majority of Syrian migrants in Karacabey were seasonal workers who were employed in the fields and stayed in the region from April to November. However it turned out that even if there were permanent migrants in Karacabey they mostly work in Bursa where job opportunities are greater.

One last chance was to try to reach the small shopkeepers in Karacabey. We first contacted the craftsman's association for Karacabey coffee makers, cooks, meatball shopkeepers and dessert shopkeepers (Karacabey Kahveciler, Aşçılar, Köfteciler, Gazozcular ve Tatlıcılar Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Odası). The person in charge explained that even if there had been any Syrian employees in those shops they would probably have been sacked because of the covid-19 pandemics. We also contacted the

craftsman's association for Karacabey Tailors (Karacabey Terziler vb. Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Odası). They said they had a few Syrian tailors but they do not communicate much because they don't speak Turkish.

Bursa – Vişne Street

So we turned our attention from the local area to the region. Bursa is known to have some districts in which Syrian workers and enterprises are heavily concentrated. We hoped that if we visited those places we could talk with the owners, employees and the customers more easily. Our first destination was Vişne Street along which textile firms producing infant clothing have concentrated. We had five in-depth interviews with people from this sector. The first is with the owner of a manufacturing firm (**WP4TRB002**). He said that they had employed Syrian workers in the past but they all quit and set up their own firms. He said he does business with migrants in the subsidiary industry but currently has no employees.

The second interviewee was the Turkish owner of an infant textile shop (**WP4TRB003**). This was a two-storey retail shop with seven employees. The owner said that they used to employ Syrian workers in the past but due to cultural conflicts they stopped hiring them. Another reason for this decision, he added, was that Syrians aim to open their own shops and therefore quit the job as soon as they feel they are ready for it.

(**WP4TRB004**) was a smaller shop on the same street with a Syrian owner and a single Syrian employee. The owner explained that he set up his own firm after having worked at similar shops.

The last company was a big garment company with 136 employees. The company manager (**WP4TRB005**) explained that they had eight Syrian and several Meshketian Turkish employees. We could conduct a very short interview with the only Turkish speaking Syrian employee (**WP4TRB006**).

Bursa Chamber of Grocers

As we did in Karacabey, we tried to use the artisan's associations to reach small shops. First we tried the Chamber of Tailors Drapers Clothiers and Hatters (Bursa Terzi Kumaşçı Elbiseci ve Şapkacılar Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Odası). However, the secretary of the chamber explained that even though they have a few members they are very timid and very difficult to communicate with. So we tried the Bursa Chamber of Grocers (Bursa Bakkallar Esnaf Odası). The chairman told us that they had about 200 Syrian members and that he could arrange a meeting with 10 of them. However, only one of them showed up at the meeting. We interviewed with the Syrian grocery store owner (**WP4TRB007**), a Syrian accountant (**WP4TRB008**) and the chairman of the Chamber (**WP4TRB009**).

Bursa – Çarşamba Street

Çarşamba Street, famous for hosting only Syrian shops, was always a last resort for us. Almost all the shops on this street are owned by Syrian migrants and all the shop signs are in Arabic. Most of the employees and the customers are Syrian migrants and very few of them speak Turkish. During our interviews with migrants we found out that language barrier was a very important problem. So we decided to get help from our local partner Hayata Destek Derneği which provided us with an interpreter. We visited 16 shops in total. People in 5 of them refused to participate in the interviews. The remaining 11 shops and the interviewees are listed below.

WP4TRB010. A stationary shop with two partners. It is close to a primary school and sells stationary equipment, decoration materials and toys. It had no official employees but the son of one of the partners was helping them with the cash register. He said he helped them now and then but could be fined if caught by the authorities. We interviewed with one of the partners.

WP4TRB011. A small döner shop. It had two employees: one preparing the döner kebab and the other his apprentice. The owner was not available so we interviewed with one of the employees.

