



MATILDE

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

Statistical briefing for Turkey on social impact of international migrants with a focus on Bursa and Karacabey

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- **Deliverable 3.2** – Statistical briefing for Turkey on social impact of TCNs in MATILDE regions

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1. INTRODUCTION

Although Turkey has always been a country of migration, and that is also the case for the selected MATILDE region-Bursa, neither public policy nor public opinion has been shaped along the lines of social cohesion. Since 2011, with the arrival of Syrians due to the civil war in the country, Turkey for the first time has to adopt its public policies as a migration receiving country.

Syrians, first as accepted as 'guests', are granted the "temporary protection" status in 2014 by Act No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection and Temporary Protection Regulation (AFIP). With this regulation, the right to health, education, access to labour market, social assistance, and interpretation services become possible. Considering the highly centralized governance in Turkey, these are national policies, however, access to these rights in every region/locality requires scrutiny. Temporary protection status provides the legal foundation, but there are obstacles-language, competition among the poor, and social exclusion- to turn the rights into capabilities.

The population of Turkey is 83 million- 41 million 698 thousand 377 female and 41 million 915 thousand 985 males in 2020 (TUIK, 2021). As of February 24, 2021, the total number of Syrians in Turkey in the status of temporary protection is 3 million 656 thousand 525. 1 million 733 thousand (47.4%) are children between the ages of 0-18. The total number of children and women is 2 million 590 (70.8% of the whole population) (DGMM, 2021). For Bursa, this number is 178.683 which equals 5.7% of the population of the city. Furthermore, according to UNHCR Statistics on Turkey, regarding non-Syrian asylum seekers, the number has also increased to 330 thousand, and therefore despite the informality, the official total numbers exceed the 5 % of Turkey's population (Erdogan, 2019).

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT)'s data based on the Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS), in 2019, 1 million 531 thousand foreigners were residing in Turkey. Foreigners in this data are defined "the foreign population by country of citizenship", excluding those Syrians who are under temporary protection status (TUIK, 2019). As only those Syrians who are not under temporary protection but have legal permits to stay are included in this number, Iraqis and Afghans took first and second place respectively. This statistical report compares the situation of the citizens of Turkey with that of citizens of non-EU 28 in that country with the available data of Eurostat on the areas of poverty; inequality; overcrowded household; education; NEET; unemployment and finally residents requiring citizenship. All these variables are crucial for livelihood for TNCs and also the social cohesion of the country.

Eurostat, the general data source that is referred throughout the brief, uses TURKSTAT data “Income and Living Conditions Survey (SILC)”. Since 2006 by the panel survey method, TURKSTAT, for compliance with European Union (EU) aims to supply comparable data on income distribution, living conditions, social exclusion, and relative poverty based on income (TUIK, 2020). Thus, the reliability of the data is questionable not only because it is based on a panel survey, which does not aim to represent the Syrians under temporary protection¹ but also because of the irregular migrants, informal and unregistered economy.

For the cases when there is no data provided for Turkey by Eurostat, other data set released by TURKSTAT and The Directorate General of Migration Management are used. However, there are also few cases for which there are no data available in national statistics for any of the levels, and therefore secondary sources are tried to be applied.

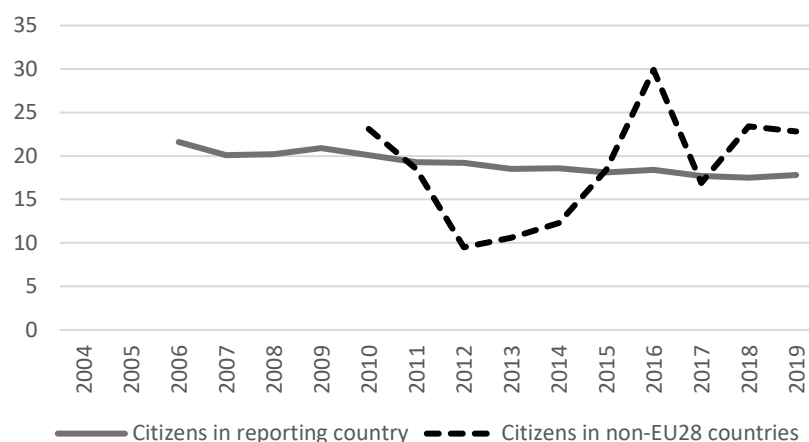
Regarding the territorial dimension of the chosen indicators throughout the brief, the indicators are generally displayed at the NUTS2 level (TR41 including Bursa, Bilecik, and Eskişehir provinces). However, in few cases, due to the lack of data, other scales are used. Also, for some, due to the lack of data on NUTS2 and/or NUTS3 level, no specific characterization regarding the chosen indicators of foreigners or TCNs can be provided.

