

# PANEL 3: UNIVERSITY GRADUATES AND FOREIGNERS WITH PROFESSIONS & FOREIGN GRADUATES FROM TURKISH UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

## Keynote:

Dr. Matthias Schulze-Böing, *Offenbach Municipality*

## Moderator:

Assoc. Prof. Can Ünver, *Vice President of the UN Committee for Migration Workers*

## Panellists:

Assoc. Prof. Mahmut Kaya, *Şanlıurfa Harran University*

Assoc. Başak Yavçan, *TOBB University of Economics and Technology*

Ece Yılmaztürk, *Director of Ankara Kızılay Community Centre*



## Keynote

### Dr. Matthias Schulze-Böing

*Offenbach Municipality*

It's a great pleasure to have this opportunity to talk to you. I have been following what has been done in Turkey in regards to the migration issue and the refugee crisis, and in a German perspective Turkey deserves great respect and appreciation of what it has done and achieved in this area so far.

Germany, which hosts the largest number of refugees among the developed countries, has 1.1 million; Turkey on the other hand is hosting 4 million. This shows that the challenges in Turkey are even greater than in Germany.

Turkey's generosity, pragmatism, rationality could in some respect be an example for Germany. As you may know, formalisation, legal regulation and an attitude of perfectionism are features of the German way to approach integration. Sometimes however it could be wise to adopt some of the flexibility and pragmatism, which I have seen at the practices in Turkey, in order to make integration policies more effective and efficient.

We had the pleasure to cooperate with IGAM in a number of projects. We already have learnt a lot of how Turkey, its public services and – not the least – its NGO-sector is tackling the problems of the integration of refugees into the Turkish society and economy.

My presentation will cover general topics will be particularly relevant to the topic of integration through employment on the level of integration management.

First of all - participation in the economy and the attainment of economic self-sufficiency of immigrants is key for the integration in the host society as well as for securing the acceptance of immigrants by the citizenship.

But – the time needed to reach at a full economic integration of immigrants may be quite long. According to OECD estimates, full integration of

refugees and migrants into the labour market of developed countries can take five years or even more.

This may be too long for both, the immigrants and their families and the host society. Long times of economic inactivity may regarded as a waste of tax payers money, a waste of human capital and, not the least, a waste to life-time and motivation on the side of immigrants. As a consequence more efforts should be put on approaches to accelerate placement in employment and integration processes.

I want to present a brief summary of an approach of integration management, we have developed within a EU-funded transnational project, in which IGAM is also one of our partners.

We reviewed the policies implemented and the services offered. We are deeply convinced, that it is important to make immigrants co-actors and co-producers of integration from the first day on. Further on the potential of civil society organizations, partnerships of public services and private providers, not to forget immigrant self-organizations, should also be taken into serious consideration. Therefore partnership and network-management are key issues of good practice in integration policies. A close look to the conditions and the specific context of action on the local level should be regarded as key success factors as well. Not the "one-size-fits-all"-approach, but localized and context-sensitive strategies will deliver good results.

In a nutshell, accelerating integration processes is about

- Optimization of integration time
- Review and restart of implemented policies and services
- Multi-dimensional strategy, evaluation of policies, service delivery, service, products, types of communication, self-organization and the potential of civil society
- Implementation of time-based management methodologies (e.g. Speed Management, Critical Path methodology)

Our integrated strategies are as follows:

- Process optimization and simultaneous processing of different activities for integration, e. g. language training, job-skills trainings, and work practice can be organized not following each other in a consecutive way, but arranged simultaneously, parallel to each other.
- Product innovation, e. g. hybrid measures for language and skills training, computer based learning and, very recently, computer based coaching and guidance.
- Co-production, i. e. making clients (immigrants) actively take part in designing, conducting and assessing single measures and

broader integration policies on the local level (adopt elements of the methodology of “design thinking”, which has become very fashionable as a way accelerate product innovation and development in advanced parts of the private sector recently)

- We focus on capacity building issues, which means that we have to qualify our staff and management to think and work “time based”, overcome silo mentalities and be open to social innovation and fast changing service-designs.

These were a brief summary of our ideas and work. Thank you.

