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**Syrian Refugees in Turkey:
Mapping, Policies and Integration
Prospects**

In March 2017 the civil war in Syria will enter its 6th year leaving behind a country torn apart by a fight between regime and opposition forces. The conflict in Syria has forced 11 million Syrians to migrate safer locations both inside the country and abroad. As a result, 4.86 million Syrians had fled to neighboring countries where Turkey has accepted almost half of the total number of refugees abroad and since the start of the civil war has spent \$12.1 billion in order to cover their basic humanitarian needs. Currently, Syrians are given temporary protection status which allows them to access to basic needs such as health, education and legal assistance services through a provisional identity card. Starting from January 2016 Turkish government allowed them to obtain a work permit and renewed its 1994 Asylum regulation with more up to date modern new Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013.

Key words: Syrian Refugees, Turkey, Humanitarian aid, Civil war, Forced Migration, Integration.

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**Түркиядағы сириялық
босқындар: картографиясы,
саясаты және интеграция
перспективалары**

2017 жылдың наурыз айында режим мен оппозиция күштері арасында алауыздық туғызған Сирия азаматтық соғысына алты жыл болады. Сириядағы қақтығыс салдарынан 11 млн. сириялық ел ішіндегі және шетелдегі қауіпсіз жерлерге қоныс аударуға мәжбүр болды. Нәтижесінде 4,86 млн. Сириялық көрші елдерге қашты. Түркия босқындардың жартысын дерлік қабылдап, азаматтық соғыс басталғаннан бері олардың негізгі гуманитарлық қажеттіліктерін қанағаттандыру үшін 12,1 млрд. доллар жұмсады. Қазіргі уақытта сириялықтарға уақытша қорғау мәртебесі берілді. Бұл мәртебе уақытша жеке кәуәлік арқылы денсаулық сақтау, білім беру және құқықтық көмек сияқты негізгі қажеттіліктерге қол жеткізуге мүмкіндік береді. 2016 жылдың қаңтарынан бастап түрік үкіметі оларға жұмысқа рұқсат алуға мүмкіндік берді және 2013 жылы. Баспана беру туралы 1994 жылғы ережелердің орнына Шетелдіктер мен халықаралық қорғау туралы жаңа заңды қабылдады.

Түйін сөздер: сириялық босқындар, Түркия, гуманитарлық көмек, азаматтық соғыс, мәжбүрлі көші-қон, интеграция.

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**Сирийские беженцы в Турции:
картография, политика и
перспективы интеграции**

В марте 2017 г. будет шесть лет, как в Сирии идет гражданская война, которая привела страну к кровопролитной борьбе между режимом и оппозиционными силами. Из-за конфликта в Сирии 11 млн. сирийцев были вынуждены мигрировать в более безопасные места внутри страны и за рубежом. В результате 4,86 млн. сирийцев бежали в соседние страны. В количественных показателях Турция приняла почти половину от общего числа беженцев за рубежом и с начала гражданской войны потратила 12,1 млрд. долларов для удовлетворения их основных гуманитарных потребностей. В настоящее время сирийцам присвоен статус временной защиты, который позволяет им получить доступ к основным потребностям, как здравоохранение, образование и оказание юридической помощи посредством временного удостоверения личности. Начиная с января 2016 года турецкое правительство позволило им получить разрешение на работу и в 2013 году обновило Правила 1994 года о предоставлении убежища на более актуальный новый Закон об иностранцах и международной защите.

Ключевые слова: сирийские беженцы, Турция, гуманитарная помощь, гражданская война, вынужденная миграция, интеграция.

SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY: MAPPING, POLICIES AND INTEGRATION PROSPECTS

The cost of civil war in Syria has forced 11 million Syrians to flee from their homes since the start of the conflict in March 2011. Large number of Syrians has escaped to neighboring countries seeking a refuge or moved to other regions within Syria. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as of January 5 2017 4,862,778 Syrians have fled mainly to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq whereas 6.6 million people displaced within Syria. [1]Some decides to stay in their first host country while others continue their journey to other countries where often the end destination is a wealthy European country. Almost 1 million people have requested an asylum to Europe that created a large scale of migration influx to Europe [2].

One of the main migration routes is through Turkey route where Syrian migrants enter to Turkey by legal or illegal ways moving on to Greece in order to reach Western European countries like Germany and United Kingdom [3]. During their travel to Europe Syrian migrants often faced with many difficulties and have to bare harsh conditions. For instance, in the first 10 months of the 2016 3.740 people lost their lives in Mediterranean while in 2015 as for a whole year 3.771 people died. Although number of people who crossed the Mediterranean reduced 78% from 1,015,078 people to 327,800 people in 2016, the death ratio significantly increased from one death for every 269 arrivals in 2015 to one in 88 in 2016. This is ratio is even worse for Libya-Italy corridor where one death for every 47 arrivals has been recorded [4].