Last, but not least, since the year 2012, a new administrative system was established which prevents a detailed analysis of the situation of rural (Erdoğan and Uyan-Semerci 2020). 30 provinces, population higher than 750000 individuals, have started to be classified as the Metropolitan Areas and due to this change, the rural population of Turkey declined to 8% from 23% (Erdoğan and Uyan Semerci 2020: 14). Although there is an effort to develop a better categorization, the national available statistics by TURKSTAT are based on the previously defined administrative distinction and therefore rural/urban distinction is no longer valid. According to the currently available official statistics, 93% of the population lives in urban places which do not reflect the actual conditions in the country.

¹The sampling frame is based on ABPRS and National Address Database, clusters involving approximately 100 dwelling addresses (between 80 and 120) are constructed. Updated twice in each year, the sampling frame does not include the addresses of the institutional population.

2. SHARE OF TCNS AT RISK OF POVERTY

Figure 1. At-risk-of-poverty rate in Turkey by broad group of citizenship (population aged 18+). Source: Eurostat.



The population at risk of poverty is defined as households having equivalized household disposable income below the specified lines. Although there is a slow decline in the risk of the poverty rate, as the figure demonstrates, poverty and social exclusion have been an important problem in Turkey. The above figure reflects the continuous decline since 2009, the year in which one can observe the effects of the economic crisis. However, it is important to underline that with the existing data, although there is a decline, an important percentage of the population is still at the risk of poverty in Turkey.

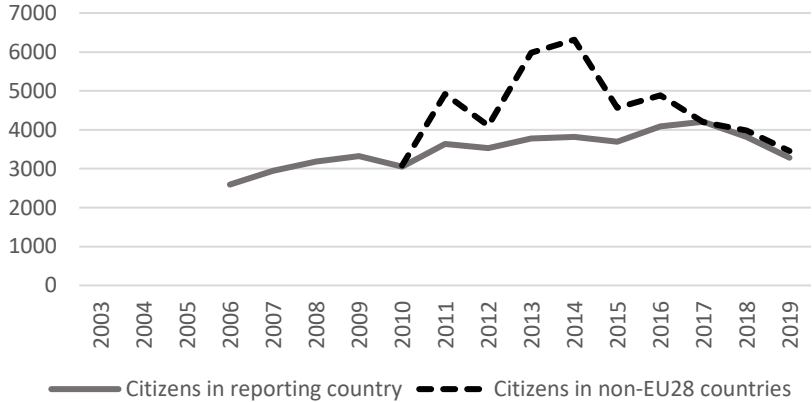
As noted in the introduction the data on citizens in non-EU28 countries is questionable and as the survey sample does not particularly aim at a representation of neither this stated group nor foreigners in general, there is a problem of reliability. The sharp fluctuations are hard to explain and it may be because of the small size of the group.

The upward trend- the increase of the percentage of the risk of poverty rate for the citizens born in non-EU28 countries- since 2012 can be explained by the arrivals of Syrians. Thus, the highest rate is 30 which was in 2016, we know that this is not a correct reflection of the field. According to UNHCR Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis 2020-2021 in Turkey Country Chapter, 42 percent of people who live in temporary or international protection status in Turkey are under the poverty line while 85 percent of these individuals are Syrians under temporary protection (UNHCR, 2020). Various local studies show that Syrians are experiencing extreme poverty, spatial segregation, and social exclusion (Ozkazanc 2021; Gurel et al., 2018).

Inequalities and regional development gaps (Karatay et. al., 2016); poverty; informal economy; child labor and access to qualified education for all have been major problems in Turkey (Uyan-Semerçi et. al., 2013; 2014 and Uyan-Semerçi & Erdoğan, 2017). With the arrival of Syrians, these problems are multiplied and the competition among the poor creates further tension in the field, both for accessing the job market, mostly informal, and for accessing social supports and assistance. With the first wave of migration, social assistance directed to Syrians created further tension among the citizens of Turkey who needs social assistance. Unfortunately, the lack of data is a problem, we neither have census data nor representative sample data which we can use for the third-country nationals in Turkey.

3. INCOME INEQUALITY ACROSS SOCIOECONOMIC GROUPS

Figure 2. Median equivalised net income (€) in Turkey by broad group of citizenship (population aged 18+). Source: Eurostat.



The above figure shows the median equivalized² net income in Turkey in Euros, both for the citizens of Turkey and citizens born in non-EU 28 countries. As can be observed, all through the years, for the citizens of Turkey the value is between slightly lower than 3000 and 4000 which is comparatively very low among the Eurostat data.