## Moderator

### **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Can Ünver**

*Vice President of UN Committee for Migrant Workers*

Thank you very much dear Dr. Schulze-Böing. First of all, I would like to thank IGAM and the organizations that have contributed to this meeting. Before starting, I would like to say a few words. I have been studying on migration for nearly forty years. My first study at Munich University was about the Turkish workers in Germany. These studies have been my job for a very long time. I have taken office as a labor attaché for many times in my bureaucratic life. Then, I become interested in the academic side of the subject. Recently, I also have a duty at the UN. As a result of our liberal visa policy since 1990s, Turkey has become a target in migration influxes for transit pass and settlement purposes. After 2011, we witnessed arrival of a significant number of people to our country survivors of the so-called Arab Spring. Meanwhile, I think that a very pleasing development occurred. Today, as we can see, there is a dynamic discussion environment here. Our migration related

institutions have experienced a learning and restructuring process in the recent years and they are still in a process open to development. We are also proud of them. At the same time, a very dynamic civil society environment has also arisen. There are migration researches centers in 25 universities in our country. We have recently founded the twenty sixth one at Istanbul Ayyansaray University. Therefore, this situation concerns both the Academia and the public institutions very closely. We have evaluated this integration issue somewhat differently and this is very good. We see that a concept, which is not established on cultural disintegration and differences, but rather a concept which will ensure harmonization of the people with the society through employment has been developed. We attach importance to harmonization, but a right-based approach should always be in the foreground. Turkey is becoming a country which sets norms and standards on migration. Turkey has had experiences since 1930 regarding utilization of trained and skilled human power. Great persons, who escaped from German Nazism and invited by Atatürk to Turkey with the attempt of Albert Einstein, contributed to establishment and development of universities in Turkey until the end of World War II.

Therefore, we are well-informed on benefiting from this. Also, in the current period, I believe that both the people being educated in Turkey and the people arriving as trained labor force would contribute at all points economically. But I would like to highlight that we should pay special attention for being rightful while looking after our own interests. This is for human dignity and among our international commitments.

Thank you very much for listening. Now I would like to introduce my colleagues. 2 estimable academicians are here. Assoc. Prof.

Dr. Mahmut Kaya is a member of Harran University which is one of the most important universities of the region. My dear friend Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak Yavçan is a member of TOBB Economy and Technology University. She is also a reputable academician in Turkey in relation to migration issues. Ece Yılmaztürk is the director of Ankara Red Crescent Community Center. We know that the Red Crescent has covered a considerable distance together with the other institutions in this respect. Now I would like to give the floor to Mr. Mahmut Kaya.

## Panellist

### **Assoc. Prof. Mahmut Kaya**

*Şanlıurfa Harran University*

I would like to thank all the institutions, which are the stakeholders of this conference, for their efforts. I will try to describe the problems experienced by the Syrian refugees by telling about my field experiences and the in-depth interviews I have made primarily in Şanlıurfa and somewhat in Gaziantep in relation to the access of the university graduate students and the refugees having a profession to employment. Business and economy are an important field highlighted across the whole integration literature. Set-up of a business by a refugee, his/her recovery from poverty is very important in terms of harmonization. We know that working is also a rehabilitation for people to recover from the postwar traumas. We could specify four main elements that affect the Syrian refugees in integration to business and employment:

1. General structure of the Syrian refugees in Turkey: This varies according to the provinces and regions. Factors that affect harmonization through employment such as the educational-cultural levels, work skills of the refugees and their gender rates; child-adult, man-woman, elderly-young rates.

2. The capacity, distribution of employment and sectors and unemployment rates in the cities where the refugees have settled in.
3. Legislation regulating the work conditions.
4. The current economic structure of the country, inflation, unemployment and foreign exchange fluctuations.