WP4TRB012. A mobile phone repair shop. The person we interviewed explained that he had a PhD in biology in Syria and was about to start working in the shop which was not officially active yet.

WP4TRB013. A shop helping Syrians/foreigners in visa applications. It had four employees. They opened the shop at its current location because there had been a Migration Management office nearby before.

WP4TRB014. A small restaurant with three employees.

WP4TRB015 A small jewelry store. No employees.

WP4TRB016. A shop selling dried fruits and nuts. There were two employees. They explained that the shop was a branch of a well known brand with several branches in Istanbul as well. It was a very busy shop.

WP4TRB017 & WP4TRB018. There were two separate businesses in this small shop. One was a mobile phone repair desk operated by the owner. The other was a bill payment point operated by two employees.

WP4TRB019. A small perfumery with no employees.

WP4TRB020. A wholesale grocer similar to a small market. There were three employers present. We interviewed with the accountant.

WP4TRB021. A very small grocery store on the backstreets. It had no employees.

In our previous report we've had already mentioned the fact that an overwhelming majority of the migrants in Karacabey are seasonal workers employed in agriculture. They come to the region at the beginning of Spring and leave before November. We also heard that another migrant group, Afghans, most of whom are irregular migrants were recruited as shepherds in the husbandaries. However, since most of them are working informally, we couldn't reach them either. Hence we had little hope of finding migrant interviewees in the local area. Unfortunately, this turned out to be the case.

Another difficulty arose from the fact that there were very few industrial companies in Karacabey. We have contacted four of them but could get a positive reply only from one. It turned out that it employed no migrant workers, and it is highly probable that it is the case for the other four companies because the number of permanent migrants in Karacabey is probably very limited and most of them go to Bursa for work. It seemed we would have to depend on our regional interviews (interviews conducted in Bursa) to make inferences about the migrant life in Karacabey.

In Bursa, almost all our interviewees were either small shop owners or their employees. Therefore, it is not possible to say much about any organizational or social innovations realized in big company settings. This is unlikely also because the overwhelming majority of Syrian migrants are unqualified workers and working in the informal sector. Research conducted by the Turkish Ombudsman Institution shows that 33,3 per cent of Syrians in Turkey are illiterate, and only 5,6 per cent of them held high school or higher education diplomas (Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu, Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler, Özel Rapor, Ankara 2018). Even though children are included in these figures, Syrians' low education level explains their limited opportunities to have a formal job considering Turkey's highly informal economy. TPS owners in Bursa mainly work in low-skilled jobs; thus, they do not bring any organizational change or innovation to the company structures. Our interviewees from the formal sector confirm that they prefer to employ qualified migrants, and there exists a high turn over rate among non-qualified migrants. Another point we should keep in mind is that number of TPS owners at a workplace cannot be more than ten per cent of the numbers of Turkish citizens (art. 8 of RTPSWPR). So we can confidentially say that there is no indication of big companies in Bursa employing considerable numbers of migrants to cause any change in their ways of business.

WP4TRB005: *"In other words, we employ the people who know the job, those who know the job can keep up with your system, those who do not comply are already gone. We have had maybe 30-40 immigrants who came and went in these two to three years."*

WP4TRB002: *"Let me say qualified, we recruit qualified staff, but we also recruited those who are not qualified; I can say they are not stable. They have an unstable stance; in their discourse, in their behavior. I can say this especially for Syrians, they are not very popular as a community. Syrians were actually not admitted very much, we are forced to work because we have difficulties in finding employees to employ. We accept them as a compulsory workforce"*

As regards self-employed TPS owners, the number of Syrian owned enterprises continues to grow in Bursa. Migrants with technical and business know-how make significant contributions to the economic

life of the region. As we mentioned in D. 3.1/D 4.1, Syrian owned enterprises and migrant workers have quite positive contributions to the textile sector.

