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**Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under  
Temporary Protection in Turkey**

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EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS DO?**

**Needs Analysis on Building Capacity in  
Workers' and Employers' Organizations**

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Prof. Dr. Seyhan ERDOĐDU

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .....	7
Acknowledgments .....	9
Abbreviations .....	10
Executive Summary .....	13
<b>1. Introduction: Background .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2. Syrians Under Temporary Protection in Turkey and ILO Strategy .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3. Description of Concepts and Research Methodology.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4. Sample Selection .....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1. Central Level .....	33
4.1.1. Labour Unions.....	33
4.1.2. Employers' organizations.....	34
4.1.3. Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen – TESK .....	35
4.2. Local Level.....	37
<b>5. General Information on Qualitative Data .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>6. Findings .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>6.1. Part I: Determination of Existing     and Desired Performance .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>6.1.1.</b> Desired performance: Establishing contact points with SUTPs.....	<b>41</b>
<b>6.1.2.</b> Desired performance: Developing solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies based on human rights and decent work opportunities relating to SUTPs. ....	52

6.1.3. Desired performance: Delivering the SUTP-related policies to members and parent organizations.....	64
6.1.4. Desired performance: Engaging in solidarity-oriented and inclusive activities in relation to SUTPs; trying to promote decent work opportunities. ....	67
6.1.5. Desired performance: Discussing issues related to Syrian workers in social dialogue bodies or platforms. ....	74
6.1.6. Desired performance: Cooperating with NGOs and refugee associations on SUTP-related issues. ....	78
6.1.7. Desired performance: Developing creative ideas and activities to ensure decent work opportunities for SUTPs. ....	81
6.1.8. Desired performance: Ensuring that rank-and-file members of the organization have a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs. ....	87

**6.2. Part II: Training Needs and Recommendations ..... 94**

**7. References ..... 109**

Annex 1. List of Interviews.....	111
Annex 2. Questionnaire .....	113
Annex 3. Draft Training Programme.....	117
Annex 4. Workshop Note .....	118



As the Syrian crisis goes through its eighth year, it is all the more important that Syrians who have had to leave their countries and taken refuge in Turkey should be equipped with self-subsistence means and have decent work. We, as the ILO Office for Turkey, engage in activities to contribute to Syrians having income sources and access to the labour market in a healthy way in formal and regular jobs.

All our activities proceed under a strategy with three components we have developed for Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey:

- 1) Increase the availability of a skilled, competent and productive labour supply
- 2) Support an enabling environment for business development and economic growth to address job creation
- 3) Provide support to strengthening institutional capacity and implementation of inclusive development policies.

Relying on ILO's tri-partite structure, we engage in all such activities of developing decent work in cooperation and coordination with governments, workers' and employers' organizations. It is obviously beyond comprehension that workers' and employers' organizations can remain indifferent to the refugee crisis with impact deeply felt in the labour market.

The present study represents a needs analysis with a view to enhancing the capacities of workers' and employers' organizations in order to promote decent work for Syrians. I do hope that this study, which reveals the perspectives and current activities of workers' and employers' organizations which are critically important in supporting formal and organized employment of Syrians, will fill a significant gap in the area, and be beneficial to all institutions and researchers.

**Numan ÖZCAN**  
**Director of the ILO Office for Turkey**



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I am grateful to the executives and representatives of the organizations who have spared their time and shared their knowledge, experiences and recommendations with me during the execution of this work. I would also like to thank YOL-IS Union and YOL-IS Adana Branch for the support which allowed interviews in Adana, Mersin, Hatay and Gaziantep to be completed easily and in a short time.

This study will have reached its goal, if it can make a contribution to our thinking on what workers' and employers' organizations can do to support the employment of Syrians in Turkey in decent jobs.

**Prof. Dr. Seyhan ERDOĞDU**

## Abbreviations

<b>3RP</b>	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
<b>ADAPTESK</b>	Project to Increase Adaptability of Tradesmen and Craftsmen
<b>AFAD</b>	Disaster and Emergency Management Agency
<b>BIRLESIK-METAL</b>	United Metal Workers Union
<b>CELIK-IS</b>	Trade Union in Steel, Iron, Metal and Auto Industry
<b>DGMM</b>	Directorate-General of Migration Management
<b>DISK</b>	Confederation of Progressive Labour Unions of Turkey
<b>ESOB</b>	Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen
<b>ETUC</b>	European Trade Union Confederation
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GENEL-IS</b>	General Services Workers Union of Turkey
<b>GIDA-IS</b>	Food Industry Workers' Union of Turkey
<b>GIZ</b>	German International Cooperation Agency
<b>HAK-IS</b>	Hak-Is Trade Union Confederation
<b>HIZMET-IS</b>	All Municipal and General Service Workers' Union
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IMPR</b>	International Middle East Peace Research Centre
<b>INGEV</b>	Human Development Foundation
<b>INTES</b>	Turkish Employers' Association of Construction Industries
<b>ISKUR</b>	Turkish Employment Agency
<b>ITUC</b>	International Trade Union Confederation
<b>MEB</b>	Ministry of National Education
<b>MEKSA</b>	Vocational Education and Small Industry Support Foundation

<b>MESS</b>	Turkish Employers' Association of Metal Industries
<b>MoLSS</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
<b>MoNE</b>	Ministry of National Education
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OZ GIDA-IS</b>	Trade Union for Workers in Food and Tobacco and Beverages Industry
<b>OZ INSAAT-IS</b>	Trade Union for Construction Workers
<b>OZ IPLIK-IS</b>	Trade Union for Workers in Textile, Weaving, Knitting and Garment Industry
<b>SUTP</b>	Syrian under Temporary Protection
<b>TAIEX</b>	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
<b>TARIM ORMAN-IS</b>	Agriculture and Forestry Employees Union
<b>TEKGIDA-IS</b>	Food and Auxiliary Workers' Union of Turkey
<b>TEKSTIL-IS</b>	Textile Workers Union
<b>TESK</b>	Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen
<b>TISK</b>	Turkish Confederation of Employers' Associations
<b>TTSIS</b>	Turkish Textile Employers' Association
<b>TUGIS</b>	Turkish Food & Beverage Industry Employers' Association
<b>TURK METAL</b>	Turkish Metal Union
<b>TURK-IS</b>	Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
<b>TURKSTAT</b>	Turkish Statistical Institute
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>YOL-IS</b>	Road-Construction Workers' Union of Turkey





## Executive Summary

The present text is the final report of the needs analysis that sought to identify and assess the needs of workers' and employers' organizations relating to the promotion of decent work opportunities for Syrians under temporary protection (SUTPs). The report also includes recommendation for a training programme for building capacity in workers' and employers' organizations in the context of decent work and working conditions for SUTPs.

The concept of "need" is used in this report not in individual or functional terms but in the context of organizational needs. The needs analysis basically adopted a normative approach in determining the gap between the actual and expected performance of organizations. In this vein, attempt was first made to determine whether workers' and employers' organizations had deficiencies in promoting decent work for SUTPs. Then it was investigated whether training could be a part of the solution in remedying such deficiencies.

The survey method was selected as a research tool fit for small-scale qualitative social projects. The sample pool comprises three big labour confederations namely, the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (TURK-IS), Hak-Is Trade Union Confederation (HAK-IS), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK) and affiliated unions; Turkish Confederation of Employers' Associations (TISK) and its member organizations; Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK) and affiliated Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen and Federations of Tradesmen and Craftsmen.

Qualitative data were collected through face-to-face interviews conducted mainly with the representatives of selected organizations by using a questionnaire facilitated by a questionnaire guide. In order to collect qualitative data as the basis of needs analysis, 50 interviews, 26 of which were at province level were conducted in May-June 2017. Of these interviews 40 were face-to-face, 7 were by completing a questionnaire, and 2 by phone calls. There was also one focus group meeting with workplace representatives.

In the context of the adopted normative approach, eight headings were selected with respect to existing and expected performance of organizations covered in the survey in supporting the provision of decent working conditions to SUTPs.

## **1. Establishing contact points with SUTPs**

It is important that organizations have contact points with Syrians to promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs. Although Turkey has been receiving irregular migration from different countries since the 1990s and is presently the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world, organizations covered by the analysis have only limited institutional contact with SUTPs. Despite this limited contact however, chambers of tradesmen under TESK recruit an increasing number of Syrian tradesmen as their members. Although very few, there are also some Syrian workers affiliated with labour unions. However, there is need to organize these contacts as active units in providing decent work opportunities for SUTPs star-



ting from the level of confederations and going down to affiliated organizations, local chambers and branches in a coordinated and systematic manner. It will be beneficial to establish local “contact points” as well as central units to coordinate these contact points with the aim of promoting decent work for Syrians and directing informal tradesmen and workers to formal employment by ESOBs that already have a significant number of Syrian tradesmen or in such sectors as textiles, metal works, food, construction, etc. where many Syrians work. The existing infrastructure, facilities, and bodies such as vocational and technical training centres of employer associations of TISK; training and counselling bodies under TESK; ISKUR service points to be created within TESK chambers on the basis of the Protocol of Cooperation signed by ISKUR and TESK on 24 July 2017; and training and organization units of labour unions can be used for this purpose. It is important to increase the number of such practices and to establish similar structures within TESK, TISK and labour union structures, especially within chambers and unions of tradesmen.

## **2. Developing solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies based on human rights and decent work opportunities relating to SUTPs**

For workers’ and employers’ organizations to promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs they must have adopted a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach built on human rights and the right to work of refugees. According to TISK, Turkey’s “open-door policy” for Syrian refugees and efforts to respond to their basic needs represent responsibility that must be fulfilled from a humanitarian perspective. TESK generally approaches the issue of SUTPs in the context of problem created by unfair competition between local tradesmen and unregistered Syrians. As far as labour unions concerned, all three confederations approve the open-door policy, but they have concerns about negative impacts on labour markets given the high number of SUTPs. All three confederations favour arrangements that would ensure formal employment of SUTPs on

equal terms with local labour force in order to curb such negative effects. Another issue of emphasis is the insufficient support given by developed countries, including EU countries, when it comes to opening doors and assisting refugees. With respect to the discourse adopted, DISK relies on class solidarity, TURK-IS focuses on negative labour market effects, and HAK-IS points out to the need for integration in compliance with government policies towards SUTPs. It is observed that there is need for discussions on a holistic, long-term and solution-focused policy for SUTPs at both headquarters and local level.

### **3. Delivering SUTP-related policies to members and parent organizations**

The support by workers' and employers' organizations to decent work for SUTPs depends on their development of inclusive and solidarity-oriented policies based on human rights and the right to work and, more importantly, on reaching their lower organizational levels and rank-and-file members with these policies. Union publications, training programmes and gatherings are the instruments of realising this union articulation. There is need that labour unions increase their publications covering different aspects of the issue of SUTPs and include in their training programmes basic issues relating to labour migration in general and SUTPs in particular. The need for such publications and training programmes seems to be a priority for TESK in particular.

### **4. Engaging in solidarity-oriented and inclusive activities in relation to SUTPs; trying to promote decent work opportunities**

The following can be considered as the first stage for workers' and employers' organizations in fulfilling expected performance in promoting decent work for SUTPs: Establishing contact points with SUTPs; developing inclusive policies defending the human rights and the right to work of Syrians; and spreading these policies to all

levels through training programmes, gatherings and publications. The second stage comprises the implementation of these policies by workers' and employers' organizations and engagement in activities that promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs. With respect to solidarity-oriented and inclusive activities and promoting decent work opportunities, it can be said that employers' organizations are not active in this field while tradesmen's and workers' organizations have their initiatives in the fields of humanitarian assistance and vocational training. Employers' organizations have considerable experience and infrastructure in the field of vocational training. Employers' organizations, relevant government organizations, international organizations and labour unions may gather on a joint platform to develop projects for providing decent work to SUTPs. As far as TESK and its member organizations are concerned, a coordinated registration campaign can serve as an important step in transforming Syrian tradesmen into formal status. As for Syrians informally working for tradesmen, the priority issue is the prevention of child labour. In achieving this, it will be a positive contribution if TESK's workplace inspection and counselling groups are mobilized and if ESOBs play an active role in the commission "Improving access to vocational training of Syrians under temporary protection" established by the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Training of the Ministry of Education. ISKUR-TESK Protocol of Cooperation dated 24 July 2017 envisages the establishment of ISKUR service delivery points within the chambers of TESK. In the coming period these service points can serve as significant instruments in ensuring TESK's and its chambers' contribution to the promotion of decent work opportunities. As to labour unions they must first of all build awareness within and at sector level concerning the rights, problems and working conditions of informally employed Syrian workers and develop axes of solidarity with Syrian workers at sector level.

## **5. Discussing issues related to Syrian workers in social dialogue bodies or platforms**

In relation to its dimension concerning working life, we see that the issue of SUTPs is not addressed in the meetings of the Tripartite Labour Board and Labour Councils. The present survey could reach no finding that, as a nationwide social dialogue platform, the “Economy and Labour Force Working Group” formed by the Prime Ministry in relation to SUTPs and coordinated by ISKUR is actually functional. It is observed that social parties are not considered as NGOs that can be included in migration-related advisory boards under the Directorate-General of Migration Management (DGMM) and Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS), and workers’, employers’ and tradesmen’s organizations have not made any application in this regard. Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards are important social dialogue platforms which presently discuss SUTP-related issues but without discussing and finalizing systematic solutions. In cooperation with ISKUR, social partners need to transform Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards into active platforms promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs. It is inferred that meetings organized by national and international organizations and their upper bodies are influential on all organizations in terms of policy development and approach to the issue of SUTPs from the perspective of human rights and the right to work.

## **6. Cooperating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and refugee associations on SUTP-related issues**

In terms of both humanitarian assistance and social services and livelihood opportunities NGOs play active roles in the Syrian refugee crisis. As of October 2015, 139 international NGOs were accredited in Turkey in the context of refugee interventions and about half of such accreditations came after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis. These international NGOs support local NGOs in a wide range of activities including strengthening protection and providing services

to refugees and asylum seekers who live off-camp. Many of these NGOs are presently UN partners and engaged in 3RP interventions. However, cooperation with these NGOs and refugee associations by TISK, TESK and labour unions remains rather limited. The recent inactivity of some leading NGOs that mobilize large amounts of international funds, employ large staff and act as partners of Turkey's 3RP due to the state of emergency can be regarded as an opportunity for workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations to fill in this gap as organizations with large membership and resources. In improving the performance of these organizations in this field, ILO support and training is critical.