Within these four main frameworks, I would like to mention the data I have compiled directly from the interviews with the Syrians from field visits. The essential problem among both the university students and the persons having a profession is the legislation and equivalence problem. For the persons who have qualified professions, for example a lawyer, to be able to work in Turkey, his/her lawyer certificate needs to be approved by the authorities of the Republic of Turkey, otherwise he/she is not permitted to work. Status of the business fields has also an important role. Şanlıurfa is a city where the agriculture, construction and service sectors are at a high level and the industrial sector is at a low level. Gaziantep is just beside Şanlıurfa. Since it is an industry city, the refugees living there have somewhat more advantage. By the way Şanlıurfa is a city where the biggest number of refugees live, following İstanbul; there are nearly 460 thousand refugees in its frontier zone. Another problem is that the persons

with qualified professions cannot find a job. For example, I know a lawyer; he is working at a factory in return for subsistence wage. The subsistence wage is not 2020 TL; it is 1600 TL which is specific for the Syrians. He was a very reputable lawyer in Syria and now he is working at a factory for 1600 TL. The persons at the middle and lower profession group can find jobs relatively easy. However, qualified professional groups such as engineers, lawyers and dentists have extreme difficulty in finding a job. Being unable to speak Turkish sufficiently is an important factor. The applications for work permits take a long time in addition this the bureaucratic procedures are very longwinded and tiresome, which results in low numbers of applications. Moreover, unregistered employment and shadow businesses occur naturally. Interestingly, however, new areas of employment are emerging. International organizations and national associations, in particular the United Nations and its stakeholders, have turned out as areas of employment. Particularly people speaking more than one language are employed there. Those who are unable to find work in their own respective fields are employed there as translators, assistants, field workers or coordinators since they are able to speak a language. Healthcare centers can also turn out as work areas for refugees; i.e., the doctors are employed there. As a distinguishing feature, one factors preventing employment of the Syrians in Turkey is the economic crisis in Turkey. High rates of inflation and the currency fluctuations have impacted the Syrians as well. They are impacted in terms of finding work, dismissals, decreased purchasing power and becoming impoverished. For students and professionals, age and gender are the decisive factors. The employers seek to employ a certain age group among the Syrians. There is an association in Şanlıurfa called 'Rızık İstihdam Ofisi' (Employment Office for Livelihood) functioning as İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency) for Syrians which has acted as an intermediary for the employment

of 18,000 people up to now. According to their data, people aged between 18-28 are preferred for employment. In particular, the group aged 40 and over and the people who are members of a qualified profession cannot find work. Generally young women are able to find work. The risks for women that are over a certain age and widowed and the women who lack social support mechanisms are very different. Young girls who are able to speak a language and are educated are more easily employed. On the other hand, employment is largely unregistered. Effort has been made to render it more registered compared to the previous years. The legal basis was formed on the basis of Directive on Work Permit of Foreigners with Temporary Protection no. 6575 dated 2016. However, unregistered employment has interesting outcomes. For instance; the fear of losing social assistance leads to employment with long working hours for a low fee. Another outcome of unregistered employment is the usurpation of fee.

Prejudice is another basic problem. Although harmonization is somewhat strong in Şanlıurfa, there is still some prejudice against the Syrians. It turns out as a problem in terms of the hiring and employment of the Syrians. Due to the bureaucratic obstacles and the prolonged procedures that I just mentioned, there are sectors developing as unregistered ones. For instance, hairdressing, particularly hairdressing for women, is more common among the Syrians.

The relevant institution in Gaziantep does not allow employment of a hairdresser holding an official certificate -although there are no legal problems- so as not to narrow down the market. On the other hand, this work gets to be done as a mobile service. Doctors, hairdressers, etc. in Şanlıurfa find a chance to perform their profession in their own home or by being invited to the home of other people. Mobile Wi-Fi application has emerged as a new sector. In neighborhoods where the infrastructure is not available in the border regions, some people set up a station and sell internet through wireless

network and make a good income out of it. Besides, there is the issue of labor migration performed by migrants seasonally and temporarily among themselves. Due to high level of unemployment in Şanlıurfa, there is a work-related migration to other cities. In contrast, due to the fact that Şanlıurfa is no stranger to Syria in terms of culture, people can choose to live in Şanlıurfa with poverty that is just enough to put bread on the table, in order not to stay away from their familiar cultural environment. There are problems arising from the working conditions. Discrimination and abuse can occur, especially among the female workers. There are certain criteria to receive citizenship. Citizenship procedures of persons who work under insurance for a certain period of time may take less time. For this reason, there may be people wishing to accelerate their citizenship procedures by paying the insurance premium to the employer without going to work. In the end,

there is actually a very simple solution: Work environments where the refugees can exist with their own language, religion, identity and gender need to be established and their security must be ensured. Legal texts and bureaucratic procedures must be transformed into a structure that will facilitate harmonization. Inspection in border areas is very poor. This paves the way for plenty of abuse. Inspections should be made more frequent in all areas and the rights should be protected. The refugee population in border provinces is very high; a fair distribution of load must be ensured. The workforce is too much, and the employment area is insufficient; the labor force especially in the border regions can be distributed to other industrial cities. Institutions and organizations carrying out projects related to refugees should turn to employment- and production-oriented projects. These are the remedies that will alleviate problems. Thank you for listening patiently.