WP4TRB002: " *There was a big sector in Syria, especially in children's clothing, they were producing and marketing to all regions of the Middle East. They are in Bursa now in this sector. It is said that there are around 350 thousand Syrians officially, most of them are in ready-made clothing,*".

Apart from textile, when we look into the distribution of business activities of the interviewed migrants, they mainly procure services in trading of grocery items, mobile phone accessories, jewelry, restaurants. These findings are in harmony with the findings of a survey of Syrian owned enterprises in six other cities of Turkey (UNDP, 2019).

Another significant development has been the introduction of Syrian tastes and preferences into the domestic market. This is especially an important niche for grocery shops. Most of them mainly sell products that appeal only to Syrian tastes.

WP4TRB007: " *Since Syrians sell their own products mostly, there are products that we do not consume, which they consume according to their own taste; especially these products come from Antep. They sell more of the products eaten by their own community. The grocery stores that I know of are generally 100% selling to Syrians.*" (Chairman of the Chamber of Grocery Store Owners)

WP4TRB021: " *One-third of (my clients) are local people, and two-thirds are Syrians. "There are many products that we have but not available in local markets as a benefit of immigration; One of them is Syrian style coffee, here are products such as canned food".* (Grocery store owner)

A worker in a dried fruits and nuts shop said that most of their customers are from Syria and that they bake their products in a different way that suits the tastes of Syrian migrants.

WP4TRB016: " *We have also local customers but very few. Generally, Syrians and foreigners buy products from us. There is nothing coming from Syria, all of our products are local from here. Some products are not available in Turkey we import from Europe, the only difference is that we're getting them raw while it's fresh products we received and we are doing different roasting according to the Syrian culture.*"

A migrant jeweler (**WP4TRB014**) said that their customers are exclusively Syrian simply because the units used for measuring the quality of gold (carat) are different in Syria and Turkey. Therefore, the golds sold in Turkey and Syria are different.

Finally we may talk about a type of change that took place naturally in the way migrants do business as a result of increasing adaptation of the migrants and the improvement in their conditions of living. The chairman of the chamber of grocery stores mentioned that initially many grocery shop owners had set up their shops with insufficient capital. As a result, their shops were in bad shape and their products were of poor quality. Similarly, they had little knowledge about the necessary regulations and

procedures to be followed. So, many of them found themselves in an illegal position and some were even swindled. However, as the migrants became more adapted over the years, such ineptitude became rare. Similarly, as they earned some money, they started to improve their shops. On the other hand, the migrant community started to demand more quality goods from them. Even though they still mostly sell goods that appeal to the Syrian community, the groceries increased both the quality and the variety of the goods they sell.

WP4TRB009: *" It is difficult to compare them with our shops in terms of technology and hygiene of the shelves. Our groceries are top notch in terms of visual, technological and hygienic matters. But their best shop is not even at the same level of our worst. Because they invest very little capital to their shops. They can find customers because Syrians shop from Syrian groceries. Otherwise they couldn't compete with our shops. They would never be preferred to ours. For example you can find bar code readers in 80% of our shops..."*

" Their citizens will force their grocers to sell better and more varied products. And the grocers will have to adapt to survive. Our shops usually have 8 to 10 times more products in stock than their stores".

WP4TRB008: *" One comes and fills two shelves (with products) and thinks that he set up a grocery store. These created many problems in the market, both to Syrians and to Turks. I tell them that they have to pay so much tax, so much accounting commission.. he says he can't afford it, that he cannot earn that much money. They don't know the regulations. But recently only the ones who can afford are setting up stores..."*

"It is already happening. For example I didn't used to buy rice or bulgur from them, I used to buy them from the supermarkets. But recently I found out that they started to sell quality products, so now I buy from them. Nowadays they are inspected for the health of their products. And the customers don't want to buy such products. Some even did not bother with the expiry dates..."