## **7. Developing creative ideas and activities to ensure decent work opportunities for SUTPs**

Organizations think that three basic mechanisms can be used to promote decent work opportunities for Syrians. The first one is ensuring that SUTPs acquire qualifications through vocational training and obtain jobs in line with the needs of labour market. Organizations think that they can contribute to this by vocational training projects. It is recommended that those with some qualification should be tested as to their competencies. The second is ensuring that SUTPs work formally since it is a precondition for decent work. As stated in almost all interviews, it is the common view of all organizations that informal employment must be stopped first before being able to provide decent work opportunities to SUTPs. However, given that the problem of informal employment has yet not been solved for local workers too, it seems not so feasible to prevent the informal employment of SUTPs through the efforts of social parties. The solution is sought more in public inspection and sanctioning mechanisms. Thirdly, there is the recommendation about information and awareness building campaigns together with social parties, but with the participation of the government as well. The last recommendation which sounds rather feeble is to have labour unions organize informal Syrian workers in their enterprises and ensure their formal employment.

## **8. Ensuring that rank-and-file members of the organizations have a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs**

The large majority of representatives from organizations say their members have negative attitude towards SUTPs which may even go as far as hostility. The first reason for this is as stated by many leaders is negative impacts on labour markets. Nevertheless, problems of security and social adaptation come to the fore in our interviews and focus group meetings as much as and in some cases even more than labour market outcomes. To conclude, it can be said that the overall tendency at rank-and-file level is negative and exclusionary. The reason behind this is not only the competition environment created in labour markets by informally employed Syrians but also the increasing number of urban refugees with social and cultural adaptation problems that entail concerns about rising rates of crime and possible terrorist activities. If workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations are to promote decent work opportunities for Syrian refugees they must first adopt a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach respectful to human rights. This, in turn, points out to the need for a comprehensive training with relevant information geared to eliminating prejudices and reaching out local and rank-and-file levels with this training.

### **Training Needs and Recommendations**

An important criterion with respect to training needs is the level of priority assigned by organizations to the issue of SUTPs. Employers' organizations do not regard this issue as a priority. It is understood that TESK and its federations too share the same view at least for their members. At local level, on the other hand, the issue is assigned priority in all provinces where there are large numbers of SUTPs particularly in the context of unfair competition they create. Among labour confederations, HAK-IS addresses the issue as a priority in the context of humanitarian concerns and working life. TURK-IS and DISK can be said to attach medium priority to the issue. For union

headquarters, the issue is of medium or low priority. A similar picture is valid at local level for labour union branches. But this situation does not mean that problems associated with SUTPs are considered as unimportant in terms of humanitarian concerns or the political agenda of the country.

An important outcome of the survey is that all organizations approach positively to a training programme on the employment of SUTPs in decent works as organized by ILO.

In relation to the content of training, there is an equal pattern of preferences for such alternatives as informing, developing attitudes of solidarity in members, policy development, and action plan. There are many favouring the inclusion of all these headings.

**To sum it up**, the need to inform is obvious in all performance areas for the promotion of decent work that we summarise under eight headings in our survey. Such information will lay the basis for further developing the content of solidarity. The content of promoting a solidarity-oriented attitude is not a heading per se but what needs to be mainstreamed in other headings. It is an important problem that there is no organizational articulation relating to policies concerning SUTPs. The objective of the training should of course not be the development of a brand new policy but to solicit recommendations to further improve policies developed by organizations' headquarters and to ensure the extension or more correctly the internalization of these policies at local and membership levels. This may require going deeper into the root causes of the Syrian refugee crisis. Hints relating to the development of an action plan emerged during our interviews. These include establishing contact/counselling/organizing points for SUTPs; organizing vocational training and language courses for SUTPs by using existing infrastructure and means; informing the rank-and-file about SUTPs; organizing training and publications; and development of projects to secure national and international funds for the action plan.

The majority of recommendations concerning the duration of training is for 2-3 days. Employer associations state that the target gro-

up as participants should be experts. While TISK envisages training at the level of experts, TESK prefers the participation of Federation and Union Presidents and Secretaries-general. Federations affiliated with TESK think that the participation of local chamber presidents will be rewarding. While ESOBs give weight to local level, labour unions favour training programmes for branch leaders and workplace representatives. The rank-and-file members are not cited as priority target group.



## 1. Introduction: Background

The mass inflow of refugees to Turkey, sharing a land border of 911 km with Syria, started right after the outbreak of civil war in the latter in 2011. The inflow of refugees which had already assumed crisis dimensions in 2013 later turned out as a permanent agenda of Turkey with 2,540,784 registered Syrian refugees under temporary protection at the end of 2015. As of 12 October 2017, the number of Syrians under temporary protection (SUTPs) in Turkey reached 3,235,992 according to the official figures, corresponding to 4 percent of Turkey's total population.

The Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD) which coordinates the response of the country to SUTPs, provided accommodation and responded to the basic needs of over 260,000 Syrians in 26 temporary accommodation centres located in 10 provinces near the border. As of 30.11.2017, the number of Syrians in temporary accommodation centres in Sanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Kilis, Kahramanmaras, Mardin, Hatay, Adana, Adiyaman, Osmaniye

and Malatya is 227,649. Outside the temporary accommodation centres, the number of Syrians is 3,132,266; that is 93.2 percent of SUTPs in Turkey live in urban areas outside the refugee camps. In the world, the proportion of refugees living in urban areas is 60 percent (UNHCR, 2017: 55).

**Table 1. Refugee-hosting Provinces (30 November 2017)**

Provinces	Number of SUTPs	Percentage comparison of SUTPs to provincial population	Number of Syrians in accommodation centres
Total	3,359,915	4.21	227,649
Adana	167,332	7.60	26,280
Adiyaman	27,585	4.52	8,938
Bursa	133,540	4.60	
Gaziantep	346,322	17.54	24,490
Hatay	450,493	28.97	17,838
Kahramanmaraş	99,004	8.90	17,174
Kayseri	69,045	5.08	
Kilis	131,671	100.65	26,508
Konya	96,510	4.47	
Mardin	90,455	11.36	2,510
Mersin	186,010	10.49	
Osmaniye	47,867	9.17	15,122
Sanliurfa	457,225	23.56	79,839
<b>13 Refugee-hosting Provinces</b>	<b>2,303,059</b>		
İstanbul	532,802	3.60	
İzmir	123,388	2.92	
Ankara	92,482	1.73	
<b>16 Refugee-hosting Provinces</b>	<b>3,051,731</b>		

**Source: Author's calculations based on data from DGMM.**

As seen in Table 1, there are 13 provinces that we can call refugee-hosting provinces where the percentage of SUTPs in the population is over Turkey's average of 4.2 percent. The number of SUTPs in these 13 refugee-hosting provinces is 2,303,059, which is 68.5 percent of the total Syrians in Turkey. If we add to the list Istanbul, Izmir

and Ankara which host a significant number of Syrians although not above the average of Turkey, the number of Syrians living in these 16 cities reach 3,051,731 that constitutes 90.8 percent of the total number of Syrians in Turkey. The remaining 9.2 percent of Syrians are scattered over 65 provinces.

SUTPs concentrated in the refugee-hosting provinces are also concentrated in low-income urban neighbourhoods, and refugee communities come into existence with the inclusion of social dynamics within the group. The intensified social presence of urban refugees has an impact on the economic, social and security-based negative attitudes and prejudices of the local population against Syrians.

Until the adoption of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2014, Turkey de facto pursued “temporary protection” regime in relation to Syrian refugees. Then, upon the issuance of the Regulation on Temporary Protection in October 2014, de facto temporary protection by Turkey eventually had its detailed legislative basis.

Expected for a long time, the “Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection” which regulated conditions and restrictions related to work permits was finally issued in January 2016.

The presence of SUTPs has dramatic effects upon labour markets, social life and social spending in Turkey. As of November 2017, the number of registered Syrian refugees over the age of 15 is 2,060,929. While there is no adequate data on the rate of participation of Syrians in the labour force and employment, it is a well-known fact that a significant number of Syrian refugees are employed informally in agriculture and small-scale businesses in manufacturing and services, especially in construction, textile and ready-wear sectors while some others are engaged in shop keeping, again informally. Erdogan and Ünver (2015: 45) estimate the number of Syrians, who are included in the labour market in 2015, to be 300,000. Erdogan and Ünver (2015: 45) estimate the number of Syrians, who are included in the labour market in 2015, to be 300,000. In the field study conducted by INGEV (2017: 2-3) with 1,282 face-to-face interviews

between 27 April and 20 May 2017 in 10 provinces hosting 79 percent of the refugee population- Istanbul, Sanliurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, Kilis, Mardin, Bursa -the rate of Syrian refugees' participation in the labour force was estimated to be 48 percent, the employment rate to be 31 percent and the number of Syrians in employment, mostly unregistered, to be 650,000.

Table 2 below presents the results of a calculation of the labour force participation and employment rates of the male and female SUTPs in the working age as of 30 November 2017, by using the labour force and employment rates of local labour force.

**Table 2. Employment of SUTPs**

Participation of Syrians in Labour Force and Employment (30.11.2017)			
	15+ age Male	15+ age Female	Total
15+ age population	1,134,595	926,334	2,060,929
Syrian labour force (assuming labour force participation rate of 72% for men and 32.5% for women)	818,908	301,058	1,119,966
Syrian employment (assuming employment rate of 64.8% for men and 26.7% for women)	737,217	247,331	984,548

**Source: Author's calculations based on data from DGMM, TURKSTAT.**

Accordingly, as of 30.11.2017, the upper limit for the number of SUTPs in employment can be set at 984,000. Given that the rate of labour force participation of SUTPs, especially that of female population, is lower than the local population and the unemployment

rate is higher, it is correct to say that the number of Syrians who is in employment is below this figure.

Despite the adoption of the “Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection”, there is still no progress at the desired level in the transition of Syrian refugees to formal employment.

There are various studies on the impact of SUTPs on the Turkish labour market and social relations. These studies have reached different conclusions relating to effects of the presence of Syrians on economic life and labour markets in border provinces of Turkey. For example, while Akgündüz et al. (2015) observed increase in real property and, to a lesser degree, food prices in provinces hosting SUTPs, Konuk and Tumen (2015) found that there was 2.5 percent decrease in general level of prices as a result of migration. Akgündüz et al. (2015) could find meagre evidence that refugees push local people out of labour market. However, Carpio and Wagner (2015) found that mostly refugees without work permit substantially displaced informal Turkish women workers with low education particularly in agriculture. Nevertheless, they also add that, besides net replacement, entry of refugees encourage the professional development of Turkish workers by creating higher paid formal jobs, and that average wages of Turkish workers increase as the composition of working people changes with the entry of refugees. Ceritoğlu et al. (2017) found, as a result of refugee entry, there are employment losses on the part of informally employed local people, which is balanced by a slight increase in public employment probably as a result of increasing social services in the region. They concluded that the effect on wages is negligible.

Despite these, local people have extremely negative perceptions regarding the effects of Syrian refugees on economy, social spending and labour market. A survey conducted by ORSAM (2015) shows that respondents in places hosting SUTPs think there is strong correlation between the presence of Syrians and job losses, declining wages, higher risk of dismissal, higher food prices and rentals, dec-

lining quality of education and healthcare services and higher rates of domestic migration. Field surveys conducted on social reaction to SUTPs reveal that parallel to the increasing number of refugees in general and at urban centres convert tolerance which existed at the beginning into dislike and, in some cases into hostility (Erdoğan, 2014; Erdoğan and Ünver, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017; Navruz and Cukurcayır, 2015).

## 2. Syrians under Temporary Protection in Turkey and ILO Strategy

As the Syrian crisis made Turkey the country hosting the largest refugee population in the world; UN organizations, in addition to the Turkish Government, started to explore policies to solve the problems faced by both Syrian refugees and host communities. The services which first concentrated on meeting basic needs of refugees later turned into policies geared to providing means of livelihood. In this context, the role to be played by ILO with respect to livelihood under the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP)<sup>1</sup> coordinated by the UN and development partners gained considerable importance.

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1 <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org>

In this context, the ILO Office for Turkey developed a three-pillar strategy for Syrian refugees in Turkey:

- 1) Increase the availability of a skilled, competent and productive labour supply
- 2) Support an enabling environment for business development and economic growth to address job creation
- 3) Provide support to strengthening institutional capacity and implementation of inclusive development policies.

Along this strategy, ILO developed the project “Improving Livelihoods and Decent Work Opportunities for Syrian Refugees and Host Communities”. The project envisages one of its final outcome as enhancing institutional and operational capacities of workers’ and employers’ organizations in order to better address the difficulties faced in labour markets.

In this context, it was decided to conduct a needs analysis with a view to strengthening the role and capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations in improving employment and working conditions for SUTPs, enhancing their awareness, and identifying the training needs of refugees. After the completion of the report on needs analysis, the findings will be presented at a workshop organized by the ILO Office for Turkey, which will be attended by representatives of workers’, employers’ and tradesmen’s organizations.

The present document is the final report of the needs analysis that sought to identify the needs, and common and distinct problems of workers’ and employers’ organizations and make an assessment of the existing situation, needs and problems. The report also includes recommendations for a training programme on enhancing the capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations in providing decent work opportunities and working conditions for Syrian refugees.



### 3. Description of Concepts and Research Methodology

The concept “need” is used in the present report in terms of organizational needs, not in terms of individual or functional needs. The needs analysis basically adopts a normative approach to determine the gap between the actual and expected performance of organizations.

In this context, attempt was first made to see whether workers’ and employers’ organizations had deficiencies in promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs. Then it was investigated whether training could be a part of the solution in remedying such deficiencies.

The survey method was selected as a research tool fit for small-scale qualitative social projects. The sample pool comprised three big labour confederations namely, the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (TURK-IS), Hak-Is Trade Union Confederation (HAK-IS), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK) and affiliated unions; Turkish Confederation of Employers’ Associations (TISK) and its member organizations; Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK) and affiliated Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen and Federations of Tradesmen and Craftsmen.

Under the survey strategy, a group within the sample pool mentioned was selected through improbable, purposive sampling. What is meant by “purposive sampling” (Denscombe, 2000) is researcher’s central or local level selection of organizations active in specific sectors on the basis of available information about sectors where the employment of Syrian refugees is more common.

Workers’ and employers’ organizations selected in addition to confederations are those from such branches as food, textiles, garment and leatherworks, construction, metal, and general works in which a considerable number of Syrians are employed. General works is where local government employees and employers are organized. It was selected as a branch where workers’ and employers’ organizations meet Syrian workers at enterprise or workplace level. However, it was found out in the survey process that the employment of Syrians in general works is short-term and remains limited.

Qualitative information was mainly collected from selected organizations through face-to-face interviews on the basis of a questionnaire facilitated by a questionnaire guide. To facilitate the assessment of needs, questions were classified and the questionnaire was adapted to the type and level of respective organizations.

## 4. Sample Selection

### 4.1. Central Level

#### 4.1.1. Labour Unions

Labour unions in Turkey are organized in different trades at national level. There are three large labour confederations. Of these, TURK-IS as the largest one has 33 affiliated unions in different trades (882,496 members), HAK-IS has 22 unions (447,930 members), and DISK has 21 member unions (141,490 members). Under the Regulation on Work Branches dated 2012, sectors where unions are organized are listed as 20 work branches.