### Panellist

## **Assoc. Prof. Başak Yavçan**

*TOBB University of Economics and Technology*

**H**ello all, first of all I would like to thank you for this nice event. Despite all our activities, we are still encountered with great problems in terms of integration with labor markets.

Around 40 thousand Syrian refugees have received work permits; however, it is estimated that around 1 million people are non-registered workers. As I discuss the subject, I will focus on the integration to education. I will talk about some studies; however, there are two studies that I largely conduct with the university students. One of them is our joint study with the American University of Beirut which is about further access and attendance to school

Here, I will touch upon the reflection of the equivalence processes in the universities and schools, which was discussed before in terms of vocations. Secondly and largely, I will talk about a study that we carry out in cooperation with Prof. Dr. Murat Erdoğan. I will rather evaluate the perceptions on university education, expectations for the future and the attitudes towards living in Turkey among the Syrian academicians and university students. Noting that generally 200 Syrian academicians are studying in Turkey, I will rather focus on the students. Education is very important as a target of harmonization. Basic education, primary, secondary, high school and university education constitute a social and economic harmonization framework for us, by creating a middle-class model at the same time. Especially looking at the example of university students, these students are in a significant position for establishing communication with the university students from the local community and setting an example for the individuals from their own group. Conducted studies show that the contact between the groups is important in terms of decreasing prejudice and increasing social harmonization. However, it is not any contact but the contact that takes place at equal level, which is significant. Being seated on the same seats, attending to the conference or taking a lecture is a harmonization relationship at the same level. Unfortunately, when we call someone to fix something at home, it does not create similar results for social harmonization, since it is not a contact at the same class level.

Syrian refugees have a schooling ratio of about 62% in the primary education. When this ratio is compared to the initial years of the crisis, it shows that a significant progress has been made. However, there is a critical situation for us. Although we have achieved a schooling of 62-63%, there is a serious decline in schooling ratio from grade 4 of the primary education. We observe that it is a problem for us to feed into the university.

Looking at the profile of the university students in Turkey, almost half of them have already studied at a university in Syria and are studying again in Turkey. Looking at the Syrians at higher education, the achievement made in access to the basic education, this achievement is a model application in which there are exemptions from tuition fees and university education funds from different institutions to 20-25% of these students. In general, 27,000 students study at various universities in Turkey in 2018-2019 academic year.

There are programs which provide education in Arabic, as well as those in Turkish especially in the regional universities. In this respect, in terms of schooling ratio there are obstacles for Syrians to attend the university or to the high school before that. According to some focus groups in a different study that I conducted; child labor is the reason why. Since the parents receive a lower wage, children need to work at the secondary or high school age, even before they come to the university level. Also, university education is not economically easy. Although the tuition fee is not paid, it is an education that needs to be supported financially. If the student is studying in a different province, economic situation is yet again a significant variable. A critical aspect that stands out when we talk to the Syrian academicians is that, although the academicians have specialized in different majors like history or geography, they have been appointed to Arabic Language and Literature or Theology as they are fluent in Arabic. In parallel, we can see that the students cannot study in the majors they want to. We see that most of them cannot always study the majors they want to due to their performance at the university entrance exams and foreign student exams; they study at the departments with a higher quota, instead.

Now I would like to continue with the results of Elite Dialogue survey concerning university students that we performed in the last months of 2018. There are eligible scholarship

programs for university students. However, the ratio of those receiving scholarship declines significantly, despite some increase in the number of those who benefit from the programs as the number of university students increases. We can see that almost half of the university students need to work full-time or part-time to sustain their living.