In terms of migrants in social enterprises, we should first underline the fact that there is no legal definition of social enterprise under Turkish law. The lack of definition makes difficult the recognition of such entities. The concept itself has been entered into literature recently. Associations, foundations are classical legal entities that are dedicated to the pursuit of social aim. They generate income through their commercial enterprises. These commercial entities may be the closest example to social enterprises in Turkish law, even though they are not exempted from tax liabilities. Only associations which hold a special status of "associations functioning for the public benefit" are granted exemptions from tax liabilities. In addition, some types of cooperatives, particularly women's cooperatives and education cooperatives, are deemed under the typology of social enterprise in accordance with the criteria of participative-decision making (European Commission, 2019).

NGOs on the field may play an essential role in the social cohesion of migrants with locals. Nevertheless, having a work permit to have a paid job in an NGO seems quite difficult. According to Article 11 of the Regulation of Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection, associations holding a particular status of "associations functioning for the public benefit" may lodge an application for the employment of foreigners under temporary protection in humanitarian assistance activities. Associations, foundations and other non-profit organizations without such specific status may also apply to employ foreigners under TPS. In this case, the consent of the Ministry of Interior shall be sought regarding the

applicant organization. Applications from organizations that failed to receive the consent in question shall be cancelled without evaluation. Therefore, it takes longer to get a work permit in NGO's. We reached a similar observations from our interviews. This observation is in accord with the outcomes of a survey that concludes there exist limited number of Syrians employed in social enterprises due to work permit problems and language barriers (Social Entrepreneurship under Scrutiny: Livelihood and Employability of Refugees, Conducted by Istanbul Bilgi University and Queen's University of Belfast, 15 February 2020).

WP3WP4TR001: *"Of course there is. We have employed our friends until March 2020, but there are serious problems in terms of work permits with the Ministry of Labor; organizations such as associations and NGOs can not easily get work permits. We've had a lot of correspondence with the Ministry of Labor about this, we've tried a lot but we haven't received any feedback yet. Even UNHCR, as a precaution, prefer to hire employees who can speak Arabic and obtained Turkish citizenship. Because there are serious problems with work permits in non-governmental organizations. In addition, after March 2021, the issue of employing foreign nationals in other companies, not only non-governmental organizations, but also companies and workplaces has become very difficult. The Ministry of Labor does not take any quick actions about this situation, it does not respond. This is probably related to the economic problems caused by COVID. But this is what I heard from the field. I can say that even many organizations have great difficulties while obtaining work permits right now."*

To assess how migration had intertwined with the local community through the participation of migrants in the local economy, one should bear in mind a serious structural problem of the Turkish economy: Informality. As of May 2019, employment in the informal sector makes up 34.3% of the total employment of the Turkish economy (Erdoğan 2019). Among those who are employed, the informality rate is without Syrians 17,1 % and with Syrians 20,1 %. The nation-wide informality rate, including self-employed persons, is about 34,34 % without Syrians and with Syrians 36 %. In certain sectors such as garment, construction, food and beverage services, higher informality rates are observed (Caro, 2020). Therefore, the deep structural problem of the economy and non-efficiency of the labour law mechanisms affect every worker, both natives and migrants, in the labour market.

Such informality has ambivalent effects on the social and economic integration of migrants and also affects the role of migrants in the development of rural regions.

3.1. Syrian owned enterprises

Enterprises owned by migrants are to be considered an essential index to assess the participation of migrants in the local economy. As we mentioned above, most of the Syrian owned enterprises are small trade businesses. There are projects, for example, IMECE, to support start-ups among refugees and help them to develop entrepreneurial skills. Our interview shows the different skill levels and business targets among TPS owners:

WP3WP4TR001: *"Some of these groups are generating entrepreneurial ideas to sell services and products to their own community who are the refugees living here. There is also a second group that makes feasibility studies for entrepreneurial ideas specific to the city and geography they live in; this group wants to provide products and services for the host community in Turkey as well. There is also a global-minded team that thinks more globally, can use technological tools well, and somehow developed these skills through our training or external training."*