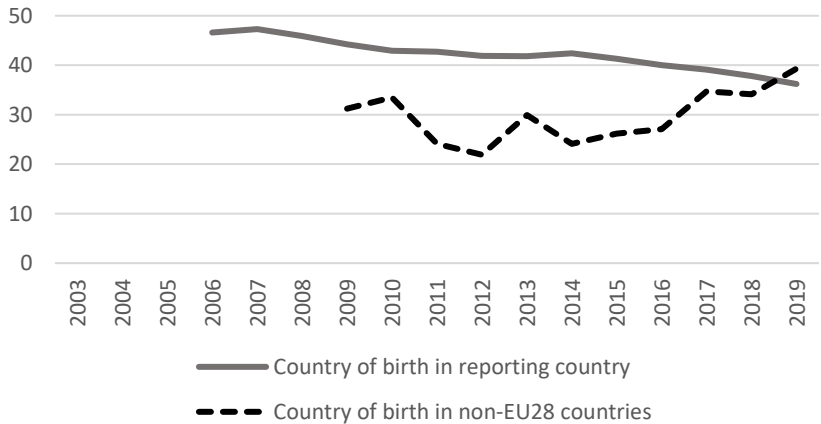
The data for the citizens born in non- EU 28 countries is available since 2010 and, as already noted, is also questionable. We observe sharp fluctuations but overall

² The total disposable household income is "equivalised" for the impact of differences in household size and composition, (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/ilc_esms.htm).

interestingly in the year 2014 which it reached its peak value, it was slightly over 6000, which is significantly higher than the income of Turkish citizens. Then we observe the sharp fall and since the year 2017, the two lines almost have overlapped. This may be explained by the increased number of settled Syrians whose income lower than the average of the income of citizens born in non-EU 28 countries. Unfortunately, due to the reliability problems with the data, a real comparison of the equivalized income for Turkish citizens and third-country nationals in Turkey is not possible. Thus, income inequality across socioeconomic groups is an important indicator of social cohesion. Gini coefficient is used to measure income inequality and its value varies between 0, which reflects complete equality, and 1, which reflects complete inequality. As stated by Eurostat, a relatively high Gini coefficient was observed in Turkey. Gini coefficient was estimated at 0.395 with a decrease of 0.013 points compared with the previous year in 2019 (TUIK 2020). Also, according to OECD data, the index of Turkey, which is roughly 0.4, is well above the OECD average of 0.32. Compared to other OECD countries except for Mexico and Chile, Turkey has a less egalitarian income distribution. However, we lack comparative data on the Gini coefficient of the citizens of Turkey and the third-country nationals living in the country.

4. OVERCROWDING RATE IN IMMIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS

Figure 3. Overcrowding rate in Turkey by broad groups of country of birth (population aged 18+). Source: Eurostat.



The overcrowding rate in households is an indicator of vulnerability. The overcrowding rate for the citizens of Turkey has been in decline since 2007. The figure shows that the percentage dropped below 40% in 2017. Although the decreasing trend continues, it is still higher than 35 %. This is slightly higher than the rate for non-EU citizens living in

overcrowded households within the EU and is almost 20 % higher than average the overcrowding rate of citizens of EU countries (Eurostat, 2019).

The figure shows that the overcrowding rate in Turkey for country of birth in non-EU28 countries reached 40 percentage in 2019. The limited data on the third country nationals due to the designing of the sampling strategy of the survey may be the reason for the fluctuations since the year 2009. There was a declining trend after the year 2010 and 2014 onwards, the overcrowding rate has been increasing and this can also be explained with the inclusions of the Syrians' households to the data.

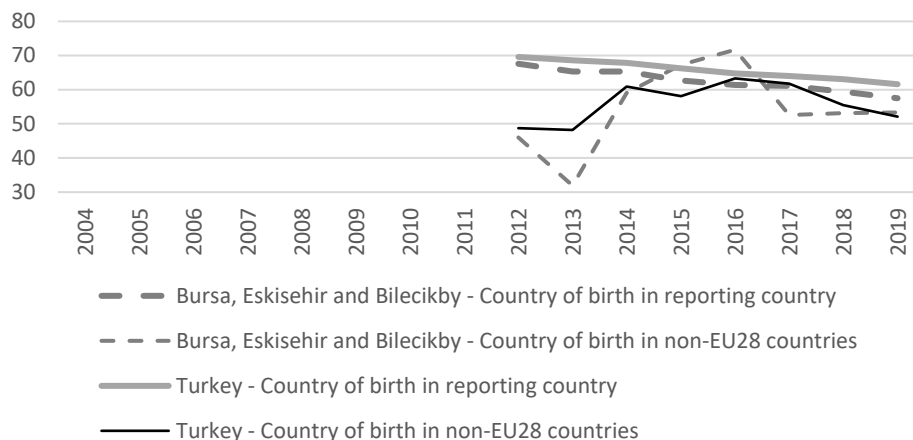
Although various studies underline the fact that Syrians live in overcrowded households and try to elaborate its various effects (Erdoğan, 2020; Babacan et al. 2017; Simsek et al. 2018; Uyan Semerci and Erdoğan 2018)\ we lack national data for third-country nations living in Turkey. Overcrowded household means further vulnerability long before the Covid virus, thus during the pandemic, it creates further and higher risks.