Another characteristic of the Syrian university students is that they are extremely vulnerable. Its first aspect is economic vulnerability. Although they used to have a significantly higher wage when they lived in Syria, we observe that there is a serious decline in their income as they come to Turkey. The only positive and pleasant point is that university students have more positive expectations from life, maybe because they are students. However, majority of students think that they cannot find a job after graduation or they will work in unqualified labor force. When we think about the issue of university students' returning to Syria, there is relatively more positive social approach towards their stay, since they constitute an educated community. Looking at what the university students think about it, we can see that there are particular conditions for leaving and staying. The rate of those who say "I will never go back" increased from 26-27% to 34% in two years. The rate of those who say "I will go back no matter what" decreased from 11% to 5%.

When asked if they are interested in placement in a third country, almost 50% say that they would like to go to another country under different conditions. They say that they would do that if their education is discontinued or if they cannot find a job. Looking at the countries they would prefer, Gulf countries are more apparent now, most probably because of the decreased possibility of placement in Western countries.

When they are asked "What are your most critical problems?" – once again reminding that this group consists of Syrian university students – they have problems specifically representing their group, rather than basic needs. To them,

studying and working conditions are the most worrying problems. When asked about what kind of a status they would like in Turkey, we observe that the most popular one is double nationality. Then, we observed that the status of work permit that does not have any limitation (as an imaginary status), would be quite popular.

We can see that they do not present great social distance in terms of their relations with the local community with regards to social harmonization, which is our main point. Actually, the social distance of Turkish community from Syrians is much greater. Another significant point for harmonization is confidence in institutions. There is a tendency of increase in terms of confidence in institutions between the 1st and 2nd rounds of the survey. This is an interesting point and it is regarded as such all around the world. Migrants have more confidence in the institutions of the relevant country than the local community. It is particularly the case with refugees because they have a more positive view of the institutions that host them in their country of destination, since the institutions in their country of origin are in a poor condition.

We have carried out a more in-depth study on the social distance. Here, employment is a critical indicator. Social distance of those who work is much lower than those who don't. In other words, they are much less biased against local community. Here we can see that participation in employment has a great contribution to social harmonization.

Public diplomacy and citizenship represent yet another critical point. We expected that the Syrians who have become citizens would have more positive view of local community. However, the survey results were entirely contrary. Syrian students who have become citizens were more distant to local community. When we started to dig into the reason why, we found that there were personal stories that do not reflect to the figures. These stories mainly involved the situations in which a Syrian

university student shared the information that he/she became a Turkish citizen with a local and saw a much greater reaction. He/she tends to keep a larger social distance as a result of this reaction, most probably.

We observed that having scholarship had a similar effect. We realized that the students on scholarship were more faced with discrimination. That the details of scholarship conditions and the origin of funds are not shared, and the situation thereof is not very well described, cas-

es reactions based on realistic competition concerns. In conclusion, university students have serious concerns regarding harmonization, and their concerns are significant for us since they are make up the group which is the closest to harmonization. However, if progress is made in areas which require proper management the most, it seems that obtaining much more positive results can be possible. Thank you very much for patience.

## Panellist

### Ece Yilmaztürk

*Ankara Kızılay Community Center*

*Director*

I would like to thank the hosts of our conference on behalf of myself and the Turkish Red Crescent for their kind invitation.

We can take up the humanitarian aid operations for the Syrian crisis following the year 2011 in three periods. These can be summarized as, firstly, the services provided for the Syrians who crossed the border to come to Turkey in temporary accommodation areas, and then, activities carried out covering FRIT I (EU Financial Assistance Program for Refugees in Turkey) period for the harmonization of Syrians moved from camps to the urban areas, and the activities to be carried out in the upcoming FRIT II period, particularly concerning improving their sources of income and increasing their employment opportunity.

When we started with the humanitarian aid operations regarding the Syrian Crisis in 2011, people who came crossing the border were hosted in temporary accommodation areas. Later, in the recent years, the phenomenon of urban refugees has emerged as they moved to the cities. As a consequence, the harmonization of Syrians living in the cities started to be discussed. Today, as Turkish Red Crescent, we have 16

Community Centers in total. What do we do in these centers? Which services do we provide to whom? Generally, I will talk about these. The main objective of the Turkish Red Crescent Community-Based Migration Programs is to ensure the psychological, social and economic wellbeing of the Syrians under temporary protection outside the camp in Turkey, as well as foreigners with international protection status and the local community, to increase their social resilience and to carry out post-crisis assistance and development activities by ensuring the development of the culture of co-existence with the local community in social harmonization.