Besides certain humanitarian considerations, labour unions can be assumed to have some interest in providing decent work to Syrian refugees mainly for two reasons: firstly negative impact on the employment, wages and working conditions of local labour force as a result of “race to the bottom” with the informal employment of Syrians at very low wages and in extremely unfavourable working conditions; and secondly possible negative impact on collective bargaining processes and de-unionization as a result of competition between Syrian workers and their members in sectors where they are organized.

In 2016, there were 56,591 foreigners in Turkey holding work permits, and Syrian citizens ranked second in the list with 7,053 persons with work permits (Ministry of Interior, Directorate-General of Migration Management, 2017: 51). These permits are mostly for employment in services and manufacturing industry.

Field studies show that there are about 300,000 Syrians employed informally in agriculture, construction, textiles and garment, metalworks and various services (Erdoğan and Ünver, 2015). If (non-agricultural) works that Syrian refugees do are taken together with work branches in which unions are organized, there are four work branches coming to the fore: Food; Textiles, Garment and Leatherworks; Metal Works and Construction. During the field survey conducted [by the present author] in 2017 for an article not published yet, GENEL-IS Union organized in general works said they came across with Syrians in Seyhan Municipality who were sent there to work in parks and gardens. As a first example, unions organized in general works are also included in the survey. In the light of findings mentioned above, the following confederations and affiliated unions were selected for assessment in the context of needs analysis (18 organizations):

TURK-IS	TEK GIDA-IS	TEKSIF	TURK METAL	YOL-IS	BELEDIYE-IS
HAK-IS	OZ GIDA-IS	OZ IPLIK-IS	CELIK-IS	OZ INSAAT-IS	HIZMET-IS
DISK	GIDA-IS	TEKSTIL-IS	BIRLESIK METAL-IS	DEV YAPI-IS	GENEL-IS

#### 4.1.2. Employers' organizations

As the higher organization of employers in Turkey, TISK brings together 21 employers' organizations including 2 organized in the public sector and 3 in local governments. 1,230,000 persons are employed in 9,600 workplaces affiliated with TISK member organizations. The member enterprises of TISK are medium and large-scale enterprises that do not directly employ unregistered local or Syrian workers themselves.

Besides humanitarian considerations, it can be assumed that TISK may have interest in the employment of Syrians in decent jobs in different respects. Firstly, as a potential labour force that can be

employed in various sectors. Secondly, for protecting its members from the unfair competition of non-member enterprises that employ informal Syrian workers. Thirdly for protecting its members from the competition of some unregistered enterprises run by Syrian employers. And fourthly in terms of Syrian registered employers, whose numbers have been increasing over the years.<sup>2</sup> Given the work branches that Syrian refugees are employed, the following are the employers' organizations affiliated with TISK that are assessed in the context of needs analysis (5 organizations including TISK itself):

TISK
TUGIS, Turkish Food & Beverage Industry Employers' Association (Istanbul)
INTES Turkish Employers' Association of Construction Industries (Ankara)
MESS, Turkish Employers' Association of Metal Industries (Istanbul)
TTSIS, Turkish Textile Employers' Association (Istanbul)

### 4.1.3. Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen – TESK

TESK is a professional organization having public status extending services to its members in line with the provisions of the Law no. 5362 on Professional Organizations of Tradesmen and Craftsmen that took effect on 21 June 2005. TESK covers over 2 million registered tradesmen and craftsmen with 3,098 chambers at province and district level, 82 Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) at province level (2 in Istanbul) and 13 occupational Federations with their HQs in Ankara.

TESK may have interest in the employment of Syrians in decent jobs for various reasons. First, the protection of member tradesmen and craftsmen from the unfair competition of non-registered Syrian

<sup>2</sup> According to the "List of Foreign Capital Firms Active in Turkey" prepared by the Ministry of Economy, there are 2,827 Syrian firms in Turkey as of June 2015. 1,709 Syrian firms (60.4%) having membership with chambers of commerce and industry in Turkey are active in Istanbul. Istanbul is followed by Gaziantep (471 enterprises, 16.6%), and Hatay (250 enterprises, 8.8%). There are 70 Syrian firms active in Kilis, 56 in Şanlıurfa, and 22 in Kahramanmaraş. The fields of activity of Syrian firms point out to the existence of three main groups: Wholesale trade (978 firms), repair works (606 firms), and construction (288 firms) (Erdoğan and Ünver, 2015). The number of Syrian firms has reached 6,493 as of 2017. For 2017 data see, <https://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/ucm/path/contribution%20folders/web/yat%c4%b1r%c4%b1m/uluslararası%c4%b1%20yat%c4%b1r% C4% B1m / International% C4>

tradesmen and craftsmen; second, protecting registered members from the competition of others who employ Syrian workers informally; third, for extending guidance to tradesmen and craftsmen who employ informal Syrian workers; and fourth, for ensuring the registered membership of formal Syrian tradesmen and craftsmen.

TESK is organized as Federations in 14 different branches of trade. The headquarters of all federations are located in Ankara.

TESK representatives state that Syrian refugees appear in almost all trades, some are registered as well. There are complaints about informal Syrian tradesmen and craftsmen active as barbers, bakers, cab drivers/transporters.<sup>3</sup>

Istanbul Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen gives the distribution of 110 Syrian tradesmen as members of affiliated chambers as follows: 35 persons running markets, 24 in garments, 18 barbers; 6 sweetshop runners; 10 restaurant owners; 8 real estate agents; 6 butchers and 3 persons running stationery shops.<sup>4</sup> Available information shows that Syrian refugees in Istanbul opened small enterprises employing 1-2 persons including small coffee shops, small restaurants, shops selling sweets and spices, car wash, barber shops, hair dressers, small manufacturing workshops, nuts shops, garment shops, narghile shops, doner buffets, jewelleryes, etc. (Erdoğan, 2017).

In the light of this information, the following federations under TESK were selected for assessment in the context of needs analysis (6 organizations including TESK itself):

TESK
Federation of Drivers and Motorists
Federation of Grocers and Sales Agents
Federation of Barbers and Hair Dressers
Federation of Restaurateurs and Confectioners
Federation of Bakers

<sup>3</sup> 02.07.2015 <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/palandoken-suriyeli-korsan-bakkal-taksici-ankara-yerel-haber-862841/>

<sup>4</sup> 03.02.2016 <http://www.istesob.org.tr/suriyeli-esnaf-kayit-altina-alinmaya-baslandi/>

### 4.2 Local Level

At local level, survey work was carried out in provinces of Ankara, Adana, Gaziantep, Hatay, Mersin and Sanliurfa. The sample selection of labour union branches to be interviewed at local level was made on the basis of criteria used at central level. Local interviews in the context of TESK were made with representatives of Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen. There was no TISK interview at local level since this organization has no local branch. In Ankara, there were also interviews with two branches of TEK-GIDA IS, one branch of BIRLESIK-METAL and TARIM-ORMAN-IS affiliated with the Confederation of United Public Employees Unions. In addition to these, there was a focus group meeting with a group of workplace representatives from TURK METAL in Bursa.





## 5. General Information on Qualitative Data

In order to collect qualitative data to provide the basis of needs analysis, there were 50 interviews conducted in May-June 2017, 26 of which were at province level. Of these interviews, 40 were face-to-face, 7 were written responses to questionnaires and 2 by phone. There was also one focus group meeting with workplace representatives (Annex 1).

The interest of employers' organizations in the study was poor and in this respect the study remained limited to face-to face interview with TISK and a written response from INTES. Tradesmen's as well as workers' organizations on the other hand were closely interested in the study at both central and local levels. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in Ankara, Adana, Hatay, Mersin and Gaziantep, and by phone in Urfa. Face-to-face interviews took about 45 to 60 minutes. As mentioned earlier, there was also one focus group meeting with workplace representatives of a union.

The questionnaire used in the interviews is tailored to the type and level of organizations and facilitated with a questionnaire guide (Annex 2).

In the context of the normative approach adopted, the following eight headings were selected to capture the gap between the existing performance and desired performance of organizations covered in terms of their possible support to decent employment of SUTPs.

1) Establishing contact points with SUTPs.
2) Developing solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies based on human rights and decent work opportunities relating to SUTPs.
3) Delivering SUTP-related policies to members and parent organizations.
4) Engaging in solidarity-oriented and inclusive activities in relation to SUTPs; trying to promote decent work opportunities.
5) Discussing issues related to Syrian workers in social dialogue bodies or platforms.
6) Cooperating with NGOs and refugee associations on SUTP-related issues.
7) Developing creative ideas and activities to ensure decent work opportunities for SUTPs.
8) Ensuring that rank-and-file members of the organization have a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs.

Part I of the questionnaire was designed to assess the current performance under these eight headings.

After identifying whether workers' and employers' organizations have performance gaps in promoting decent work for Syrian refugees, the next step was to assess whether training could be a part of the solution in the elimination of these gaps.

For this purpose, Part II of the questionnaire was allocated to the identification of training needs and related recommendations.

## 6. Findings

### 6.1.Part I: Determination of Existing and Desired Performance

#### 6.1.1.Desired performance: Establishing contact points with SUTPs

Are there Syrian workers at workplaces where you are organized?

Do you have Syrian refugee members?

Are there platforms on which you come together with Syrian refugees as an organization?

For workers' and employers' organizations to promote decent work for SUTPs, these organizations must first of all establish contact points with these people.

It was considered that these contact points would have two different spatial dimensions. The first dimension is about enterprise/workplace. The employment of Syrian refugees, formally or informally, in enterprises/workplaces where the parties are organized will directly present a contact point.

The second point of contact is getting together with Syrians on such occasions as activities carried out, relations with associations, and participation at various meetings.

It is stated that no Syrian refugee is employed by companies affiliated with employers' organizations under TISK. It is further stated that TISK's member companies include no enterprise run by a Syrian. TISK and affiliated organizations seem to have had no direct and systematic contact with SUTPs.

Chambers affiliated with TESK are registering more and more Syrian tradesmen as members in all parts of Turkey. However, there is no compiled statistical information about Syrian refugees having membership with chambers of TESK. The occasion in which TESK established indirect contact with Syrian refugees as a confederation is the project on delivering vocational training to 1,000 Syrian refugees in Ankara by the Norwegian Refugee Council and Vocational Education and Small Industry Support Foundation (MEKSA). Apart from this example, TESK has no direct contact at confederation level with Syrian tradesmen or workers.

While federations under TESK have information about Syrian tradesmen operating informally and Syrian workers employed informally by these tradesmen, they have no clear information concerning Syrian refugees registered as members in their chambers. The reason, they say, is that they cannot see chamber registries. Occupational federations have had no direct contact with Syrian refugees. Only one federation representative said they have had contact with a female Syrian worker in a bakery upon their visit to the site for the purpose of delivering training in hygiene, but she had no information whether this worker was employed formally. During their contacts with member chambers, federations learned that tradesmen were disturbed by informal competition of SUTPs. During our interviews the Federation of Drivers and Motorists felt it necessary to seek information from the chamber of tradesmen in Gaziantep to supply more relevant and correct information. Information given on phone by the local chamber goes: *"Syrians are in cab business with their cars. We told them through our Arabic speaking friends that it is forbidden to work unregistered, that they evade tax, and usurp the share of our tax paying cab drivers. They said okay, but they still do it in some covered ways."* Indeed, as can be seen in this example, although local tradesmen in almost all trades are in direct contact

with Syrian tradesmen in their daily business, it does not find reflection in federations or TESK as institutionalized points of contact.

At local level, it is observed that an increasing number of Syrian refugees register with local chambers. Gaziantep ESOB says there are currently 196 Syrian tradesmen from different trades as their members and the number is increasing. Given that the number Syrians operating informally is estimated at around 400, the number of registered ones is not negligible at all. This trend of registration on the part of Syrians can be explained by various factors including the efforts of Gaziantep ESOB before official authorities and the assistance of some internationally funded associations to Syrian tradesmen in their registration procedures by establishing contacts at local level. However, registration to local chambers via associations seems to be stopped due to cessation of activities of some associations under the state of emergency conditions<sup>5</sup> or to the introduction of some rigid rules for their activities. Yet, it is possible to have these contact points undertaken by ESOBs and maintain the same function. Further, since Gaziantep ESOB is delivering language and vocational training to Syrian refugees based on its own infrastructure in the context of various projects, this can be used as another channel in getting into contact with Syrians.

According to the information given by Adana ESOB, the number of registered Syrian tradesmen in Adana seems to be quite limited. Adana ESOB says there are about 1,000 Syrian tradesmen in the province according to the local tax office while they have only 16 such members. Still, the number of registered Syrian tradesmen is in increase since there are stricter tax inspections by authorities. *“The enterprise owner makes his tax registration, applies to us for registration, and he gets his licence from the municipality by submitting the document we give. These are all subject to some fees of course. Earlier, an organization funded by Europe used to help refugees in these procedures and in payment of fees. Syrian tradesmen may be penalized at any time if they evade these, their enterprises or workplaces may be closed down. But we mostly convince them to have their registration and do not apply sanctions.”* The president of Adana

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<sup>5</sup> Among associations mentioned during our local level interviews there is The International Middle East Peace Research Centre (IMPR) which was closed down by Decree-Law no. 689 dated 30 April 2017, and the US based Mercy Corps. Both associations are partners to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for Turkey 2016-2017.

ESOB says he visits and talks with Syrian tradesmen however this communication has not turned into institutional relations and registration procedures. Apart from this, there is no platform where they get together with Syrian refugees.

Hatay ESOB has 18 Syrian tradesmen as its members from various trades. But the number of unregistered Syrian tradesmen in Antakya is much above this figure. The presence of unregistered Syrian tradesmen is considered as a serious local problem in such terms as unfair competition faced by local registered tradesmen, food hygiene when it comes to the production of sweets for example or safety as in the case of unlicensed marketing of LPG tubes. There is no platform that ESOB can meet SUTPs. There has been no case of getting together with Syrian tradesmen with membership with the local chamber.

There are 86 Syrian tradesmen members of Mersin ESOB. It is said that some Syrians have registered over Turkish tradesmen as well. The chamber says that this situation derives from lack of information on registration process or the drive to keep rentals guaranteed in cases where Syrians rent their workplaces from Turkish citizens. Mersin ESOB has no platform where they can get together with SUTPs.

For workers' organizations too, there are limited grounds where there is institutional encounter at confederation level with Syrian refugees. "Institutional encounter" includes participating together with SUTPs in activities organized through international meetings, visits made to centres where Syrians stay and, as in the case of HAK-IS, vocational training activities conducted on the basis of project support.