5. POPULATION BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education level is an important indicator of wellbeing and is crucial for social cohesion. The education levels of immigrants play a crucial role in immigrant children's school participation. The following figures, both regional and country-level are questionable as the educational level of Syrians in the status of temporary protection is below the average in Turkey about half of them were either illiterate or never attended school (Erdoğan, 2019:8)

5.1 PRIMARY EDUCATION

Figure 4. Share of population 25-64 years with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education in Turkey and Bursa, Eskisehir and Bilecikby. Source: Eurostat.



The share of the population 25-64 years with less than primary, primary, and lower secondary education in Turkey for the Turkish citizens has gradually decreased but it is still above 60 percent. For the region, the same trend can be observed hence it reaches below 60 percent. Considering the share of third country nationals 25-64 years with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education, the fluctuations portrayed in the illustration above due to the already stated problems. Hence there was an increase of almost 10 percent in the year 2013 which mainly can be explained the process following the arrival of Syrian migrants both to Turkey and to the region (TR41, Bursa, Bilecik, Eskişehir). As the number of Syrians increases, the share of the mentioned population also increases. In general, it is also often stated known that Syrians with higher education backgrounds try to reach Europe and prefer to seek asylum in European countries. Since 2017, there has been a decline but it still is higher than 50 percent which is lower than the percentage for the citizens of Turkey.

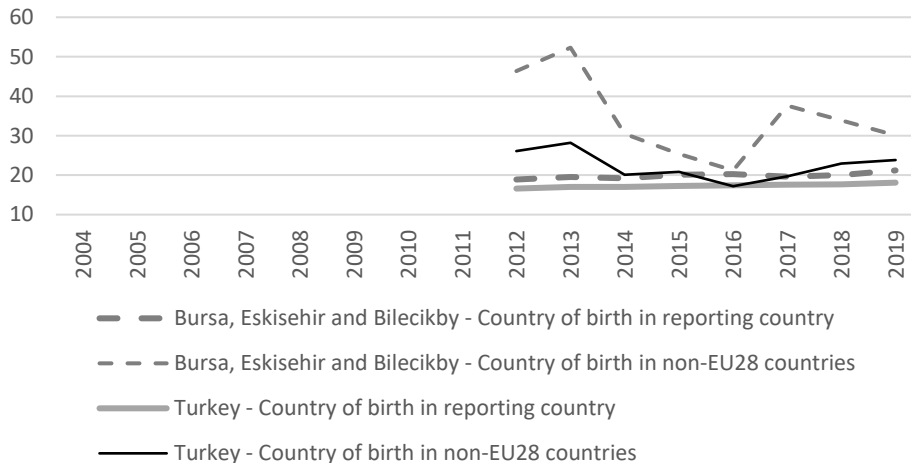
Considering the NUTS2 level, the region, especially Bursa, is among the rural areas with high agricultural production. Migrant agricultural workers, particularly Syrians, often the ones who migrated from the rural areas in Syria. Moreover, work in agriculture is characterised by low wages and bad working conditions including long working hours or discrimination at the workplace (Tören 2018; Atasü-Topçuoğlu 2019; Dedeoğlu & Bayraktar 2019; Kaya 2020). All these give a considerable reason to explain, in one sense, the high share of population 25-64 with low levels of education of illiteracy among the agricultural workers and so does the one for NUTS2 level in the graphic above.

Besides, Bursa province has a strong concentration on textile production. Considering this fact, Syrians who are settled in Bursa mostly originate from the Syrian province of Aleppo with earlier expertise in textile production which does not require higher education. This may have an effect on the share of the migrant population with lower education

settled within the region. Last, but not, gender plays a role and therefore low level of education is observed among Syrian women.

5.2 SECONDARY EDUCATION

Figure 5. Share of population 25-64 years with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education in Turkey and Bursa, Eskisehir and Bilecikby. Source: Eurostat.