Target audience of the services of the Community Centers, as a priority, includes the vulnerable people such as the handicapped, the elderly, and the individuals who have been exposed to violence. Our Community Centers aim to bring their services to all those in need living in the region of their service area, regardless of their religion, language and race.

Four main programs are implemented under the Community Centers, which include Protection, Development of Source of Income, Social Harmonization, Health and Psycho-social Support Program. Here, I would like to focus on the program of the source of income. This program aims to improve the vocational capacities of those in need being under temporary protection and international protection in our country, as well as

the local community, and to increase their employability, and to support guidance towards employment and entrepreneurship in order to ensure their self-sufficiency. This program has reached out to 28,888 people so far. These include people who participated in the vocational and Turkish language courses, were guided towards employment and included in entrepreneurship programs. There are three main sub-programs of the development of source of income. These are guidance towards employment, entrepreneurship, farming and stock-breeding.

Talking about the guidance towards employment program, every employer expects employees to speak Turkish language at a certain level. At present, many people continue to Turkish language teaching throughout the day at any community center. It is ensured that the people contact with the employers in the region based on their previous vocational experience and knowledge with our profile creation and guidance towards employment activities. Vocational trainings are provided in areas that the market needs. Employers are supported with the payment of the work permit charges in order to make registered employment more appealing.

Separate groups attend to the tailoring course at our center in the morning and in the afternoon. Monthly contribution in kind of 15.000 TL can be made available to our course participants with the support to household production project. Many occasional activities are also carried out with our course participants in different parts of Ankara. For example, activity of clothing sewing has been performed for the students studying at a school identified in Polatli, who were found to be in need of support, to wear during the ceremony of 23 April National Sovereignty and Children's Day, this year.

The hairdressing course in our center is yet another activity that we carry out with the Public Education center. Some of our course participants who were entitled to receive a certificate

for this course, and who graduated from this course in the previous years started to use a room in their places as a hairdresser saloon and contribute to the household income. In addition, our course participants occasionally visit the nursing centers for the elderly to support the individuals with their self-care.

Another project of ours for providing a source of income is "There Is Hope in the Kitchen" project. Project was launched 3 months ago. Training activities are ongoing with the participants who were identified as a result of the interviews made with the candidates. As a result of the cooking training provided to a total number of 60 people in two groups under the project carried out with the cooperation with WFP and WALD, course participants will also complete their probation stage and will be placed in a job. It will be ensured that the foreigners with an engineer or technician background achieve the qualifications as a SAP Counselor in areas that the clients and business partners of SAP Turkey need and that they are employed in appropriate firms, with our SAP counseling project which is yet to start.

Also, there are many foreigners who have graduated from the School of Law among those who apply to our community centers. We will have opened the path for these individuals who cannot perform their profession in Turkey due to the vocational equivalence condition, with our ECHO-supported and certificated "Judicial Operations" course, which we are yet to launch in Ankara, and is already operating in some community centers in different provinces of Turkey, so that they can work in the law offices and courthouses.

80 people will be provided training by means of our wood flooring, natural gas pipe laying, welding, automotive electrician's courses (in cooperation with MEKSA) and it is aimed to ensure 20% employment. In general, the period of employment of the people who start working may be shorter than expected due to the mismatch between the expectations of



the employees and employers although employment-guaranteed vocational training programs are implemented. Therefore, support programs for the individuals are implemented to develop social skills, in order to provide a solution to the problems which can be attributable to the curse participants.

Quite recently, our projects on farming and stockbreeding have accelerated in all parts of Turkey. Cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is ensured in order to provide theoretical and practical vocational training to the beneficiaries through the stakeholders in the provinces within the scope of the project, meet their material and equipment needs and enhance cooperation for the employment of the beneficiaries. For example, course participants from among the local community and Syrians are provided training on mushroom cultivation in Adana. We also have fresh fruit and vegetable growing course in Bursa, lavender growing courses in Mardin and medicinal and aromatic plant growing course in Şanlıurfa. It is aimed for the individuals who have vocational skills in a particular area but do not have an income

but developed vocational skills with the courses they participated, to generate income by means of household production and small-scale farming and stock-breeding activities.