Our findings show that the main customers of Syrian owned enterprises are the Syrian community in Bursa. When we ask about their clients, interviewees told us that

"One-third of them are local people, and two-thirds are Syrian." (**WP4TR021**)

"%60-70 Arabs, %30-40 Turks. Thus we have both". (**WP4TR017**)

The fact that their customers are mainly composed of the migrant community demonstrates a low integration level to the regional economy. For the moment, most of them are mainly family businesses run by fathers and sons but there are also others employing several migrants. Thus, these types of companies are set up in city centres where the Syrian population is dense. Rural areas do not seem attractive from this perspective.

3.2. TPS owners and access to the employment

TPS owners registered for at least six months are entitled to apply for a work permit to work legally. If TPS owner applies for an independent work permit, they lodge the application on behalf of themselves. If the TPS owner is to be recruited by an employer, the work permit application is made by the employer (Art. 5 of RWPFTP). The low number of work permits given to TPS owners indicates a widespread informal work practice. Those who have no future prospect in Turkey are less affected by the drawbacks of informality. Nevertheless, TPS owners who wish to stay in Turkey, seem to understand the importance of having a formal job. The need for proof or a documented history in a citizenship application outweighs the social security benefits.

WP4TRB023: *"I mean, this work permit is not much. You can get it if you pay for it, but the employer has to do it, not the worker. The employer has to get the permit, but they say "if you want a work permit, pay it yourself". The main reason I want a work permit is for citizenship, for registration."*

Employers seem reluctant, even demanding migrants to pay their work permit application fees as well as their insurance contributions if they want to work formally (WP4TR014). Migrants are suffering from all kind of precarity in these informal jobs:

WP4TRB023: *"When they realize that we are foreigners, they pay less, and they don't make insurance. When we ask for insurance, they say if you don't accept it go elsewhere. For example, I was working for a low wage, the Turks come and ask why I work for less, I have to work for however much I can find what can I do, I have to earn money. The inspections are stricter now, there is a danger of deportation, there is a penalty for both the employee and the employer, but what should I do, sister, I have to earn money, should I stay on the street? What the employer has to do is to pay one fee for the work permit and then to pay the insurance like they do for a normal Turkish citizen. But they don't do it, I mean 70% of them don't."*

WP4TR021: *"They made me work informally; without insurance, I did not get a work permit. In fact, I worked harder and got less salary, and there were cases where I worked and did not receive any salary at all. So we do the job, we finish it, then they say "You don't have anything with me, leave", I encountered similar incidents."* (similarly **WP4TR020; WP4TR018**)

One of our interviewees perfectly summarized the economic logic of informal employment:

WP4TRB022: *"In fact, this is not the choice of immigrants, but rather the employers' abuse of this situation. When we calculate economically, with the insurance of an immigrant, instead of employing 2 registered people, they employ 3 unregistered people, sometimes even 4 people. In other words, very punctual inspections are needed to prevent this, but this will affect immigrants badly while doing well. Most employers will prefer local workers rather than deal with work permits."*

3.4. Challenges Facing Immigrants

3.4.1. Language barrier

In all sectors, both formal and informal, either self-employed or wage workers, the lack of language skills appears as the most challenging barrier to overcome by immigrants. The language barrier affects both their employment opportunities and the quality of jobs they find.

WP4TRB010: "- What kind of troubles did you have?"

- Language, some people are also racist, but they got used to it gradually..."