HAK-IS says information on whether there are Syrian members in their affiliated unions should be sought from unions concerned, and add that they get together with Syrian refugees, not necessarily members, in some side activities of events like the World Humanitarian Forum. Further, visits to camps of refugees and HAK-IS project on Social Integration of Refugees through Vocational Training are grounds for getting together with Syrians.

A similar situation is valid also for TURK-IS and DISK. Drawing attention to the role of ILO in this respect, DISK says, *"Of the meetings we have attended, it was 'the Workshop on Problems Faced by Workers,*

*Employers and Entrepreneurs in Labour Market and Recommendations for Solution' where we were present together with Syrian workers and employers".*

From the perspective of labour unions, the first outcome of interviews is that reserving for some exceptions, Syrian workers are not employed in enterprises where labour unions are organized, and that the point of contact with Syrian workers is not working life but urban social spaces.

The visible presence of over 3 million Syrians in all cities of Turkey means that labour unionists too meet Syrians in all urban living spaces as local people do. The high number of SUTPs, conversion of some urban centres into Syrian refugee cities, and more frequent encounter with Syrian workers and service providers in the services sector make labour unionists aware of the presence of Syrians in labour markets.

Despite this overall picture pointing out to lack of contact, there are cases where unions meet Syrian refugees at workplaces and even organize them.

At both central and local level, unions organized in the metal works sector say there are too many Syrians informally employed in small enterprises, workplaces where there is no labour union, organized industrial zones, workshops, outsourced and sub-contracted jobs and even home-based assembly of electric sockets.

But this sector is also the one where first cases of formal and even unionized Syrian workers can be seen though their number is small. Within the total 195,000 members of Turkish Metal Union (TURK METAL), there are 25 Syrian members, most of whom are in Kocaeli. The company where these workers are employed is a medium-size moulding plant. It is considered that this formal and unionized employment of Syrians derives from the fact that moulding work is not preferred by domestic workers and the efforts of Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR) directors to call companies and encourage them to employ Syrians.

The Trade Union in Steel, Iron, Metal and Auto Industry (CELIK-IS) says they came across 12 registered Syrian workers employed by a firm in TAYSAD Istanbul Organized Industrial District. The enterprise is unionized and Syrian workers will become members of CELIK-IS after their testing period.

The Anadolu Branch of United Metal Workers Union (BIRLESİK-METAL) says Syrian refugees are employed in grinding and casting works not preferred by local workers. Branch leaders say they came across with Syrians employed in daily precarious jobs in an enterprise where they were trying to organize workers but did not intervene for humanitarian reasons since they were not permanent workers.

It is stated that there are too many unregistered Syrian workers employed in metal branch in such cities of the region as Adana and Iskenderun; however, these are not institutional enterprises where unions are organized.

There is frequent news coverage in the media about the employment of Syrian workers in “under stairs” sweatshops in textiles and garment sector in Turkey. Garment workshops where children as young as 8 and 10 are employed in errand works are closely known by the public. But these workers have no contact points with unionized textile and garment workers. In this sector, unions are organized mostly in workplaces working for institutionalized and international brands. Since international companies have their inspection mechanisms it is said that local firms working for these brands avoid losing assignments by employing informal refugee workers. However, although there is no Syrian employment in the visible initial links of supply chains, labour unions are not so sure about the state and conditions of employment in lower links of the chain.<sup>6</sup>

For example, Trade Union for Workers in Textile, Weaving, Knitting and Garment Industry (OZ IPLİK-IS Union) says: *“enterprises where we are organized are institutionalized and there are no Syrians workers there, but for example ..... Company does not give us the name of its contractor, so we don’t know. For example, we hear about Syrians working in bag production in a desolate building in Ankara; jeans producers in Istanbul say we go bankrupt if there are no Syrians. Couple of years ago there was boiler explosion in a workplace in Gaziantep and two Syrians died. That was how we learned about it. There are many instances in the sector, but you cannot control what you cannot measure.”*

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<sup>6</sup> For a study on Syrian workers employed in Turkish garment sector supply chain see, Business and Human Resource Centre, 2016.



The Textile Workers Union (TEKSTIL-IS) says there are no Syrians working in enterprises where they are organized, but they observed, during their fieldwork conducted in Gaziantep, that there are some workplaces employing Syrians.

The situation is the same in Gaziantep which is an important centre in terms of textiles and garment industry. Syrians commonly work in small enterprises, but there is no information as to which big companies these enterprises work for. A labour unionist tells the effects of this common practice as follows: *“Very nice things took place in Antep 2-4 years ago. After a long struggle we could restore 8 hours of working day. Unemployment was curbed and wages improved. But now there is again a return to the past.”*

The Road-Construction Workers’ Union of Turkey (YOL-IS) is organized in construction sector where Syrian refugees are known to be commonly employed. The union says there is no Syrian worker in any enterprise they are organized in. *“Any wise employer in construction, mining and metal works would not employ these people anyway. In branches where work accidents occur more frequently, employing Syrian refugees as cheap and informal labour makes the case extremely difficult for the employer in case of any work accident. Syrians rather do daily small construction works.”*<sup>7</sup>

Saying that principal employers in large-scale constructions do not employ Syrian workers; unionists add that there may be Syrians employed by some sub-contractors as in textiles sector. *“It may be the case of, for example, a construction company gives the plastering work to a sub-contractor who may be employing Syrians or Afghans.”* Indeed, in some works that the Highway Administration in Mersin gives to contractors, on the road to Antalya for example, it is stated that some sub-contracting firms employ on daily basis Syrians in headwall and bridge works.

Bakeries are among workplaces in food industry branch where Syrian refugees are employed commonly. In bakeries where the bakeries branch of the Food and Auxiliary Workers’ Union of Turkey

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<sup>7</sup> Of 96 refugees losing their lives in work accidents occurring in 2016, 59 are Syrians. 37 of these losses took place in the construction sector. 21. 02.2017 [http://www.guvenicalisma.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=18379:2016-yilinda-en-az-1970-iscisi-yasamini-yitirdi&catid=149:is-cinayetleri-raporlari&Itemid=236](http://www.guvenicalisma.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18379:2016-yilinda-en-az-1970-iscisi-yasamini-yitirdi&catid=149:is-cinayetleri-raporlari&Itemid=236)

(TEKGIDA-IS) is organized, informal Syrian and unionized Turkish workers are employed together in some bakeries. Despite insistent complaints to authorities by the union, this situation cannot be prevented. It is observed that in bakeries where the union is not organized the number of Syrian workers is much higher and this has its negative effect on unionization efforts.

An exceptional situation in which SUTPs came into contact with the unionized labour force and with the labour unions took place in Gaziantep and Adana in the framework of the “cash for work” project, which was funded by the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) covering the period of July 2016 to January 2017.<sup>8</sup> Under the project, 500 Syrians in Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and 200 Syrians in Adana, Seyhan Municipality (together with 200 Turkish citizens) were employed in the Park, Garden and Green Areas Departments. The General Services Workers’ Union of Turkey (GENEL-IS), organized in Seyhan Municipality, expresses that the workers in this project like local workers in the Community Benefit Work Programmes have been employed for a short period of time and they cannot become union members:

*“They are in our trade branch but do not appear as such. In social security registry Syrian workers like local workers in the Community Benefit Work Programmes do not appear as working in our trade. Since we recruit union members according to social security registries of our trade over the e-state system we cannot enlist them as union members even if they are actually registered.”*

Adana Branch of GENEL-IS says it is an EU project which envisages employment comprising 50 percent local and 50 percent Syrian workers: *“It was an EU project for employing 400 workers for a period of 36 months in Seyhan Municipality. The mayor turned this into 200 jobs for Syrians and 200 jobs for Turks. The project was cancelled after 8 months. There is no such project now. Then there was some information that it would continue with Italians, but we are not sure. Projects funded by foreign agencies are not transparent and unions do not have any clear information about. There were 200 Turkish workers recruited under the project and now they lost their jobs. There are no Syrian refugees in municipal companies now, but there*

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<sup>8</sup> See <http://sgdd.org.tr/cash-for-work/>

*is no guarantee that there will not. It would be bad in case there is."*

It is stated that Syrians, other than those channelled by the above-mentioned project, are employed daily and informally in parks and gardens by both Gaziantep Metropolitan and district municipalities. *"I don't think they are formal workers, they do not have Turkish citizenship. They are employed by Municipal companies. The contracting company employs them for the sake of assistance as they say, thinks Syrians cannot be insured, I witnessed it with my own eyes."*

All Municipal and General Service Workers' Union (HIZMET-IS) organized in Gaziantep municipalities says they have heard about a private company employing Syrian refugees in manufacturing of parking meters, but could not get it confirmed yet. The union gets in touch with Syrian refugees on the occasion organizing workers of sub-contracting firms operating at refugee centres. Though no Syrian refugee is employed by these firms, unionized workers are together with Syrian refugees in camp environments. As far as HIZMET-IS Union is concerned, another point of contact is that HAK-IS plays a central role in the project for delivering vocational training to Syrian refugees.

GENEL-IS union in Hatay says that *"Almost all firms that are awarded tenders for municipal road repair and maintenance works employ informal Syrian workers in paving, road maintenance and sidewalk works with the exception of foremen and master workers. There are no Syrians working for service sub-contractors and in permanent works or parks and gardens, but they work in channelling. Municipalities and authorities are aware of this fact as I am, but they let it go. Since local governments too have their ties with the state, the state too tolerates it. Their mentality is letting Syrians work even informally, make some money so they don't wander around and put a burden on us. So, everybody ignores this situation."*

HIZMET-IS Union in Iskenderun states that a large-scale international solid waste disposal firm, where they are organized, extending services to municipalities in the area employs Syrians in waste "collection" works.

The Agriculture and Forestry Employees Union (TARIM ORMAN-IS) is one of the unions of public employees working in the service branch related to agriculture and forestry. The fact that this union has come across in enterprises where it is organized with Syrian forestry workers is interesting in the sense that besides local governments, some other public entities too employ informal Syrian workers via contractors/sub-contractors. In such forested provinces as Bolu, Muğla and Antalya there is now the process by which some works performed earlier by inhabitants of forest villages on the basis of unit price are transferred to contractors. In places where density management is made, initially there were workers recruited from other provinces of Turkey to replace local forest villagers, and now there are Syrians informally employed in these works. The union first raised objection to the entry of informal Syrian workers to forestry areas to defend the interests of its members and then, as the organization of labour in general, launched an initiative to ensure the rights of Syrian workers and provide decent working conditions. The union president says the following about the process: *"We had talks with Syrian refugees in Bolu, Yığılca and Golyaka. They told us about their extremely difficult situation. Indeed, they work under inhuman conditions. Earlier, this density management was performed by people from Karaisa, Adana. Earlier, the sub-contractor was entitled to 40 steres of 100 steres of wood. Now he takes 60 steres, leaving 40 steres to Syrians. Now we are in contact with these workers and I'll visit them again the next week."*

For large majority of labour unions there is no platform on which they can contact SUTPs. Associations operating for Syrians and receiving funds from international donors are carrying out their activities by contacting Syrians directly without institutional cooperation with labour unions or tradesmen chambers. At present, however, the activities of these organizations too have been either stopped or curbed under the state of emergency conditions.

In conclusion, institutional contacts of workers and tradesmen with SUTPs remain limited, even though Turkey suffered irregular labour migration from different countries since the 1990s<sup>9</sup> and has

<sup>9</sup> See Toksoz, Erdoğan and Kaşka, 2012

become the top refugee-hosting country in the world since 2011. We can say that workers' organizations have limited direct contacts with SUTPs in their workplaces. ESOBs and tradesmen chambers are increasingly in contact with Syrians, both as members and as others working informally in their domains. However, there is need to organize these contacts as active units in providing decent work opportunities for SUTPs starting from the level of confederations and going down to affiliated organizations, local chambers and branches in a coordinated and systematic manner. It will be quite beneficial to establish local "contact points" as well as central units to coordinate these contact points with the aim of promoting decent work for Syrians and directing informal tradesmen and workers to formal employment by ESOBS that already have a significant number of Syrian tradesmen or in such sectors as textiles, metal works, food, construction etc. where many Syrians work. The existing infrastructure, facilities, and bodies such as the vocational and technical training centres of employer associations of TISK; training and counselling bodies under TESK; ISKUR service points to be created within TESK chambers on the basis of the Protocol of Cooperation acted by ISKUR and TESK on 24 July 2017; and training and organization units of labour unions can be used for this purpose. The ILO Office for Turkey as well, within the framework of the projects in execution, offers consultancy services both to Syrians and citizens of Turkey by personnel who speak Arabic employed at the support desks established within Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, Hatay Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Reyhanlı Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is important to increase the number of such practices and to establish similar structures within TESK, TISK and labour union structures, especially within chambers and unions of tradesmen.

## 6.1. 2.Desired performance: Developing solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies based on human rights and decent work opportunities relating to SUTPs

Is the issue brought to the agenda in the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Board of Presidents? If yes, which topics are discussed with their negative and positive aspects?

Are there statements made by the representatives of the organization?

Is there any General Assembly resolution referring to Syrian refugees?

For workers' and employers' organizations to promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs, they must adopt an inclusive and solidarity-oriented approach on the basis of human rights and the right to work.

According to a TISK representative, SUTP-related issues did not make any special agenda in governing body meetings. Yet there were some remarks on the impact of Syrian refugees on labour markets. The governing body decisions of the last year were visited and no decision on SUTPs was found. Neither did General Assembly meetings touch upon this issue.

TISK made various statements reflecting its policy on the issue. According to TISK, Turkey's "open-door policy" for Syrian refugees and efforts to respond to their basic needs is a humanitarian responsibility that must be fulfilled. Contrary to the initial opinions regarding the case as a temporary one, TISK holds that Syrian refugees will remain in Turkey for a long period of time or some will decide to live in Turkey. It is therefore necessary to address the issue on the basis of a holistic strategy encompassing economy, working life, social and cultural adaptation and core service areas like education, healthcare and housing. TISK president said the following at the ILO Conference 2017: *"Migration and migrants make up a sensitive issue in our country. Within the last six years about 3 million Syrians took refuge in Turkey. This led to some economic and social problems in Turkey. There is some international support extended to Turkey on this issue, but it is still far from what is needed. If the world has not suffered even heavier disasters and tragedies around borders, it is the result of*

*Turkey's commitment and devotion. From a more global perspective, it is necessary to support investment and production environments through sincere and result-oriented efforts to solve social, political and environmental problems in regions that are sources of international labour migration.*"<sup>10</sup>

INTES says the issue was not brought into the agenda during executive board meetings, and that they have no statement or General Assembly resolution related to the issue.