We have started with a new program on entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship trainings are started to be provided under this project which we will implement with TOBB ETÜ in 6 provinces. We have already received applications from Ankara that are quite higher than expected. 150 people to be identified will be provided entrepreneurship training from the basic level to advanced, and 10 people to be determined will be provided contribution in kind amounting to 50 thousand TL each, at the end of the training period. Later, they will also be provided incubation and mentorship support with the idea camps to be developed.

Before I end my words, I would like to mention our stakeholders and supporters. European Union, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Norwegian Red Cross, German Red Cross, UNCHR, UNICEF, IOM and WFP are the distinguished organizations that we work with.



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Conference Report

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# SOCIAL HARMONIZATION OF FOREIGNERS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT



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## **Report of the Conference on Social Harmonization of Foreigners Through Employment**

ANKARA PROVINCIAL DIRECTORATE OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT  
THE RESEARCH CENTRE ON ASYLUM AND MIGRATION, IGAM

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## - Conference Report -



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This report contains a broad summary of the presentations and opinions presented at the conference, and the views contained in the report may not fully reflect the official views of the Ankara Governorship Provincial Directorate of Migration Management and the Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (IGAM) or the organizations to which the participants are affiliated.

# List of Acronyms

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>BELBİS</b>      | Municipality Information System  |
| <b>ECHO</b>        | European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations                      |
| <b>EU</b>          | European Union   |
| <b>FRIT</b>        | The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey   |
| <b>GHI (GSS)</b>   | General Health Insurance   |
| <b>GIZ</b>         | The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit                    |
| <b>GPP</b>         | Global Project Partners  |
| <b>IGAM</b>        | The Research Centre on Asylum and Migration                                    |
| <b>ILO</b>         | International Labour Organization  |
| <b>IOM</b>         | International Organization for Migration                                       |
| <b>IPA</b>         | Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance  |
| <b>ISKUR</b>       | Turkish Employment Agency  |
| <b>KEDV</b>        | Foundation for the Support of Women's Work                                     |
| <b>LFIP (YUKK)</b> | Law on Foreigners and International Protection                                 |
| <b>MNE (MEB)</b>   | Ministry of National Education   |
| <b>MPG</b>         | Migration Policy Group   |
| <b>NGO</b>         | Non-governmental organization  |
| <b>NIEM</b>        | National Information Exchange Model  |
| <b>OECD</b>        | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development                          |
| <b>OSTİM</b>       | Middle Eastern Commercial and Industrial Center                                |
| <b>PSS (PSD)</b>   | Psychosocial support   |
| <b>RIAC</b>        | Regional Integration Accelerators Project                                      |
| <b>RT</b>          | Republic of Turkey   |
| <b>SAP</b>         | Systems, Applications and Products   |
| <b>SCC (SHM)</b>   | Social Care Center   |
| <b>SONİM</b>       | Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center                                      |
| <b>SSGSSK</b>      | Social Security and General Health Insurance Law                               |
| <b>TBB</b>         | Union of Municipalities in Turkey  |
| <b>TOBB</b>        | Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey                            |
| <b>TOBB ETU</b>    | TOBB University of Economics and Technology                                    |
| <b>TOMER</b>       | Turkish and Foreign Language Research and Application Center                   |
| <b>TRT</b>         | Turkish Radio and Television Corporation                                       |
| <b>TUGODER</b>     | Int. Turcoman Immigrant Refugees Solidarity Association                        |
| <b>TUIK</b>        | Turkish Statistical Institute  |
| <b>TURKONFED</b>   | Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation                                  |
| <b>TUSIAD</b>      | Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association                             |
| <b>UN</b>          | United Nations   |
| <b>UNHCR</b>       | United Nations Refugee Agency  |
| <b>UNICEF</b>      | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund                         |
| <b>UNRWA</b>       | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East |
| <b>YOS</b>         | Examination for Foreign Students   |
| <b>YTB</b>         | Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities                             |
| <b>WALD</b>        | World Academy for Local Government and Democracy                               |
| <b>WFP</b>         | World Food Program   |