WP4TRB022: "*I mean, I am originally a Turkmen of Syria, our village is in the border region, but I have always lived in Aleppo. I have never had trouble dealing with the local community; I only had some in public buildings a few times; there's no problem while speaking but when I show that identity at the time of application, everything changes. The things that should normally be done are not done, I mean people don't do the things that are their job when they see your identity. Sometimes I have an advantage because of the language. I have been speaking Turkish since my childhood, I did not learn the language from scratch; it can be even more different and difficult for those who do not speak Turkish.*"

One interviewee gave a striking example regarding the importance of language skills for migrants' careers:

"....My father is a carpenter. He used to create superb models there. But he can't do it here because he doesn't speak Turkish. He works as a regular worker." (**WP4TRB008**)

It is evident that the increasing language skills enable immigrants to set up their own enterprises and allow them to gain their livelihood through formal jobs (Şentürk, 2020; UNDP-TR, 2019, Kirişçi, 2019; DSP-IGAM, 2019)

3.4.2. Diploma equivalency and vocational skills

Recognition of immigrants' qualifications still reveals considerable difficulties for TPS owners. Fleeing conflict in Syria, they were forced to leave behind all personal documents, which are necessary to prove their qualifications.

WP4TRB023: "*There is that too, but I want to study anyway, I had a goal to study English Literature, and I will do that. I graduated from high school in Syria, but I did not have a certificate here, so I started from the beginning again.*

.....

No, I started from elementary school, I started from the beginning. I enrolled in open education at the age of 20, from scratch. Otherwise, I would have been about to graduate from college."

Even for those who have a higher education, getting a job matching their qualifications seems something else. One of our interviewees, who came to Turkey six months ago with a tourist visa and stayed irregularly, said that he had a PhD in biology and found a job as a telephone repairman.

WP4TRB012: "*I received a training on telephone repair in Syria, I went to a course. I found this job through a friend when I came here.*"

The other one has a different career path: *"I am 37 years old, I came to Turkey in 2015, I was a teacher in Syria. ...*

- *What did you do first when you came here?*

I worked as a carpenter for about 3 years, then I started working here as an accountant." (WP4TR020)

Not only education level but also vocational skills play an important role in access to the labour market. Evidently, highly skilled immigrants find jobs easily.

WP4TRB005: *"Those who match our requirements, in general, in our sector, they should know one or two sewing machines, they should be qualified people, they should know this job well; Of course we recruit people with those qualifications".*

3.4.3. Differences in work culture

Differences in working culture reveal an important challenge both for wage workers and self-employed immigrants. Syrians are complaining about Turkey's long working hours, whereas Turkish employers accuse Syrian immigrants of being lazy.

WP4TRB023: *"The working hours here are very long, it's 12 hours a day no less, from 7 am to 7 pm. We were working for even longer when we first arrived." (similarly WP4TRB020; WP4TRB011).*

WP4TR019: *"So there is not much difference in terms of work culture; we just have to work here longer. For example, I cannot close the shop on Sundays here. Sunday is the most crowded day, the weekends are when I work the most.*

- *Was it different back in Syria? Were you closing the shop over the weekend?*

- *I always closed the shop on Fridays. I never worked."*

WP4TRB022: *"I did not work in Syria, I was very young, but there are differences and things I observe. The public sector stops working at noon there, around 1-2 pm, I mean, they close completely, not like a lunch break. It depends, in the private sector, some of them were working until the evening. In the last few years before the war, some places started not to close at all, but the working hours were the same, I mean people worked with shifts."*

Two big immigrant groups in the memory of Bursa are compared in terms of their attitudes in work life:

WP4TRB002: *"Educated people from Bulgaria have settled in different parts of Bursa, sheltering themselves in some way. I still say, a woman with her mother-in-law would do the work of five local people. Because they were educated in high school there, they are very disciplined hard working people, not lazy like us. They have provided a tremendous benefit, not only in our sector, but in all areas; I think they contributed to the development of the city and its infrastructure. There are people who came at that time and are now factory owners. (...) It is said that there are*

around 350 thousand Syrians officially, most of them are in ready-made clothing, but of course, they also have a lazy side because women do not work, only men work. There's no discipline; only some of them are disciplined. There are people who opened up shops on Vişne Street. We also recruited employees, but they worked for two or three years and then started their own business."