TESK approaches the issue of Syrian refugees mainly in the context of problems emerging from unfair competition of Syrians with local tradesmen. In fact, press statements made by the President of TESK mainly refer to this problem. For example, in a press statement the President of TESK pointed out that SUTPs appear in almost all trades, negatively affecting some local 1,700,000 tradesmen and craftsmen: *"Syrian refugees in Turkey made their entry in many trades including as grocers, bakers, cab drivers, transporters and barbers. Some refugees coming to Turkey with their cars are engaged in illicit cab driving and transportation activities encroaching upon the subsistence of our drivers. In many provinces where such cases are observed including Mersin, Adana, Konya and Sanliurfa, our local chambers applied to authorities in writing to have necessary measures taken, but there was no result. Only in Ankara, the capital city, there are over 200 barber shops run illicitly by Syrians. No penalty is applied to illicit grocers, cab drivers and transporters. If applied, what can you take from these people anyway? There must be urgent action to stop Syrian grocers, cab drivers and transporters operating illicitly. Refugees should stay in their camps. Throughout the country, Syrian refugees are at large and unstoppable. They must be urgently taken under control."*<sup>11</sup>

TESK did not adopt any decision related to SUTPs in its 2014 General Assembly meeting. In the Fifth Council of Tradesmen and Craftsmen convened in 2016 TESK raised the demand that *"Necessary measures be taken to solve the problems and improve the economic situation of our tradesmen and craftsmen, and to protect them from unfair competition given economic losses they suffer as a result of migration from neighbouring countries."*

<sup>10</sup> 13 June 2017, <http://tisk.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/13062017.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> 01.07. 2015 <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/palandokenden-suriye-tepkisi-29428497>

The Situation Analysis Report of the project ADAPTESK (Improving the Adaptation Capacity of Tradesmen and Craftsmen) concludes that SUTPs are considered as threat rather than opportunity by tradesmen and craftsmen.<sup>12</sup>

In its press statements, TESK mostly does not touch upon Syrian workers who work informally for local tradesmen. This issue was brought to agenda under a joint project to be carried out together with UNICEF in the context of Syrian child workers and it was stated that the employment of Syrian children would be prevented through voluntary inspection of member workplaces through TESK's workplace inspection and counselling groups.<sup>13</sup>

The federations too approach the issue of Syrian refugees in the context of unfair competition. The Federation of Barbers and Hair Dressers, for example, says the issue of Syrian tradesmen is addressed in board meetings rather with its negative aspects. In general, complaints from individual chambers are mentioned together with the state of unfair competition created by the presence of Syrian tradesmen. The same remarks were made also during the meeting of the Board of Presidents in December 2016. The Federation of Bakers also approached the issue pointing out to informally operated bakeries run by Syrians. Chamber presidents from regions say municipalities connive at unlicensed Syrian bakers. During our interviews, federations did not touch upon the issue of informal Syrian workers employed by tradesmen.

The approach of provincial-level ESOBs to the issue of Syrian refugees is similar to their national organization's. All ESOBs state that the issue is addressed in the context of unfair competition created by informal Syrian tradesmen. ESOBs have shared their SUTP-related policies with the press and public authorities on various occasions.

Adana ESOB, for example, says: *"It is addressed in meetings. They were forced to flee their country and now they are here. We say okay to their working, but under registration. Three months ago, we submitted a petition to the Governorate to have foreigners in our province*

<sup>12</sup>19.03.2016 <http://adaptesk.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/AdapTESK-Projesi-Mevcut-Durum-Analizi-Raporu-19-Mart-2016.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> 28.05.2017 [https://www.tesk.org.tr/tr/yeni/haber\\_devam.php?id=1823](https://www.tesk.org.tr/tr/yeni/haber_devam.php?id=1823)



*registered and wanted a commission for these affairs. So far there is no call for any commission meeting. Still, our recommendations are translated into life through municipalities, chambers of industry and commerce and tax offices, though in a piecemeal manner, each tries to fulfil its part."*

Hatay ESOB: *"It frequently makes itself to our agenda. The positive side is that all say they are our brothers, they have fled the war and we must embrace them... Then comes 'but' it goes on with discourse on their informal and competitive position. When there is a clash of interests, people start regarding Syrians as a trouble."*

The words of the President of Mersin ESOB speaking in the panel discussion "Legal Status and Problems of Syrian Refugees in Turkey" organized by Mersin Bar Association can be taken as reflecting the attitude of local tradesmen. Saying that Syrians have not come in by their will and that all humanitarian assistance must be made in this regard, the President of Mersin ESOB refers to the associated economic and social problems: *"There is a commercial life in this city and this life has its rules. In a process where commerce is undergoing transformation we are under the squeeze of shopping malls and market chains and gradually losing blood. While under this pressure, you see some groups intervening in your area without any observance of rules. Unfortunately, we failed in this course of migration management. Neither did we exercise control on entries and have them registered nor did we engage in establishing an order and migration management. I am ready to hear if anyone can say the opposite. We could not complete in time official procedures in relation to incoming Syrians. Many of these people are poor and they experience very hard times. There is some trying to survive under extremely unfavourable conditions. Our intention is not to strangle or oppress Syrians. We have some rules in our commercial life and we want all to abide by without any clash. But unfortunately, we start to witness clashes. We wanted no clash and no unfair competition; we wanted an order to be established. But we have after so many years. The situation is becoming unbearable for local tradesmen. Problems will be worse in coming days if a solution is not found".<sup>14</sup>* We see Mersin ESOB once more dwelling on the same issue 1.5 years later in 2016. After stating that illicit initiatives taken by Syrians in Mersin for sur-

<sup>14</sup> 13.12.2014 <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/suriyeli-siginmacilarin-mersin-e-etkileri-mersin-yerelhaber-521310/>

living and maintaining their families harm local tradesmen, ESOB President goes on saying: *"While we start an enterprise we have to fulfil many obligations under the current legislation. There is the obligation to get food production license, there are rules of hygiene and so on. You have to fulfil all these for launching a business. If we can produce unit of good at the cost of 10 liras for these obligations, they can do it at the cost of 5 liras since they have no such obligations. So, they can sell their goods and services at lower prices and this means unfair competition."*<sup>15</sup>

Tradesmen's organizations that favour inspection and penalties on informally operating Syrian tradesmen either do not touch upon Syrians who are employed informally by local tradesmen or draw attention to the problems of some local tradesmen who had to pay fines for employing informal Syrian workers. One ESOB leader says the following: *"Tradesmen who employed Syrians used to be fined. Now there is no fine after the intervention of chambers. This is a crisis situation and it will not work if you put extra burden on tradesmen. We warned public authorities about this."*

In a statement, the president of Mersin ESOB explains the reason why local tradesmen employ informal Syrian workers as their difficulty in finding qualified hands and apprentices. *"Because of flaws in our legislation we cannot find qualified persons. There was incredible fall in the number of children enrolled in apprenticeship training centres especially after the introduction of 8-year compulsory education. There was transition to the 4+4+4 system without adopting relevant measures. The system includes no provision at all for apprenticeship. Given this, we could not find people to work in many sectors. In other words, it was difficult to find potential masters to train. So, local tradesmen turned to Syrian refugees in Mersin. Syrians who are employed informally have no social protection and they are paid daily. This situation is fine for their employers as well. People make use of labour force coming in from Syria. But this may turn dangerous in the longer term. Maybe tradesmen can find cheap labour for the time being, but our children, our young people completing their university education are waiting for jobs. So, this is another problem. If it goes like this our children will find it difficult to have jobs in the future. Hence, authorities, the relevant ministry must find a solution to this problem*

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<sup>15</sup> 15.06. 2016 <http://www.mersinhaber.com/haber/6017/suriye-savasi-mersinli-esnafi-vurdu.html>

*by making necessary arrangements. Without losing time, we must attach importance to vocational training to provide us intermediate level personnel. Along with this, there is also need to re-train refugees vocationally according to our domestic legislation.”<sup>16</sup>*

It is observed that all ESOBs are aware of TESK policy regarding Syrian refugees, and that it is reactions coming from the bottom that led to the development of this policy. ESOB officials say their General Assembly meetings do not cover the issue of Syrian refugees.

In the approach of the labour union movement in Turkey to the issue of SUTPs, one cannot see any significant difference with respect to different confederations. There is difference, however, when it comes to levels of organization, i.e. confederation, union headquarters and local branches.

The initial attitude of confederations towards SUTPs was to approve the open-door policy of the government and readiness, as unions, to contribute to the provision of all kinds of humanitarian assistance to Syrians. Although confederations have differing opinions relating to the Syrian policy pursued by the government, they did not display any tendency for the abandonment of open-door policy even as the number of incoming Syrians kept increasing. Considering the open-door policy as a must in humanitarian terms, confederations found the policy of the EU countries unacceptable in that they adopted unilateral decisions beyond the common practice of the EU and that some EU countries even closed their doors to refugees. This humanitarian approach of confederations assumed concrete content as they took part in humanitarian relief campaigns.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, confederations also favoured arrangements to include Syrian workers in labour markets given that they are employed formally and on equal terms with local workers with respect to wages and working conditions.

In its Presidential Board meeting held in 2014, TURK-IS formulated its stance on SUTPs as follows: *“The Presidential Board of TURK-IS*

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<sup>16</sup> 15.08.2016 <http://www.mersinhabererci.com/haber/6017/suriye-savasi-mersinli-esnaf-vurdu.html>

<sup>17</sup> It is stated that relief materials from the “solidarity convoy” launched in 2015 by, British Communication Workers Union (CWU) and supported by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and European labour unions will be delivered to Syrians under temporary protection through labour unions in Turkey. (03.01.2015 <https://disk.org.tr/2015/11/avrupali-iscilerden-multecilere-kislik-yardim/>)

receives positively the extension of humanitarian aid to people who are forced to leave their countries particularly our neighbour Syria and to take refuge in Turkey. However, there is need to act carefully and meticulously in such issues as the duration of their stay in Turkey, granting of identity papers and work permits on the basis of statement in order to avoid possible problems ahead. Efforts must be made to ensure that this presence does not lead to increase in informal employment and unemployment, and lower wage rates." (TURK-IS 2015:15). A member of TURK-IS Executive Committee said in our interview that SUTPs seemed to be permanent in Turkey and accordingly they had to take up some jobs for their livelihood: "If they are to work, this should be formal and organized; they should pay their taxes and benefit from all rights that Turkish citizens are entitled to. We don't want to see Syrian labour brokerage tomorrow. If you stand against their formal employment, they'll be working under stairs tomorrow; employers will impose cheap labour to you in collective bargaining. As labour unions we must be on that side of the table to defend their rights as well. We are brothers of labour regardless of language, religion and race, and we are all after the same objective. I don't think it is correct to oppose the presence of Syrian workers in our working life given that they are employed formally." During the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary General Assembly Meeting of TURK-IS held on 3-6 December 2015, delegates frequently referred to civil war in Syria and accompanying human tragedy. In the same General Assembly, a proposal submitted called for assistance to Bayirbucak Turkoman community living in Syria who were displaced and victimized by the ongoing civil war in Syria, and the proposal was adopted by the General Assembly. On days following the General Assembly a bank account was opened for this purpose and deposits amounting to 300,000 TL were transferred to an account by the Governorate of Hatay on 3 February 2016.

The Conclusion Declaration of the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly meeting of DISK in 2016 said the following about Syrian workers: "Efforts will continue to ensure that all migrant workers including Syrian migrant workers who are now a part of the working class of Turkey are free from inhuman working conditions, and that they enjoy all rights including the right to work and association, access to public services and equal conditions in employment on the basis of class fraternity. In this context, there will be firm stance and combat against discrimi-

*nation, racism, and anti-migrant sentiments.*<sup>18</sup> While advocating that *“not only Syrians but all migrant workers labouring in this country should be free from unregistered working conditions, their work permit issues should be solved and they enjoy equal employment rights*<sup>19</sup> DISK also warned against policies envisaging lower social security contributions for SUTPs. Another warning of DISK is that policies of this type which make the employment of Syrians attractive for employers may lead to serious social problems by creating a new cheap labour pool in Turkey where the rate of unemployment is already high.

In its 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly resolutions HAK-IS says in relation to refugees including Syrians: *“Realistic and sustainable national and international policies must be developed for asylum seekers who had to flee their countries because of war or economic and social reasons. The issue of asylum seekers has turned into an issue of adaptation and security with its social, political and economic dimensions. HAK-IS draws attention to problems between asylum seekers and local people stemming from differences in language, culture and way of life. Thus, necessary importance must be attached to activities ensuring the adaptation of asylum seekers to their host communities. HAK-IS believes that if the process of adaptation is managed successfully, this will contribute, in the long term, to Turkey’s national wealth and her multi-cultured structure.”*<sup>20</sup> HAK-IS President too is in favour of granting work permits to SUTPs with due account of balances in labour markets. *“If we would not approve any labour unionist denying jobs to Turks living abroad, then we cannot say ‘no jobs’ to Syrians. There must be an arrangement within a specific legislation by taking due account of balances in the country. Before giving effect to these arrangements that are closely related to working life, social dialogue mechanisms at national and local level must be set to work with the participation of government, workers’ and employers’ organizations and representatives of NGOs. Arrangements must be given effect after soliciting opinions from social partners and considering their concerns.”*<sup>21</sup> In its response to our survey question, HAK-IS said the issue of SUTPs is frequently addressed in the Governing Board,

<sup>18</sup> 09.03.2017 <https://disk.org.tr/2017/03/disk-15-genel-kurulu-sonuc-bildirgesi/>

<sup>19</sup> 13.01.2016 <https://disk.org.tr/2016/01/disk-genel-baskani-kani-bekonun-gocmen-iscilerin-istihdami-uzerine-aciklamasi/>

<sup>20</sup> 24.10.2015 <http://www.hakis.org.tr/uploads/files/13.ogkkararlari.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> 13.01.2015.<http://aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/hak-isten-suriyeli-istihdamina-destek/84721?amp=1>.

Presidential Board and Provincial Board meetings and also conclusion statements touched upon the issue. HAK-IS says the issue of Syrians has its humanitarian characteristics: *“It is our wish to see realistic and sustainable national and international policies for our migrant brothers fleeing their countries because of war and violence including Syrians in the first place, end to oppression that victims suffer all around the world, and triumph of democracy.”*

In sum, we can say that all three confederations approve the open-door policy pursued for SUTPs, but with concerns about negative effects on labour markets given the very high number of these people. All three confederations share the same stance that there should be arrangements ensuring the formal employment of SUTPs on equal terms with local workers in a way to mitigate these negative effects. Another issue that is emphasized is the inadequate support extended to Syrian refugees by advanced countries, including the EU in the first place in terms of opening their doors and providing assistance. Assessing in the context of dominant discourse, it can be said that the discourse by DISK focuses on class solidarity, TURK-IS on possible negative effects on labour markets, and HAK-IS on the concept of integration in line with the relevant policies of the government.