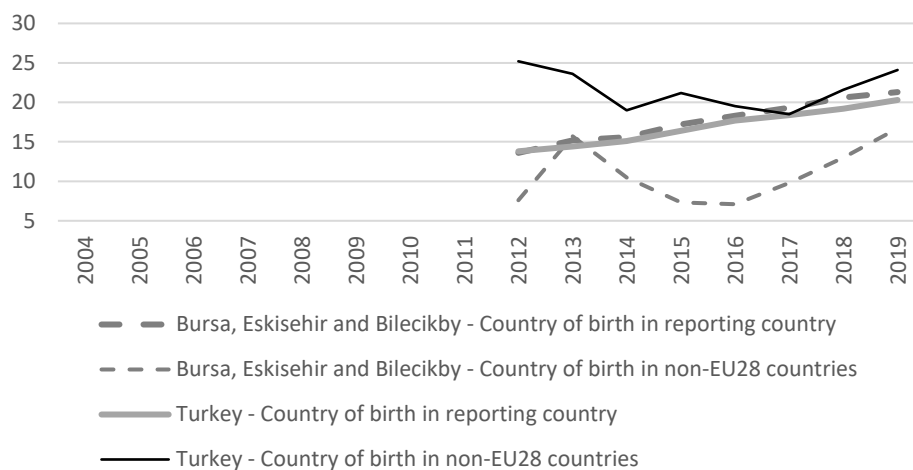


The share of population 25-64 years with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education was 25 percent in the year 2012 for the citizens of Turkey. The change in the data that was observed can be due to 2-Year Compulsory Education System (4 + 4 + 4 education system) that started in 2012-2013, the education system in Turkey. . The compulsory education in Turkey for eight years removed 12 years. For those who were born in non-EU28 countries, the data for Turkey has been below 20 percent and slightly upward between the years 2012 to 2019.

The regional data for the citizens of Turkey have been stable around the 20 percent. Thus, for those whose country of birth is non-EU28 countries, there have been enormous fluctuations. In the year 2013, the percentage was 50 and fell slightly over 20 percent in 2016 and then increased to 35 percent in 2017, and then a drop to 30 percent. As already noted despite the data problems, the inclusion of more Syrians in the data set may explain the dramatic decline starting in 2013.

5.3 TERTIARY EDUCATION

Figure 6. Share of population 25-64 years with tertiary education in Turkey and Bursa, Eskisehir and Bilecikby. Source: Eurostat.



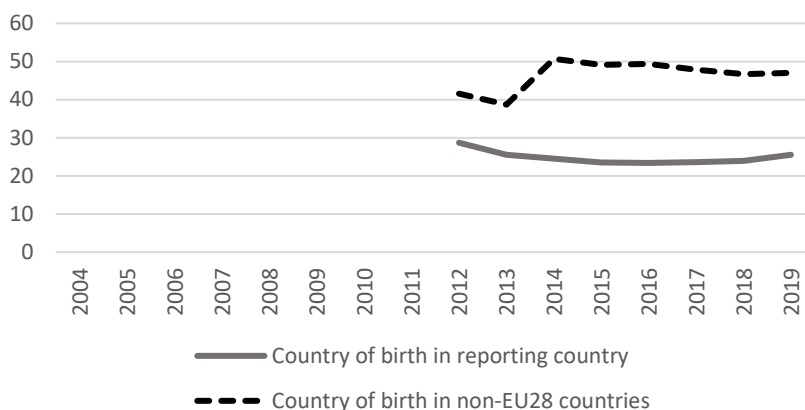
For tertiary education, one can observe a 5 percentage gradual increase between the years 2012-2019 for the whole Turkish population and almost the same, but a slightly higher trend for the regional data (for the ages 25-64). Thus, fluctuations can be observed for non-EU28 born foreigners in Turkey and the data higher than the Turkish population except the year 2017, both almost had the same value. This is also difficult to explain and demonstrates that the vagueness of the data.

For the regional data on third- country nationals, one can observe a lower percentage almost all the years except the year 2013 where all three was 15 percentage except the non-EU28 born foreigners in Turkey. In the year 2016, the percentage was as low as 7 and then there has been an upward movement which reaches to slightly over 15 percent.

6. YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 NATIONAL LEVEL

Figure 7. Young persons neither in employment nor in education and training in Turkey by broad category of country of birth. Source: Eurostat.



Turkey has the highest NEET rate among the OECD countries, as indicated in different studies (Erdogan et al., 2017; Erdoğan & Uyan Semerci, 2020; Susanli, 2016). As the illustration above also shows that there is an acute unemployment problem among the Turkish youth. Continuous political and socio-economic problems in Turkey caused by polarized politics, child labor, gender-related inequalities, Kurdish issue as well as migration have all had multi-layered effects on youth wellbeing (E. Erdoğan & Uyan Semerci, 2020). The high rate of youth unemployment is also linked, by the Eleventh Development Plan of the Presidency of Turkey (2019), to the global macroeconomic developments and therefore to the weak outlook for investment, trade, productivity as well as wage increases, high debt ratios, and the increase in income inequality in the global scale. The Youth Working Group in the Ministry of Development (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018) also draws attention, among NEET, to the high rate of youngsters who do not actively search for a job anymore. Turkey is among the countries with the highest rate in this regard. This could be explained by giving up hope on finding a job. A survey on the well-being of youth in Turkey (Habitat, 2020) shows that 73% of young people believe that finding a job is hard and job opportunities are limited in Turkey. This also brings a growing trend of alienation from education with it, due to the complaint about failing to find a job after graduating from university.