In terms of numbers, Turkey has almost accepted half of the total number of Syrians who escape abroad. The number of Syrians who seek refuge in Turkey in 15 January 2012 was only 9.500 Syrians however, the number started to increase after March 2012 reaching 170.468 Syrian by the end of the year. In relation with the intensification of civil war in Syria monthly arrivals has increased to 32.000 in 2013, 82.000 in 2014 and then slightly reduced to 73.000 in 2015 and stabilized around 25.000 in 2016. By December 2016, their number reached little over 2.81 million. Throughout the process the highest jump in the arrivals recorded during the 14 September - 31 December 2014 within 3 months more than 775.000 Syrians has arrived to Turkey increasing the number of registered refugees to 1.62 million from 847.000 [5].

According to Turkish Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM), 3.1 million people from different nationalities seek international protection in Turkey by October 2016. Among them 2.75 million are Syrians who received a temporary protection status. Other major groups are coming from Iraq (126.756), Afghanistan (116.422), Iran (29.502), Somalia (3.921) and others (8.424) in total more than 285.000 people has applied to Asylum in Turkey. It is worth mentioning that by temporary protection Syrians are granted an access to basic rights and services to certain extent and given a right to legal stay in the country however this status should not be confused with asylum since temporary protection does not allow them to apply for citizenship as asylum seeker could. [6]

In order to cover the basic needs of Syrian refugees Turkish government has establish 26 camps that mostly located in South Eastern region of Turkey close to border with Syria where 254.260 Syrians are hosted. However, comparing with the total number of Syrians in Turkey we see that 9 out of 10 Syrians are living outside the camps in different parts of the Turkey (Reliefweb, 2016). Looking at the provincial breakdown map shows that majority of them resides in cities like Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Adana, Mersin and Istanbul. In general, they prefer to reside in South Eastern part of the Turkey and in big cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir [1]. Although various domestic and international observers including UNHCR declared that the conditions in camps are more comfortable and standardized comparing with other refugee accepting countries camps in the region. Since the start of the conflict Turkey has pursues an open door policy that aims to provide the optimum humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees. In order to do that Turkey has taken great responsibility to cover the expenses of the humanitarian assistance provided to Syrian refugees [7]. However, prolonged conflict in Syria has increased the challenges of managing the migration flow to Turkey. Since the start of the conflict government spend over 12.1 billion dollar to provide assistance for refugees whereas the international community's contributions consisted \$512 million [8].

The large-scale arrivals from Syria has forced Turkey to review its legal framework on its asylum and international protection laws. In the beginning of the migration flow, the assistance programs initiated in an emergency response state and the process handled by state-centered approach. With the continuation of the refugee crisis authorities started to revise their policies in order to change

the short-term emergency response to a long-term planning. In line with this goal Kızılay and AFAD organizations have become the responsible organizations for management of acceptance and assistance process of Syrian refugees [7]

The current temporary protection status allows them to access to basic needs as health, education and legal assistance services through a provisional identity card. However, this situation does not provide them an internationally recognized refugee status that could lead to citizenship rights. Today it could be said that many temporary guests will not return to their home country soon. Therefore, taking into consideration of large of part of the 2.8 million Syrians will settle in Turkey there is a need for comprehensive long-term planning which will guide the management of their integration and settlement within the country [1].

Therefore, one of the most important issue in planning long-term strategies is to identify whether they should be considered as asylum seekers or not and to update the laws regarding asylum regulations. Regarding the renewal of the regulations, numbers of necessary initiatives are taken and Turkey has replaced its 1994 Asylum regulation with more comprehensive new Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013. The new reforms in the law will provide Turkey a modern, reflective and efficient management system at the European standards [7]. In addition to that, in order to create long-term plans and manage the migration crisis more efficiently establishment of DGMM could be counted as a milestone. The new law and various initiatives indicate that Turkish government work on the issue in order to provide proper solutions. Having said that there are still problems with the work permit. Starting from 15 January 2016 Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees Under Temporary Protection has been issued which grants work permit to Syrians under certain conditions. Regulation indicates that only Syrians whose temporary registration is older than 6 month could apply for work permit. Moreover, application could be made either by the employers or by individuals themselves for independent application. Foreigners under the temporary protection cannot be paid under the minimum wage and their share cannot exceed 10% of the employed Turkish citizens in companies [9]. Granting a work permit for Syrians is an important step in their economic integration into society [10].

In conclusion, provisional breakdown of Syrians shows that large number of them has chosen to reside in South Eastern region and in big

cities and adopt themselves to their new lives in Turkey. It could be said that Turkish government has accepted the fact the majority of the temporary guests will turn in to permanent settlers. In line

with this realization, responsible authorities are working on to modify the policies, regulations and prepare long-term strategies in order to regulate the integration process.

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