Since labour unions rarely come across Syrian refugees in enterprises they are organized, they do not develop any special policy in this regard and consider the issue as a policy area that should be addressed by their confederations. After the adoption of the regulation on the employment rights of SUTPs, labour unions started thinking about the impact of Syrian refugees on labour markets, but did not take any specific initiative in this field given that the formal employment of Syrians remained quite limited in the period of one year following the adoption of regulation. In the words of a labour unionist, *“the issue of Syrian refugees cannot be considered as adopted by the agenda of the labour union movement though it is talked about by unionists in their chats.”* At labour union level, the response to the presence of Syrian refugees humanitarian considerations has a secondary place after its possible effects on labour markets. To avoid negative consequences, labour unions argue for ensuring their formal employment and prevention of any competition with local labour force as a cheap labour. Further, besides their critical approach to migration policies adopted by European countries, labour union level discourse also includes the role of “imperialist policies

leading to civil war in Syria” and the need to stop wars as the main cause of refugee problem. As to union headquarters’ policies to Syrian refugees some examples are given below:

TURK METAL: *“When we discuss general issues in our board meetings, the issue of Syrian refugees comes to the agenda. But this discussion is not about the problems of refugees but the dimensions of the issue which raise concerns. We are at a distance to the issue since it is not regarded as a threat to our members. We have no press statement or General Assembly resolution on the issue.”*

CELIK-IS: *“Not in our agenda so far. Neither was it brought up by our branches. But as the issue of Syrian refugees turns to a problem in terms of employment and social dimensions, it will be in our agenda as well. It is because there is increase in informal employment of Syrians while the informal employment of local people is going down. So, there will be need to talk about it. Yet we have no press statement or General Assembly resolution.”*

OZ IPLIK-IS: *“We discussed the issue of extending assistance to Syrian refugees and how their working conditions affected us negatively. We focused more on informal employment. And there were also those coming from the House of Commons in UK saying they wanted to train Syrians. They found us through the IndustriALL. We had a meeting in Istanbul to discuss the issue. We told them to launch a school project with the state to give education to Syrian children. It seemed they didn’t like it.”*

TEKSTIL-IS: *While saying that “since there is no dynamism around this issue in enterprises we are organized we did not discuss it in our board meetings”, the Union clarified its policies on the issue in press statements: “The civil war in Syria grew worse and turned into a human tragedy also with the erroneous policies of the Government. Now the major part of the victims of this civil war are trying to subsist in Turkey. Clashes stemming from sectarian discrimination in Iraq and Syria lead to unspeakable atrocities while affecting Turkish economy adversely. Settling in many provinces starting from the south-eastern region of the country, Syrian refugees are now being made a part of informal economy and employment. Syrians are forced to conditions akin to slavery to survive. The Minister says Syrians will be granted identity documents and opportunities to work in vacant jobs. The opening of borders without any regulation has made the status of Syrians in Turkey rather ambiguous. Giving them identity*

*documents will at least help in taking Syrian refugees under registration. In such cases what is appropriate both in legal and humanitarian terms is to host refugees in camps with decent conditions and to respond to their needs by the means of the state. Even when they are registered, Syrian refugees will still be regarded as cheap labour and jobs of Turkish citizens will be at risk.”<sup>22</sup>*

“A large majority of our Syrian brothers took refuge in Turkey leaving all they had behind. In desperation, they are used as workers informally and illicitly by opportunistic groups.

As a result,

- 1) Our own citizens lose their jobs facing the threat of hunger;
- 2) Syrian refugees are made to work for peanuts, in slavery-like conditions;
- 3) in the face of losses in taxation and social security contribution the state resorts to indirect taxes which makes our burden heavier;
- 4) Enterprises engaged in the same trade with formal employment come to the point of closing down as a result of unfair competition and many lose their jobs.”<sup>23</sup>

OZGIDA-IS: *“The issue of Syrian refugees makes an agenda item in our meetings of course. We have a settled state of doing our work and we are worried that our members will lose their jobs if employers use Syrians by paying half the wage our members get. But it is also necessary to help Syrians and the state is doing this by extending social services. The government refers to what it has done so far, and we say you take care of 3.5 million Syrians, but what about the problems of 25,000 temporary workers? Aren’t our workers as worthy as Syrians?”*

GIDA-IS: *“We address the issue of Syrian refugees in our board meetings. The negative side is that it constitutes a barrier to union organization. The positive side is that Syrian refugees are now a part of the working class in Turkey and there is need to have Syrian and Turkish workers united in common struggle against capital.”*

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<sup>22</sup> 06.10.2014 <http://disktektstil.org/suriyeli-multecilere-kimlik-bir-sorunu-yeni-sorunlar-yaratarak-cozemezsiniz.html>

<sup>23</sup> 10.12.2016 <http://disktektstil.org/gaziantep-i-sciler-birleselim-zoru-birlikte-asalim.html>



YOL-IS: *"There is conversation about it, but not in the context of their findings jobs or employment. The conversation is about why these people are here and why did that war break out. Syria was a country on the road of civilization and humanity. What happened now? That is what we talk about. People focus on Syrians rather than others coming from Iraq or Afghanistan. They try to find a way of keeping them here so they won't disturb Europe. The solution of the problem of refugees is tied to the problem of imperialism. If seeking a solution, ILO must first consider the problem of imperialism. If you usurp ground and underground resources of the countries these people live, this problem of refugees will persist. Others are all palliative solutions for saving the day."*

TARIM ORMAN-IS: *"We have a general assembly resolution on this issue adopted on 10 April 2017 which reads as follows: 'It is a well-established fact that due to economic and armed clashes that stem from neoliberal (capitalist) policies adopted worldwide after 1980, peoples of poor (underdeveloped-developing) countries affected by these processes migrate to other countries for a better life and future. In the future, the situation of migrants and refugees will constitute the most important problem of the world. For a radical solution, there must first be a common front standing against policies of war. Also, there is need to advocate for providing decent living conditions, legal status and employment to refugees in our country who left their homeland for reasons such as war or poverty.' We are going to carry this approach to the BWI Congress. It is not enough to ensure decent conditions for refugees, it is also necessary to put an end to imperialist policies and wars."*

Province level interviews too confirm that the issue of SUTPs is addressed in the context of its adverse effects on labour markets. Branch organizations of labour unions are generally informed about the policies of their confederations related to Syrian refugees and approve these policies. The formal employment of SUTPs is defended not on the ground of providing decent work to Syrians but for concerns about the possibility of deteriorating job opportunities and working conditions of local workers.

Another situation that we frequently observed during our interviews is that labour unions are not adequately informed about temporary protection status accorded to Syrians. There is a commonly shared mistake that Syrians cannot be included in formal employment or

be members of labour unions since they are not citizens.<sup>24</sup> There are some labour unionists that came to hear for the first time in our interviews that Syrian workers in their sectors can be formally employed and enlisted as union members as there are already some examples of it.

Another case that we have frequently observed is the common belief that the request for the elimination of the negative pressure of SUTPs over local labour markets cannot be met by relevant government authorities.

It is observed that labour unions both at central and local branch level need to be informed about legislation related to temporary protection status accorded to Syrians. It is also needed, again at both central and local level, to discuss a holistic, long-term and solution-focused policy on SUTPs.

Using the expression of TISK, for all organizations, the development of a policy that “has a long-term perspective with a holistic strategy covering economy, working life, social and cultural adaptation, and basic service areas of education, healthcare and housing” will lay the basis for solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies upholding human rights and decent work opportunities.

### **6.1.3.Desired performance: Delivering the SUTP-related policies to members and parent organizations**

Does your union cover SUTP-related issues in its publications?
Does your union cover SUTP-related issues in its training activities?
Did you cover the issue of SUTPs in the meetings of international organizations that you are affiliated with?

The ability of workers’ and employers’ organizations to promote decent work for SUTPs depends on their development of solidarity-oriented and inclusive policies on the basis of human rights and decent work opportunities and more importantly, transmitting these policies to organizations at different levels and their members. The tools of realising this articulation include labour union publications, training programmes and union meetings.

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<sup>24</sup> See Erdođdu, 2013 for the labour union rights of migrant workers.

TISK says it covers SUTP-related issues in its publications. The November-December 2014 issue of the journal *“Employer”* for example is devoted to SUTPs including the opinions of the presidents of labour confederations. An important contribution of TISK in this issue is the study conducted in cooperation with the Migration and Policy Research Centre of Hacettepe University (HUGO) for the purpose of examining economic and social dimensions of the phenomenon of Syrian refugees, evaluating the opinion of business world on this issue, and presenting recommendations to policy makers. The heading of the study is *“Opinions, Expectations and Recommendations of the Turkish Business Community on Syrians in Turkey”* (Erdoğan and Ünver, 2015). Under this survey, there were interviews conducted as a part of field survey with businessmen, representatives of chambers of industrialists and tradesmen, NGOs, and representatives of the central government in provinces and local governments in 18 provinces considered as specifically relevant in this context (Istanbul, Izmit, Bursa, Ankara, Konya, Kayseri, Malatya, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay, Adana, Kahramanmaras, Mersin, Izmir, Antalya, Muğla, Denizli and Van). The Confederation stated that the purpose of the study was *“to examine the economic and social dimensions of the phenomenon of Syrian refugees, evaluate the opinion of business world on this issue, and present recommendations to policy makers”* (Erdoğan and Ünver, 2015:5).

TISK organizes meetings, symposia and workshops as a confederation. *“We don’t deliver training; we organize meetings, symposia for our members. Last year we had a symposium, but the issue was not raised. But it will be in the near future. It is raised in some meetings we participate. In a meeting organized by the General Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health we came up with a recommendation to promote basic measures of safety and health accompanied by visuals on the occupational safety and health of Syrian refugees.”*

At international level, TISK brings the issue of migration in general rather than Syrian refugees in particular, and they are addressed in this context. TISK is a member of the Migration Commission of the Federation of International Employers and it attends the meetings of the Global Migration and Development Forum.

The publications and training activities of INTES do not cover issues related to Syrian refugees. The same is more or less applicable to other employers’ organizations as well.

It is stated that TESK, affiliated federations and ESOBs in provinces have no publication and training activity related to Syrian refugees.

The case is different in labour confederations. There are publications on Syrian refugees by confederations. For example, the 4th issue (2015) of DISK-AR, the Research Periodical of DISK Confederation, compiles academic studies under the heading "Working Class and Migration" which includes articles on Syrian refugees as well (DISK, 2015).

HAK-IS states that its quarterly journal HAK-IS deals with the issue of Syrian refugees in line with the opinion and recommendations of the Confederation. They add that their training programmes cover the issue of integration of Syrian refugees and their members asked to behave in their workplaces in a manner conscious of the humanitarian aspect of the issue.

Following the adoption of the "Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners Under Temporary Protection" in January 2016, TURK-IS administered a questionnaire titled "Syrian Refugees and their Impact on Working Life" to collect information from its member unions on the number of Syrians working in their respective trades, wages paid, social protection status, working hours, working conditions and their impact on employment. In their responses to the questionnaire, member labour unions underlined the negative impact of Syrian refugees on labour markets and social life (TURK-IS, 2016).

Though limited, labour union publications include some informative articles concerning Syrian refugees.<sup>25</sup> In many labour unions, except when labour union trainers raise the issue on their own initiative, the issue is not taken as a separate topic in labour union training programmes. Nevertheless, participants in training activities do raise questions concerning Syrian refugees and their impact on labour markets during training sessions.

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<sup>25</sup> Ela, E.D. (2016), "Are Refugees Welcome", TURK METAL, April, No. 201, p. 30-32.

Issue 141 of "Emek (Labour)" published bi-monthly by GENEL-IS Union includes a special file "Syrian Refugees in the World and in Turkey", GENEL-IS, 2016, Emek Gazetesi, issue 141, pp16-17 ([http://www.GENEL-IS.org.tr/emek-gazetesi-141-sayi,2,11631#.WS6EW\\_DyjiU](http://www.GENEL-IS.org.tr/emek-gazetesi-141-sayi,2,11631#.WS6EW_DyjiU)). GENEL-IS covers the issue also on its website (<http://www.GENEL-IS.org.tr/20-haziran-dunya-multeci-gunu-suriyeli-gocmenler,2,11833#.WQYCwROGPIU>)

The short film "He" directed by Didem Boztaş, the press advisor of Oz Iplik-Is Union gives segments from the life of a Syrian child worker. (<http://www.oziplikis.org.tr/tr/data.asp?id=1098>)

Both confederations and affiliated unions spoke out their views concerning Syrian refugees in the meetings of ITUC, ETUC and global labour unions.

Local labour union branches state the topic of Syrian refugees is not covered in training activities they attend. There was participation at branch leaders level to the meeting in Gaziantep organized in the context of HAK-IS' vocational training project.

There is need that labour unions increase their publications covering various issues related to Syrian refugees and include in their training programmes basic issues related to labour migration in general and Syrian refugees in particular.

It can be stated that the need for publications and training is a higher priority particularly for TESK.

**6.1.4.Desired performance: Engaging in solidarity-oriented and inclusive activities in relation to SUTPs; trying to promote decent work opportunities**

✓ Have you engaged in activities related to:

Humanitarian aid to Syrians under temporary protection.
Vocational training for Syrians under temporary protection.
Legal aid to Syrians under temporary protection.
Work for organizing Syrians under temporary protection.
Preventing informal employment of Syrians under temporary protection.

The following can be considered as the first stage of the performance expected from workers' and employers' organizations in promoting decent work for SUTPs: Establishment of contact points with SUTPs; development of inclusive policies defending human rights and the right to work of Syrian refugees; and extending these policies to all levels of labour union organization through publications and meetings. At the second, stage workers' and employers' organizations are expected to translate these policies into life and engage in activities to promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs.

TISK states that they have no activity as a confederation that can be considered as action. It can be said that member employers' unions have no such activity in relation to Syrians either.

At confederation level and under the Project for Vocational Training of Refugees and Host Communities, TESK organized the delivery of high-quality vocational training to 500 persons in Ankara in the period of October 2016 to January 2017 and their awarding of MoNE (Ministry of National Education) recognized certificates through the Norwegian Refugee Council and MEKSA Foundation. Courses in this context included cooking, hair-dressing, computer repair, tailoring, translation, executive assistance, marketing and child training.

TESK's project to be implemented jointly with UNICEF will, when implemented, represent a significant activity in terms of preventing informal employment. The project involves the inspection of voluntary workplaces through workplace inspection and counselling groups in order to prevent Syrian child labour.<sup>26</sup>

The registration and chamber membership of Syrian tradesmen must be taken as a reflection of efforts waged by TESK and its chambers to organize Syrian refugees.

To have Syrian tradesmen officially registered, TESK contributed to the Economy, Labour Force and Development Working Group for SUTPs chaired by ISKUR and to the 2016 Action Plan for SUTPs, and conveyed its recommendations as a list to ISKUR.