The mismatch between young people's skills with the needs of the economy is also portrayed to make a general evaluation of the youth unemployment in Turkey (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018). In addition to the limited job opportunities, being employed in the informal economy is a serious reason for the high rate of NEET. It is indicated that more than half of young people in Turkey are employed in the informal economy (Ibid.).

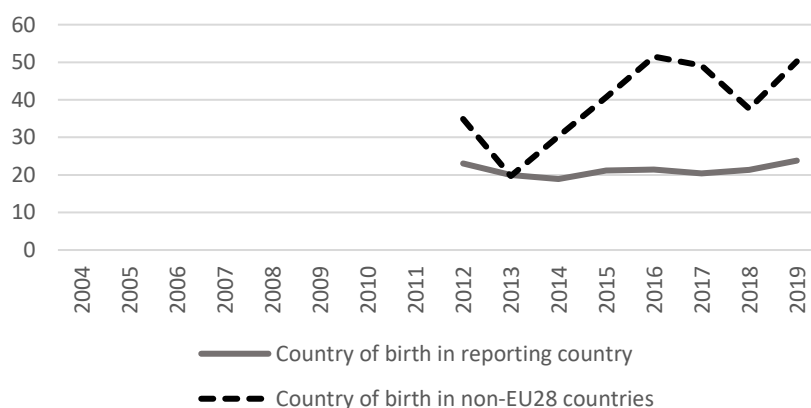
A significant gender gap and the lower levels of female labor force participation have led to an increase in the NEET rate in Turkey (Erdogan et al., 2017; E. Erdoğan & Uyan Semerci, 2020). The main factor affecting female labor force participation is the division

of labor within the family. Marriage (Susanli, 2016), household workload and the lack of social services to support mothers to take care of children seem to be significant determinants of the NEET status for women. Low education levels of women, despite improvements, could also be raised as the reason to fall into the NEET category. In addition, the correlation between poverty and having difficulties coping with education expenses and giving priority to the education of boys rather than girls, which assign women as a secondary role as a symptom of the patriarchal culture, makes the NEET rate higher for women (Erdogan et al., 2017).

Regarding migrant youth, the high level of NEET in the illustration above mostly refers to the arrivals of millions of Syrians to Turkey, and not to be well integrated into the job market. According to the interviews conducted for the MATILDE Project, the unregistered employment of Syrians is very high. Moreover, school drop-outs because of the poverty or peer bullying in schools make the Syrian children fall into the NEETs among migrant youth. Cultural reasons such as early marriage for Syrian girls as well as not letting women work in marriage also make a higher likelihood for women to be NEETs. Additionally, unaccompanied minors over age 18 remain outside the protection system provided to unaccompanied children in Turkey. In this sense, unaccompanied migrant youth also fall in a more disadvantaged position for their education, and this creates a challenge for accessing vocational education as well (Beyazova, 2019). This may lead to a likelihood for especially Syrian unaccompanied youth to fall into the NEET category.

6.2 REGIONAL LEVEL

Figure 8. Young persons neither in employment nor in education and training in Bursa, Eskisehir and Bilecik by broad category of country of birth.
Source: Eurostat.



The illustration above on the regional level shows a similar trend as the one on the national level. One of the possible interpretations for the sharp increase from 2013 onwards can be linked to the sharp increase in the number of Syrians under TPS between

2013-2017 (please see *Temporary Protection*, 2021) throughout Turkey as well as the region. Also, although the arrival of Syrians fleeing from the civil war to Turkey began in 2011, most of the Syrians lived both in refugee camps and outside the camps in the bordering provinces of Turkey within 2 years. However, the majority of Syrians in Turkey have turned into “urban refugees” after 2013 (Erdoğan, 2019), so they also moved to the Western regions, including Bursa Sub-region (NUTS-2 level, TR41), covering the provinces of Bursa, Bilecik, Eskisehir.

In addition to the increase in Syrian population in the region, the fluctuations and mostly sharp increase in NEET rate is mostly the result of the facts due to unregistered employment of Syrian youth, school drop-outs, and the language barrier as a serious obstacle to integrating the Syrian refugees into the education and work environment. All these dynamics were emphasized in almost all interviews conducted in the region. In many interviews, the reluctance of female employment as a cultural approach among the Syrian population was also raised as an issue. This could let the migrant population fall in the NEET category in the region as well.