Non-camp approach of Turkey enables TPS owners to secure their own homes and livelihoods despite all its drawbacks from the perspective of decent work (World Bank Report, 2015; Erdoğan, 2019). In terms of discrimination and wage gaps between migrants and nationals, recent research shows that Turkish natives earn 63 per cent more than Syrians. However, the wages in the informal sector look very much similar to each other. In terms of working hours, the working hours of locals working in the informal sector is about 55,8 hours weekly and of Syrians 55 hours. Both groups are working beyond the legal limits (max. weekly working hours is 45 hours) but in similar terms. Syrians with tertiary studies are the ones who suffer most compared to natives (Caro, 2020) .

4. CONCLUSION

In our previous report, we mentioned some research findings about the contribution of the Syrian migrant community to the economies of Karacabey and Bursa. According to research, the overall impact of the Syrian migration on the GDP of Turkey was positive. Furthermore, there seemed to be no negative effect on the unemployment rate because more than 95% of migrants were employed in the informal sector. This also ensured that there was almost no friction between the domestic workers and the migrants for the formal jobs. Another finding of the research was that Syrian migrants made positive contributions to the Bursa economy by providing labor, capital and entrepreneurship to many sectors. We were hoping that our fieldwork and in-depth interviews would enable us to assess the validity of these findings. However, as pointed out earlier, the Covid-19 conditions and the near impossibility of finding migrants in Karacabey made this task difficult. Nevertheless, we are happy to see that none of the findings of our fieldwork that we summarize below contradicts the findings of the previous research we mentioned above.

The difficulty we had in finding big companies employing migrant workers confirms indirectly the argument that a big majority of migrant workers are employed in the informal sector. The two companies we interviewed stated that they had no migrant workers and that the situation is the same with similar companies. Furthermore, many of the interviewees shared their past experiences of informal employment and said it is a widespread phenomenon. However, the interviewees also stressed the point that starting from 2017, inspections in Bursa became more frequent and harsher, leading to a considerable fall in the rate of informal employment.

As TPS owners are exempted from work permits in seasonal agriculture and livestock jobs, we would expect immigrants to have settled in the Karacabey region rather than Bursa city centre. However our fieldwork suggests the opposite. TPS owners come to this rural area during the harvest season to earn their livelihood, but they prefer to reside in a more crowded industrial city center where there exists a community of compatriots and more small jobs. We may conclude that informal economy undermines the positive developmental effects of migration in rural areas. In fact, if more work permits were given, immigrants may have sought jobs in the rural regions, considering the expensive living costs in the city center.

Informality, however, is not so prominent in the economic life of migrants if they are entrepreneurs. Several interviewees pointed out that almost all businesses that had recently been set up by migrants were done so in compliance with the regulations. They paid all the necessary taxes and fees just like their Turkish counterparts. This also implies that migrant businesses are not in an unfair competition with Turkish firms. Furthermore, the fact that the customers of the migrant owned businesses are mainly migrants reduce the possibility of competition between the two groups. Many interviewees declared that they had very good relations with their neighboring Turkish businesses.

Our fieldwork made it clear that entrepreneurship is well and alive in the Syrian community. They set up thousands of businesses in certain regions and in many different sectors. Many interviewees mentioned

Syrian workers eager to set up their own businesses. This was a point made by previous research. Even though it is not possible to ascertain their contribution to the employment in the region, it is clear that they make a huge contribution to the provision of the needs of the Syrian community. Almost all Syrian migrants do their daily shopping from Syrian owned firms. This has more to do with practical reasons than nationalist sensibilities. First, Syrian shop owners provide local goods and services that the migrants cannot find in Turkish shops. Second, the Syrian shops sell cheaper (and accordingly less quality) goods. And last, they can buy those goods and services on store credit. True, Turkish small shops, especially groceries also let their customers shop on store credit but it is doubtful if they could accommodate so many new comers with very poor purchasing power.