Federations affiliated with TESK have not engaged directly in any activity related to SUTPs. The Federation of Barbers and Hair Dressers re-directed to relevant ESOBs the complaints from Hatay and Gaziantep about informal Syrian tradesmen. Syrians working in bakeries benefitted from training programmes in hygiene organized by the Federation of Bakers.

It can be said that provincial ESOBs are engaged in various activities related to SUTPs, but there can be no mention of any coordinated and systematic scheme of activities. In Gaziantep, Adana and Sanliurfa as provinces covered by the survey, MEKSA Vocational Training Centres provide the infrastructure for delivering training in various occupations. In Gaziantep, for example, there is sufficient infrastructure and experience relating to the delivery of such train-

<sup>26</sup> 28.05.2017 [https://www.tesk.org.tr/tr/yeni/haber\\_devam.php?id=1823](https://www.tesk.org.tr/tr/yeni/haber_devam.php?id=1823)

ing programmes. GESOB (i.e. Gaziantep ESOB) MEKSA Supra-enterprise Training Centre is used for training on metal works, machinery, woodworks; GESOB MEKSA Vocational Training Centre for training on automotive, garments, informatics, electrics-electronics, natural gas, elevator, automation; and GESOB Service Building for training on ladies' hair-dressing, hygiene, entrepreneurship, and occupational safety and health. Officials from Gaziantep ESOB say that Syrians too benefit from these training programmes and they also offer Turkish language and vocational training opportunities to Syrians who want. *"They used to have their occupations while in Syria and they want to practice it here now. First, we reach working people to inform them about the legislation in effect here. For those who are not engaged in any work, we develop programmes on occupations they mention and present these to donors. We first give them Turkish language training and then refer to vocational training. We have the infrastructure to deliver training programmes. We have our training centres. International organizations extend financial support; we use the trainers of MoNE and our own. Infrastructure is what we provide and the rest is from the international organization concerned. We did the same in Sanliurfa too."* *"Syrian refugees come and say they want training. We launched an advertisement; and they have good communication among the community. There are hundreds of applications to us. We respond to these so far as we find projects."* GESOB adds that support to these training activities receive support from SODES, GIZ and ILO (Ercan, 2016).

Under the protocol signed by ILO with Sanliurfa ESOB, training programmes planned and delivered on CNC programming, welding, plastic piping, gas-welding, car tyre repair to local people and Syrians in classes of 20 at the Supra-enterprise Training Centre located at Evren Industrial Site.<sup>27</sup> In similar vein, Adana ESOB and ILO Turkey jointly delivers vocational training and Turkish language courses to Syrians. In 2017, 7 Turkish language courses outreached 140 Syrians. A total of 140 Syrians and Adana people benefited from vocational training on hair-dressing, assistant cook, plain stitch, work apron sewing, synthetic painting, upholstery sewing, piping, car tyre repair and service.

Another example of training delivered to Syrians is the Turkish language courses for Syrians in Antakya by the Credit Guarantee Coop-

<sup>27</sup> 21.04.2016 [http://www.ilo.org/ankara/news/WCMS\\_473289/lang-tr/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ankara/news/WCMS_473289/lang-tr/index.htm)

erative of Tradesmen and Craftsmen. *"We have a historical building that we restored; along with adult training activities we give Turkish language courses to Syrians. Demand is high."*

It is understood that the membership of Syrian tradesmen to ESOBs is not the outcome of a coordinated campaign for membership. Syrian tradesmen encountered in training programmes or social environments have been encouraged to join chambers.

While no detailed data are available on their activities in this area, it may be conjectured that NGOs working with international funds like the International Middle East Peace Research Centre (IMPR), Gaziantep-based Malumat Community Information Centre which is a program of Mercy Corps turkey, and Mersin-based Syrian Social Community<sup>28</sup> have their important role in increasing the number of registered Syrian tradesmen by covering their registration-membership fees.

*"In Aksaray neighbourhood of Antakya, there is an association which I think has some relations with the European Union. There are 3-4 Syrians and 7-8 Turkish citizens. They say they help Syrians in getting work permits and starting their workplaces. There was a young expert there, called me several times and asked about relevant procedures."*

*"Chamber membership of SUTPs in Mersin happened spontaneously. There must be some organizations assisting them. There is an association called Syrian Social Community active since 2012. It is funded by donors abroad. There, refugees are informed about legal matters and so. We don't know if and how this has implications on our body of members. The process of registration here is a process that trickles down 4 to 5 years after migration. Some stay away from registration since their idea is to go somewhere else. There is the Turkish-Arabian Businessmen Association in Mersin. On some occasions they help us too. But, we don't know much about institutional implications of this."*

All ESOBs state that they have applied to relevant public authorities to prevent the informal activity of Syrian tradesmen, but in general not so much enforcement takes place against this informality.

Humanitarian aid to Syrians take place at individual charity level; and no direct institutional aid is extended although support has been given to ongoing campaigns.

<sup>28</sup> 20.04.2016 <http://epochtimestr.com/index.php/sosyal-suriye-toplulugu-turkiyenin-en-onemlisuriye-toplulugu-olma-yolunda>



Relating to providing decent work to SUTPs, it can be said that ES-OBs can make significant contribution to this with their experience in vocational training especially in those provinces where they have necessary infrastructure. In this context, ESOBs must be given support to take part more often in national and international projects on vocational training of Syrian refugees. A positive step in this regard is the inclusion of the Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen in the commission established by the MoNE General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Training for *“improving the access of SUTPs to vocational training.”*

At rank-and-file level, it can be said that unfair competition related complaints of tradesmen and craftsmen lead them to behave hesitantly towards any support to Syrian refugees except humanitarian aid. This distance can be covered if the international support to the registration of Syrian tradesmen is given directly through projects to be implemented with TESK and affiliated chambers instead of NGOs.

The action by TURK-IS, DISK and HAK-IS in relation to SUTPs is that they engage in humanitarian aid. Besides humanitarian aid, HAK-IS also launched a social integration project in Gaziantep and Kilis together with Gazi University, Islamic Community National Opinion Hasene Association (IGMG) of Germany and Cojep International of France that involves vocational training allocating 20 hours of theory and 80 hours of practice in laundry and scullery works. The project also includes the production of a Social Integration Guide, a survey on a sample of 250 people from Gaziantep and Kilis to identify local people's prejudices against migrants and refugees and other similar social integration activities.

As headquarters, local branches of labour unions too played their role in participating in humanitarian relief activities of their confederations or conveying relief materials to refugees. Gaziantep and Adana branches of HIZMET-IS say they spend efforts in humanitarian aid. Limited budgetary resources of local labour union branches as well as the tendency “help your own poor” stand out as factors limiting humanitarian aid efforts. Labour unionists say they extend “personal help” particularly to Syrians living in their neighbourhoods.

Labour unions make no specific effort to organize Syrian workers. As in the case of metal works, it is observed that a limited number of formal Syrians workers join labour unions without any special effort by others in case there is a union in their enterprise.

As chambers of tradesmen, labour unions too say that they have applied to authorities for preventing informal Syrian employment but with no result. It is a widespread conviction that there is no inspection in fact and it is pointless to make any complaint. This leads to the belief that informal employment of Syrians is something that cannot be prevented, and even that it is a political choice. It is observed that there is a frustration concerning the outcome of efforts to prevent informal Syrian employment not only in commercial activities and services but also in industry and in medium-size enterprises.

*"We all have our complaints about the informal employment of Syrian refugees. The tax authorities can pursue the case of a 15-year-old tax debt, but do not display the same sensitivity when it comes to informal employment of refugees. For example, the state can detect Syrians informally employed in bakeries if it wants to. It keeps the doors and finds them. The state knows all about what is going on."*

*"No use in complaining. The state encourages it. Go and tell it to the Governorate, you will get no response."*

*"Syrians are working in about 40 bakeries out of 50. We can't stop it, we just complain. We informed the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry rejected our appeal for not giving identity numbers of persons concerned. We obtained no results. We filed our written applications. The Governorate and Police check whether they are illegal; they don't bother to check whether they are formal workers. And municipalities do nothing. Lately we applied to the General Directorate of Security upon the advice of a security personnel. The General Directorate sent a note to all District Directorates to respond to our applications. So, we got responses from few, telling us that they found two persons who have become Turkish citizens now."*

There is no initiative in the union community envisaging vocational training for Syrians, other than the preparation for vocational training in Gaziantep in the context of a project by HAK-IS Confederation. In general, there are no cases in which SUTPs apply to unions for information or support in any issue.

TARIM ORMANI-IS (Agriculture and Forestry Works) Union published a booklet on the rights of Syrians employed informally by contractors and sub-contractors of forestry enterprises. Yet, the booklet is in Turkish and geared to informing workers employed in the sector rather than Syrians.

In conclusion, it can be said that in terms of engaging in solidarity and inclusive activities and promoting decent work opportunities, employers' organizations are not active whereas tradesmen's and workers' organizations have initiatives in humanitarian assistance and vocational training. Employers' organizations have considerable infrastructure and experience in vocational training. These organizations can get together with government institutions, international organizations and labour unions can get together on a joint platform to develop projects to provide decent work opportunities to SUTPs. With respect to TESK and affiliated organizations, a coordinated registration campaign can be considered as an important step in transforming Syrian tradesmen into formal status. In relation to Syrians working informally for local tradesmen, particularly in terms of preventing Syrian child labour, it will be a positive step if TESK's workplace inspection and counselling groups are mobilized and the Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen assume an active role in the commission established by the MoNE General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Training for "improving the access of SUTPs to vocational training."<sup>29</sup>

ISKUR and TESK signed a protocol of cooperation on 24 July 2017 envisaging the establishment of ISKUR service points<sup>30</sup> within TESK chambers. In the coming period, these service points may be useful for TESK and affiliated organizations in contributing to the promotion of decent work opportunities for SUTPs. As to labour unions, they should first build awareness within relating to the problems of informal Syrian workers at sector level, their working conditions and the right to work, and develop axes of solidarity with them again at sector level.

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<sup>29</sup> 03.02.2017 [http://mtegm.meb.gov.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/2017\\_02/06103159\\_img-170206104352.pdf](http://mtegm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2017_02/06103159_img-170206104352.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> 24.07.2017 <http://www.tesk.org.tr/tr/mevzuat/17/2017058ek1.pdf>

### 6.1.5.Desired performance: Discussing issues related to Syrian workers in social dialogue bodies or platforms

Have the representatives of your organization stated any opinion related to Syrians under temporary protection in social dialogue bodies?
Have the representatives of your organization taken any initiative to have seats in migration related advisory bodies within the Directorate-General of Migration Management and Ministry of Labour and Social Security?
Have the representatives of your organization brought to the agenda of issues related to Syrian refugees in Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards? If yes, what were their arguments?
Have you participated in meetings related to Syrian refugees organized by international and/or public organizations?

As stated by TISK and TURK-IS, the Tripartite Advisory Board as a central social dialogue body and 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Labour Assemblies have not discussed any issue related to SUTPs.

Workers' and employers' organizations have not taken any initiative to have seats in advisory boards existing within MoLSS and DGMM.

TISK takes part in Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards in 76 provinces, but they are represented through public employers' organizations for they cannot do it via private sector in many provinces. According to TISK, their representatives mostly avoid bringing up issues at boards where governors preside. There is no feedback to TISK from Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards.

TURK-IS says their representatives in Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards mostly do not convey to the HQ the issues they discuss in these boards. But during our interviews with local board members in Gaziantep and Hatay provinces where there is considerable Syrian refugee population we learned that the issue is discussed in provincial boards. It is stated for both provinces that there are problems related to informal employment of Syrians but there can be no mention of any effective intervention against it.

HAK-IS say their representatives bring the issue of Syrian refugees to the meetings of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards; they emphasize the importance of vocational training on the assumption that they will permanently stay in Turkey; and vocational training is also a tool to prevent informal employment.<sup>31</sup>

A platform for dialogue that TESK says having participated in some meetings of is the “Economy and Labour Force Working Group” formed by the Prime Ministry in relation to Syrians under Temporary Protection (SUTPs) and coordinated by ISKUR. This working group comprises relevant governmental institutions, NGOs that represent Syrians as well, labour unions, employers’ organizations and international organizations. The working group developed an Action Plan encompassing 19 items under 5 key objectives for the labour market integration of SUTPs.

*The following are the 5 key objectives specified in the action plan:*

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Delivery of vocational and language training to SUTPs in line with labour market needs.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Developing mechanisms of entrepreneurship for SUTPs.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Augmenting the service delivery capacity of institutions/agencies extending or capable of extending services to SUTPs especially in the context of employment.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Activities geared to enhancing awareness in services offered to SUTPs and in prevention of informal employment.

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Ensuring labour force participation of SUTPs.

The ILO Office for Turkey as the specialized organization is included in the Working Group includes other public institutions and organizations, workers’ and employers’ organizations, and made significant contribution to the formulation of the action plan. According to ISKUR, the overall coordination of this work is transferred to AFAD

<sup>31</sup> No activity related to “migrants” which ISKUR considers among “groups in need of special attention” could be observed in randomly selected activity report and resolutions of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards (PEVTB) in the provinces of the region. Neither is there any activity related to “migrants” in the PEVTB 2015 Activity Report covering all boards (<http://www.iskur.gov.tr/tr-tr/kurumsalbilgi/raporlar.aspx#dltop>)

and there is now an effective and comprehensive process of monitoring and evaluation led by AFAD.<sup>32</sup>

As structures with regular meetings participated by the representatives of workers' and employers' organizations at local level, Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards are the most widely embracing platforms where the problems of Syrian refugees in working life can be addressed. However, the representatives of workers and employers say they act quite cautiously while making criticisms in these boards. According to interviewees among local representatives who attended board meetings, discussions mostly revolve around informal employment of Syrians without any step for solution.

Gaziantep ESOB: *"Not much on the agenda. This is the top-level policy. These issues are mostly addressed in the meetings of the governorate and AFAD."*

Adana ESOB: *"It as was raised in the board as follows: They are informal, have to be registered. We are talking with employers too. Formalization is a must. The state should support tradesmen, merchants, and say I cover a part of their security contributions. There is need to inform tradesmen."*

Mersin ESOB: *"People speak out their opinion in boards. We discuss what we can do. There is also the problem of integration besides informality. They are socially different, we sleep at night but they sleep daytime. Initially we offered them our food and meals, but incoming people were many more than we expected. Presently we keep discussing, no solution yet."*

Hatay CELIK-IS: *"It is addressed by provincial employment boards. We communicate them our opinion. Informal employment disturbs us, it pushes wages down."*

Hatay TURK METAL: *"It is discussed in provincial employment boards. We keep telling it to the Governor. Representatives around the table, TOBB, TESK, talk about issues relevant to ISKUR, but these do not translate into action."*

<sup>32</sup> The full text of the action plan mentioned could not be reached in the sources of the Prime Ministry, ISKUR or AFAD. Neither is there any information about the implementation processes, roles of workers' and employers' organizations in these processes, and processes of monitoring and evaluation. Such information may have a guiding role for contributions that workers' and employers' unions can make in promoting decent work opportunities for Syrian refugees. Organizations other than TESK did not mention this Action Plan during our interviews.