One of the striking reasons to be evaluated under NEET rate among the foreign population is the decrease in schooling rate as the level increases in Bursa region. According to the figures, delivered by one of the interviewees during the field research (*Informant 15, Bursa, 11 March 2021*), whereas an average of 4000 students is enrolled in each grade at the primary school level, it decreases considerably in the upper levels. As of March 2021, for example, in Bursa, only 475 foreign students³ (out of which 265 students are Syrians) are enrolled in the schools in the 12th grade. The migrant youngsters then have a very limited chance to go on their education at the university level or to find qualified jobs in the field of employment.

7. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

7.1 NATIONAL LEVEL

An overwhelming proportion of migrant workers are employed in the informal sector. More than 95% of the migrant workforce are employed in the informal sector. As of May 2019, employment in the informal sector makes up 34.3% of the total employment in the Turkish economy (Erdoğan, 2019). Also, for the Syrian population among TCNs, the ESSN aid (Emergency Social Safety Net) seem to have a direct bearing on the scope and extensity of informal migrant labor. Since it is given to each member of the migrant family provided

³ As of 11 March 2021, the number of foreign students enrolled in Bursa province is 36.206, out of which 31.209 are Syrians.

that none has formal employment, many Syrian refugees, who are eligible for ESSN aid from applying to jobs in the formal sector, are believed to prefer to be employed in informal sectors to enjoy its benefits.

The decrease in unemployment rates among the foreign population between 2016 and 2019 can somehow be explained by the regulation in January 2016 when Turkey decides to grant Syrians under TPS increased access to labor markets. According to this regulation, with a quota on temporary protection beneficiaries based on the needs of the sectors and provinces, the number of beneficiaries active in a specific workplace may not exceed 10% of the workforce, unless the employer can prove that there would be no Turkish nationals able to undertake the position. Also, only one temporary protection beneficiary may be recruited in a workplace employing less than 10 people. Although this is an important step in terms of economic activities and the integration of Syrian migrants in Turkey, even so, it cannot be said to show the expected effect in terms of registered migrant employment (Erdoğan, 2019).

7.2 REGIONAL LEVEL

Due to the lack of data on NUTS-2 and NUTS-3 level⁴, no specific characterization regarding the unemployment rates of foreigners or TCNs can be provided. The high rate of unregistered employment must be taken into consideration, not only for Bursa but also for Turkey in general.

8. RESIDENTS WHO ACQUIRED CITIZENSHIP

Due to the lack of data on any of the levels, no specific characterization for the residents who acquired Turkish citizenship can be provided. Based on the secondary sources, only scattered numbers can briefly be mentioned. Turkish citizenship is primarily based on the principle of jus sanguinis (by descent). Turkish descendants may be eligible to acquire citizenship regardless of the place of birth. A foreigner or stateless person can acquire Turkish citizenship after birth by the decision of competent authority on the basis of several conditions, e.g. exceptional and marriage. Turkey also started a citizenship program as of 2017 with a regulation (2016/9601) by which investment conditions were determined to acquire Turkish citizenship. Accordingly, there is the news, released based on the data of the Ministry of Interior, in 2017-18 (Daily Sabah, 2019), 70 foreigners

⁴ There is no regional data on the unemployment rate for foreign population. Please see the attached excel file for only Turkish nationals in the region (NUTS2 level)

applied for Turkish citizenship by investing \$1 million each (Hurriyet Daily News, 2020). In September 2018, another amendment eased the minimum requirements⁵ for acquiring Turkish citizenship to encourage investment in Turkey. In July 2019, it was announced that 981 foreign investors became Turkish citizens since the 2018 amendment (Daily Sabah, 2019). In November 2020, the figure was updated as 7,312 foreigners who have become Turkish citizens over the past three years (2017-2020) by investing in property in Turkey. Accordingly, following September 2018 amendment, 7,242 foreigners from 93 countries made property investments in the country, each investing \$250,000, and acquired Turkish citizenship.

The issue of granting citizenship to Syrian migrants is another issue frequently brought up. There are dispersed and confusing numbers mentioned in different studies, rarely, though. In the study titled “Syrians Barometer 2017” (Erdoğan, 2017), it is stated that 38 thousand Syrians were granted as of November 2017. In March 2018, the Refugee Rights Sub-committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM, 2018) published an immigration and cohesion report and mentioned approximately 30,000 Syrians have acquired citizenship in the last 6 years (2011-2017). About 10,000 Syrians acquired citizenship either because they were from a Turkish mother and/or father or through marriage. Only 1% of Syrians living in Turkey acquired citizenship in that period, despite the stories about a very large number of Syrians in Turkey acquiring citizenship. This figure was briefly mentioned reached up to 60 thousand in 2018 in a news article (Özbey, 2018). As of December 2019, the number of Syrians who acquired Turkish citizenship was 110 thousand, according to the declarations made by the officials in their speech (Erdoğan, 2020).