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## Preface

# A Step Towards the First Global Refugee Forum; Conference on Social Harmonization of Foreigners through Employment



Turkey has been hosting **four million** refugees as of June 2019. Although the entries to the country, voluntary returns and placements in a third country are ongoing in relatively small numbers, this critically huge humanitarian problem of displacement has become long term. It has been exactly nine years since the start of the flux of the individuals who only fled from Syria and requested protection from Turkey (date of the first entries was **29 April 2011**). As historical records were statistically broken, the developments in Syria as the core reasons of the problem, resulted in the extension of the load on the neighboring countries like Turkey and Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq to a period **close to ten years**. As time goes by, this historical forced migration gained new dynamics in the host communities and other places in the world, and it continues to do so at present. Although we can be sure that the overwhelming majority of the refugees will return to their country when a solution within the scope of international guarantees is provided, that is acceptable to the whole Syrian community, **there is an increasing need for an environment in which social harmonization is built and co-existence culture is developed** in the period up to the time when the conditions thereto are made available. With these ideas and assumptions in mind, the Government of

the Republic of Turkey considers policy shifts in the sectors of education, language learning, employment, accommodation and social acceptance, taking into consideration the realities in the field. **In this respect, harmonization strategy document was developed and the year 2019 was declared the “Harmonization Year”.**

Social harmonization is a multi-faceted process which also takes time. Acceptance and harmonization of the differences between the cultural habits of the refugees and the individuals of the host community require great effort. There are close ties between the components of a good harmonization strategy. **Employment is one of the most important elements** of the registered harmonization to the labor market. Despite quite significant steps taken in this field, employment of a community of four million is an extremely challenging, almost impossible situation even for the most developed economies. Constant effort must be exerted to overcome this problem. Achievement in the employment of refugees will bring their potential to the fore and help them and their families to economically survive in a way that is compatible with human dignity and ensure their development. Also, they will contribute to the economic development and stability of the host community and country. As part of this awareness,

**Governorate of Ankara, Provincial Directorate of Migration Management and Research Center on Asylum and Migration (IGAM)** organized a Conference on Social Harmonization of Foreigners through Employment and brought together all relevant stakeholders. It was aimed to convene the representatives from the public and private sector, NGOs, academy, international organizations, foreign experts and refugees-foreigners around a table to discuss the challenges and opportunities for employment. The conference held on 27-28 June 2019 in Ankara, which was the **first of its kind in Turkey** received a great deal of attention. Problems concerning employment, legal legislation and other elements of harmonization, mainly employment and education were dealt with in detail. Strong support of the **General Directorate of Migration Management** helped open up such a sincere and transparent channel for discussion and provision of a solution.

This report constitutes the most significant output of the Conference. As the General Directorate of Migration Management, Governorate of Ankara Provincial Directorate of Migration Management and IGAM, we believe that the subjects taken up, shared good examples and the suggested possible solutions will guide the upcoming policies and projects, as well as the individuals who wish to conduct studies. Conference was organized with generous finan-

cial contributions of the **Qudra Programme**, a regional action co-financed by the European Union and the German Government and the **Durable Solutions Platform**. We would like to thank all participants of the conference, experts who moderated the panels and delivered speeches, stakeholders who shared good examples, distinguished moderators of the round table discussions and guests who made contributions. We are grateful to the estimable experts of the Governorate of Ankara Provincial Directorate of Migration Management Harmonization and Communication Department who carried out the preparations for months, our Project Coordinator Mr. Turker Saliji, our Project Assistants Mr. Kerim Can Kara, Ms. Janet Eke, Ms. İrem Aynagöz and Ms. Şebnem Belfin Baki, our editor Ms. Rhyan Fritzel, and our rapporteurs Ms. Elif Özge Uslu and Ms. Büşra Efe for their efforts.

**We believe that the conference and its report will shed light on the preparations of Turkey for the Global Refugee Forum to be held, co-hosted by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Switzerland, to be jointly organized by Turkey, Costa Rica, Ethiopia and Germany on 17-18 December 2019 in Geneva, to which President of the Republic of Turkey Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan confirmed their participation.**

**Metin Çorabatır**

*President of the Research Centre on  
Asylum and Migration*