It is an unfortunate fact that Turkey does not have any policies toward promoting migrant entrepreneurship and innovation capacity. However, it could be a comforting fact that she does not have any policies to hinder it either. It seems that migrant entrepreneurs do not have difficulties more than their Turkish counterparts. No interviewees mentioned any difficulties or disadvantages the migrant entrepreneurs were confronted with.

Our findings imply that, in terms of economic integration and welfare, the most important problem the migrants face today is the language barrier. This is a point stressed by several interviewees. Those who overcame the barrier could find better jobs with higher wages or set up their businesses more easily. Teaching Turkish to as many migrants as possible should be an urgent policy target for the authorities. In addition, the lack of vocational skills matching the needs of the industry disables immigrants to find better jobs in the formal economy, even those who override the language barrier.

One of the main conclusions to be drawn from the field study is that the lack of social cohesion make feel its impacts on working life. Even though the economic activities of the migrants does not seem to be well integrated with the local economy (the markets of the migrants and the locals are still dissociated to some extent) there are signs that as the migrants adapt more and their living conditions get better the economic integration will increase, too. In that case, the contribution of the migrants to the local and national economy will probably multiply.

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DATA COLLECTION / PSEUDONIMIZED INTERVIEWEES

| ID Study Code and Date of Interview | Policy Level | Nationality | Stakeholder type/Affiliation | Working position |
|---|--------------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| TASK 4.1: DATA COLLECTION (FIRST ROUND INTERVIEWS, OCT-NOV 2020) | | | | |
| Nov 11, 2020 WP3WP4TR009 | Local | Turkish | Neighbourhood Unit | Mukhtar |
| Nov 11, 2020 WP3WP4TR0010 | Local | Turkish | Neighbourhood Unit | Mukhtar |
| Nov 11, 2020 WP3WP4TR0011 | Local | Turkish | Neighbourhood Unit | Mukhtar |
| Nov 12, 2020 WP3WP4TR0013 | Regional | Turkish | Turkish Employment Agency | Branch Manager |
| March 3, 2021 WP3WP4TR001 | National | Turkish | NGO | Project Manager |
| March 4, 2021 WP4TRB001 | Local | Turkish | Entreprise | HR & Internal Services Manager |
| March 16, 2021 WP4TRB002 | Regional | Turkish | Entreprise | Owner |
| March 16, 2021 WP4TRB003 | Regional | Turkish | Entreprise | Owner |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| March 16, 2021 WP4TRB004 | Regional | Syrian | Entreprise | Owner |
| March 16, 2021 WP4TRB005 | Regional | Turkish | Entreprise | Facility Manager |
| March 16, 2021 WP4TRB006 | Regional | Syrian | Entreprise | Worker |
| March 19, 2021 WP4TRB007 | Regional | Syrian | Craftsman | Grocer |
| March 19, 2021 WP4TRB008 | Regional | Syrian | Employee | Accountant |
| March 19, 2021 WP4TRB009 | Regional | Turkish | Chamber of Craftsman | President |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB010 | Regional | Syrian | Craftsman | Owner |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB011 | Regional | Syrian | Diner | Worker |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB012 | Regional | Syrian | Phone Repair Store | Worker |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB013 | Regional | Syrian | Photocopy & Photography Store | Owner |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB014 | Regional | Syrian | Diner | Worker |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB015 | Regional | Syrian | Craftsman | Jeweler |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB016 | Regional | Syrian | Food Store | Worker |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------|--------------|
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB017 | Regional | Syrian | Phone Repair Store | Owner |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB018 | Regional | Syrian | Bill Payment Store | Owner |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB019 | Regional | Syrian | Craftsman | Perfumer |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB020 | Regional | Syrian | Food Wholesaler | Worker |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB021 | Regional | Syrian | Craftsman | Grocer |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB022 | Regional | Syrian | NGO | Field Worker |
| March 24, 2021 WP4TRB023 | Regional | Syrian | House painter | Worker |