9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

“Migrants, refugees are people, not numbers” is an important ethical statement which we need to consider for human/refugee rights. However, both the numbers and the statistics are important to give us a picture of the situation that exists in the field. The existence of data or the lack of data or unreliable data is a problem as it may mislead the design of the policies, and the priorities.

Overall, the general approach towards immigrants, particularly Syrians, also plays a role. The dominant perspective, not be accepted as a permanent part of the current and/or future society in Turkey, has not only an effect on policymaking and policy implementation but also data collection. Hence, to develop short, middle, and long-term strategies for harmonization, the availability of detailed data is crucial. Furthermore, without the

⁵ Foreigners who own real estate in Turkey worth a minimum \$250,000, instead of the previous limit of \$1 million, can currently acquire Turkish citizenship.

knowledge of the “universe”, various studies that have been conducted in the field were not representative. Syrians under Temporary Protection are registered to cities and their access to rights depends on this registration. However, for most in their search for work, they may go to other cities that they are not registered. Thus, some cities, including Bursa, are “closed cities”, they do not accept new registry which leads to a problem as this affects the reliability of the data. Syrians with temporary protection identity cards from other cities both have difficulty accessing the rights and also prefer to be unseen as they do not want to be sent back to the city they are registered in.

Furthermore, the informal economy in Turkey also is an obstacle to the collection of reliable data but at the same time, the livelihood of Syrians often depends on this informality. Although the decline in the risk of poverty rate for the citizens of Turkey is observed, poverty and social exclusion have been an important problem in Turkey. The Covid- 19 pandemic creates further risks for this vulnerable population. The wide gap between have and have nots still continues in Turkey, along with regional gaps. We lack comparative data on the Gini coefficient of the citizens of Turkey and the third-country nationals living in the country. Hence almost all research in different parts of Turkey demonstrate competition among the poor with respect to social assistance and informal labor that leads to tension rather than social cohesion.

Thus, informal labor means usually precarious and exploitative working conditions endangering the wellbeing of the Syrians, from child labor to work-related accidents. The vast majority of third- country nationals work without work permits and outside the protections of the law- no social security, low wages. Thus, this informal work is also common for the citizens of Turkey and as noted, competition among the poor lowers the wages that are already below the minimum. Furthermore, even with work permits, requested by prospective employers, Syrians are allowed to work in the province in which they are registered. The application for work permits time consuming and costly and needs renewal every year.

Syrians under TPS residing in Turkey have lower levels of education and especially those working in agriculture are mostly the ones who migrated from the rural areas in Syria. Considering the NUTS2 level, the region, especially Bursa, is among the rural areas with high agricultural production and textile production. This makes the region attractive for both seasonal agricultural workers and textile workers, both are mostly informal, with migrant backgrounds, and with low levels of education.

Unemployment is also a serious issue for a long time in Turkey. Over recent years, the increase in the unemployment rate in terms of the foreign population can generally be explained by the arrival of the Syrian population to Turkey. However, this does not mean that the inflow of Syrian migrants in the labor market has a significant effect on the overall

unemployment rate. This is mainly because an overwhelming proportion of the migrant workers are still employed in the informal sector, despite small procedural regulations providing rights to them to access to the Turkish labor market.

Regarding NEET figures, it is the fact Turkey has the highest NEET rate among the OECD countries. Several reasons such as political and socio-economic problems in Turkey caused by polarized politics, child labor, gender-related inequalities, giving up hope on finding jobs as well as migration have multi-layered effects on youth wellbeing in the country. The mismatch between young people's skills with the needs of the economy is also portrayed to explain the highest level of NEETs. More importantly, a considerable gender gap and the lower levels of female labor force participation have to be mentioned among the main reasons which cause an increase in the NEET rate in Turkey. Regarding migrant youth, the high level of NEET mostly refers to the arrivals of millions of Syrians to Turkey, and not to be well integrated into the job market as well as into the education system. The gender gap is also an obvious cause for the Syrian migrant population residing in Turkey.

To make a comprehensive analysis, the lack of data on acquiring citizenship is a very challenging issue. Although after 5 years of residence, immigrants can apply for naturalization, by completing language, economic and other requirements, it has still been criticized with discretionary and complex requirements. The issue of granting citizenship to Syrians under TPS is another issue frequently brought up in Turkey. However, there are only dispersed and confusing numbers mentioned in different studies.

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