Urfa HIZMET-IS: *“Continuously discussed in boards. We voice continuously in the meetings. The governor is also sensitive to the issue. Having no security is a form of modern slavery. They conduct work together with the social Security Institution and Police, but we have no role in this as a labour union.”*

Adana TURK-IS: *“It comes to the agenda in provincial employment boards of course. The governor presides over board meetings and in some cases academics come to make presentations. The point is how to ease their situation. I should talk about the impact on labour markets, but I fail to voice it.”*

It is observed that workers’ and employers’ organizations participate actively in many international and national meetings to which they are invited. Conferences, panel discussions, symposia and workshops where issues related to SUTPs play an important role as platforms of informing, contact and activation for organizations in the context of the issue of Syrians in general and promotion of decent work opportunities in particular. In 2016, central-level meetings participated by workers’ and employers’ organizations included the following: Police Academy I. International Migration and Security Conference; Federal Republic of Germany Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs Programme for the Participation in Labour Market and Integration of Refugees; Panel discussion: Central Place of Decent Work Approach in Syrian Refugee Crisis: ILO Experience; TAIEX Conference on the Social Inclusion of SUTPs; Discussion on Draft Document of Recommendations on Political and Institutional Alignment for Migration and Development in Turkey; and National Conference on the Promotion of Livelihoods and Decent Work Opportunities for Syrians and Host Communities. At local level, representatives of organizations say they never fail to participate where they are invited to these kinds of meetings and they benefit from it. Labour unions also participate in the meetings of global unions through the ITUC and those of ETUC and Federations at European level that are related to the issue of migration.

It is observed that the issue of Syrian refugees in the context of working life is not addressed in the meetings of the Tripartite Board and Labour Councils. For organizations to support the promotion of decent work opportunities, they have to adopt an inclusive and

solidarity-oriented approach on the basis of refugees' human rights and right to work. The survey could not reach any finding about the effective working of the "Economy and Labour Force Working Group" formed by the Prime Ministry in relation to Syrians under Temporary Protection (SUTPs) whose coordination as a country-wide social dialogue platform. It is further observed that social parties are not considered as NGOs that can be included in advisory boards within DGMM and MoLSS while employers' organizations, workers and tradesman have no application to that effect. Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards are significant social dialogue platforms where issues related to Syrian refugees are addressed but without discussing and deciding on systematic solutions. The social parties must, in cooperation with ISKUR, convert Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards into active platforms for promoting decent work opportunities for Syrians. It is understood that the meetings of national and international organizations and higher bodies are influential on all organizations in terms of policy development and in approaching the issue of Syrian refugees in the context of human rights and right to work.

### 6.1.6. Desired performance: Cooperating with NGOs and refugee associations on SUTP-related issues

Do you have contact with NGOs and refugee associations related to Syrian refugees? Have you had any joint activity?

In the Syrian refugee crisis, NGOs play highly active roles in terms of both humanitarian assistance and social services and providing means of livelihood. As of October 2015, there were 139 international NGOs accredited to interventions in refugee issues in Turkey; about half of such accreditations came after the beginning of the crisis. These NGOs assist local NGOs in various areas from strengthening protection to providing services to off-camp refugees and asylum seekers. Many of these NGOs are presently UN partners and engaged in 3RP activities.<sup>33</sup>

The website address <https://graphcommons.com/graphs/0711e621-a8c5-4651-a1d6-33106c7bb3f1?show=comments> includes a network chart of national and international organizations extending support

<sup>33</sup> Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for Turkey 2016-2017, p. 10. [http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Turkey-2016-Regional-Refugee-Resilience-Plan\\_Turkish.pdf](http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Turkey-2016-Regional-Refugee-Resilience-Plan_Turkish.pdf)



to Syrian refugees in Turkey. The chart shows that there are many associations in Turkey engaged in activities related to Syrian refugees.

However, cooperation by TISK, TESK and labour unions with these NGOs and refugee associations is quite limited.

It is stated neither TISK nor INTES is in cooperation with any NGO in relation to SUTPs. TESK and affiliated trade federations too state to have no joint work with NGOs on this issue.

A problematic period started for NGO activity in the region with the suspension of the activities of some NGOs upon the state of emergency regime, including the Coordination of the Organizations for Voluntary Service (COVS) active in Gaziantep, Kilis and Hatay; International NGO Safety Organization (INSO)<sup>34</sup> active in Gaziantep; Turkish Branch of Mercy Corps supporting the Malumat project; and IMPR active in 31 provinces of Turkey which states that it has directly and indirectly transferred 400 million TL to Turkey within one year from international funds allocated to refugees. However, since these NGOs were not in any kind of partnership with tradesmen's and workers' organizations in their projects, the suspension of NGO activities cannot be said to have any direct effect on the activities of local organizations mentioned.

Gaziantep ESOB: *"There was the Malumat. It was a leading institution, but later it was closed down for some reason we are unaware of."*

Adana ESOB (referring to IMPR): *"It was this association that worked the hardest. They used to bring in those who wanted to register and cover their registration costs. They were holding meetings with the Governorate and we met in one of these meetings. They worked in the field and did all they could to have Syrians registered. Nothing was heard of them in the last month..."*

Hatay ESOB: *"In Aksaray neighbourhood of Antakya, there is an association which I think has some relations with the European Union. There are 3-4 Syrians and 7-8 Turkish citizens. They say they help Syrians in getting work permits and starting their workplaces. There was a young expert there, called me several times and asked about relevant procedures. I had met in Ankara by chance with their authorized person. He*

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<sup>34</sup>15.04.2017 <http://www.gazetevatan.com/turkiye-5-stk-nin-faaliyetlerini-durdurdu-1058187-gundem/>

*told me they had a branch office in Hatay that I should visit and get acquainted. They start vocational training courses where there are many Syrians. We had some talking, but it remained as so without any actual partnership." "In fact, these associations are like sealed boxes. I ask them what they actually do, but get no clear response. I ask how much money you distribute, they look at one another as if asking "should we answer?" They are paid personnel and have their worries. They must visit tradesmen's chambers and talk about these issues."*

*Mersin ESOB: "We don't have direct contact with these NGOs. Why don't they get in touch with social partners? These associations are active on their own with international funds."*

A similar lack of contact is also valid for labour unions. HAK-IS says it cooperates with such charity/relief agencies as IHH and Turkish Red Crescent in relation to Syrian refugees.

The inactivation in the field of some NGOs who mobilized large sums of international funds, employed many personnel and even in the partner status of the 3RP in Turkey may have created an opportunity for workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations with strong infrastructure and large membership to fill the emerging vacuum. An ESOP manager say the following on the issue: *"70 percent of money coming from Europe goes to personnel working in these associations. It must be investigated. They organize courses for Syrians and give them pocket money. Then it is over. What? There is no sustainability. It could be much better it is done via tradesmen's organizations and so on. Tradesmen's organizations have their systems already established and there is no need for any new personnel. They have their infrastructure. These vocational training programmes should be organized through tradesmen's chambers. Funds would be transferred to chambers according to their size of membership. It is because they are in need of funds though they have their necessary infrastructure. When people talk about these associations they talk about funds amounting to 800,000 USD or so. If these initiatives take place in our channels most of these funds will actually go to Syrians and there will be saving in personnel costs. There will be more efficient utilization of funds for projects. Anyway, people from these associations come to us and ask how to register tradesmen. These budgets must be used well. Sustainability must be ensured and funds should be allocated on the condition of employment creation guarantee."*

ILO support and training programmes will be meaningful in terms of improving the performance of workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations in this field.

### 6.1.7.Desired performance: Developing creative ideas and activities to ensure decent work opportunities for SUTPs

Under this heading, the understanding of organizations of decent work for Syrians is analysed on the basis of two complementary questions given below:

What can be done to ensure that Syrian refugees have formal jobs under decent working conditions?

If you were to develop a project for the formal employment of Syrian refugees under decent conditions, what would you recommend?

TISK approaches the issue from the point of vocational training. According to TISK, correct integration policies and overcoming language barriers are as important as vocational training. *“Syrian refugees are no different from other workers. We give priority to skilled labour force in our labour market policies. There is a method that we employ with governmental organizations and agencies. We can act protocols of cooperation with the MoNE to work together for the vocational training of SUTPs. Vocational-technical training centres deliver training programmes in line with the needs of our enterprises. We have employment guarantee as well in some of these training programmes. We witnessed the benefits of this in creating qualified workers. A similar model can be used particularly for Syrians of Turcoman origin without language problem. Language courses can be delivered to overcome the barrier of language. These people have their competencies. There are some who have worked in the automotive sector while in Syria. We can assess the competency of these persons and refer them to some correct niches in the labour market. Coming to the question of what can be done about informality it was necessary to start with a sound monitoring policy. We lost that chance with the open-door policy. Inspection is important of course, but it is difficult to overcome the problem through penal sanctions. There is need to develop mechanisms of informing. Bringing the*

*presently uncontrolled process under control depends on the will of official authorities.”*

TISK opts for vocational training as a project as well in providing decent work to SUTPs: *“If we were to develop a project on the issue, we would have done it through vocational training; by developing a vocational training module suitable for refugees. You identify priority sectors, develop your module and conduct pilot training programmes on the basis of this module. We can prepare the module, we can conduct pilot training programmes. We are developing occupational standards and competencies, but training programmes must be delivered by competent vocational training institutions.”*

As TISK, INTES too recommends the delivery of vocational training and, at the end of training, recognition of earlier learning. They consider the possibility of a project that first identifies occupational groups and state of qualifications, and then training in specific occupations so as to channel trainees to pertinent jobs according to their skills.

TESK holds the opinion that ensuring decent work for SUTPs is a very large-scale, macro issue and can be addressed only through overall public policies.

The federations of tradesmen dwell on rigidity in regulations, cooperation with Government, informing and supporting Syrian tradesmen about registration procedures, informing local tradesmen and delivery of vocational training. All leaders say the problem is of large-scale and needs to be addressed in the context of a long-term integrated public strategy.

At local level, we see ESOBs recommending stricter inspection by government authorities to register and formalize the status of Syrian tradesmen. But the issue of decent work for Syrians informally employed by local tradesmen is not on the agenda of tradesmen's organizations. Pointing that the same problem is also valid for local people working for tradesmen, a union leader says: *“No chamber goes to a workplace and asks about the social security status of people working there. They ask whether they have their documents of hygiene and proficiency. It is the task of government authorities to check social security status, not that of chambers. We make our efforts for the registration of informal tradesmen, but that is all. Informal employment must be inspected by the government.”*

Gaziantep ESOB thinks Syrian tradesmen can be informed and registered through a project envisaging the establishment of a “Counselling Centre” under the Union and support activities so far carried out through large and small, difficult-to-control associations can be carried out under the umbrella of the Union.

A common concern shared by both ESOBs and local labour union branches is that efforts to promote decent work opportunities for Syrians may lead to reactions from the rank-and-file given local labour markets characterized by employment and informality: *“Mersin cannot cope with refugees. Unemployment is already widespread. Any action for Syrians under these conditions will instigate reactions and not received well. Our president says this process must be kept under control. In other words, projects must not be limited to Syrians and cover other disadvantaged groups as well.”*

There are also approaches that address the issue of decent work for Syrian refugees at macro scale and say that the problem cannot be solved without employment creating investments.

According to TURK-IS, the greatest obstacle for Syrian refugees to find jobs in decent conditions is the slow rate of investment in Turkey in general. Turkey has a young population and each year a million young people is added to the labour force. So while there are bottlenecks in providing jobs to young population, it seems very difficult, at least in the near future, to provide decent work opportunities to SUTPs.

As TISK, TURK-IS too draws attention to the importance of vocational training. According to TURK-IS one of the major problems in working life in Turkey is being without any vocation: *“The low level of education and lack of vocational training in Turkey lead to serious problems particularly in finding intermediate personnel. Speaking no other language than their native one and with educational background that is lower than that of Turkish citizens on average, Syrian refugees need to undergo serious training to be able to find decent employment. At this point the state must make serious investment in education and training infrastructure. If there are no new fields of investment and if Syrian refugees do not acquire qualifications of working life including language in the first place they will have no other choice but being employed informally instead of having decent work opportunities. The informal economy and the presence of Syrians bring unfair competition in particularly for medium and large size en-*

*terprises. The same phenomenon even leads to some inter-regional disparities. Industrialists in Denizli, for instance, state they can no more compete with Gaziantep since industrialists in the latter enjoy lower costs thanks to Syrian refugees. Thus, informality emerges as a problem that negatively affects many parties at the same time including those enterprises that abide by relevant rules, the state, and those who are employed informally. This development brings along the risk of disturbing industrial peace, and all parties including the state should adopt relevant measures and NGOs should work together to restore the situation."*

TURK-IS recommends a project to help Syrian refugees advance in the field of language and vocational training. It is said that which sectors need workers of which qualifications should be identified and minimum vocational training should be given accordingly.

HAK-IS too attaches importance to vocational training in enabling SUTPs to enjoy decent working conditions. As far as projects are concerned, HAK-IS favours a project that would be the extension of existing vocational training projects in a way to contribute to employment.

Some union headquarters recommend that vocational training to be delivered to Syrians should be in occupations that local labour force stays away. *"This has unfortunately turned into gangrene. Many thought that they would soon return. The burden fell upon the shoulders of Turkey. The rate of informality jumped up and it is a risk when they are employed. I don't know how we can overcome this problem. What can labour unions do? Qualified refugees go to Europe. Maybe we can encourage these refugees to stay. In such fields as medicine and engineering, for example, we must wage specific efforts. The government may extend vocational training courses to those who have no skills. Special courses I mean. All must be registered and made formal."*

Another recommendation is about launching information campaigns through public spots on TV: *"Those who work formally must be informed; television channels can be used in this. Workers must be told they are doomed to hunger if Syrians are employed informally. Local workers must be aware that it is to their detriment."*

A union recommended that Syrian migrants be entered in a database first according to their occupations and educational background and then referred to vacant jobs in Turkey accordingly. The following is recommended for those who have their qualifications: *"There must be*

*work on equivalencies and creating opportunities for the employment of qualified refugees. But the problem is not related to Syrian migrants only. Informal economy and employment are at the root of the problem. It does not seem possible to provide “decent” employment to Syrian refugees without solving this problem.”*

*At local level labour unions are quite distant to the idea of engaging in activities to promote decent work opportunities for Syrians. What is actually desired is the end of war and Syrians’ return to their country. “Frankly speaking, I am not with that idea. There is already unemployment here in Turkey and it is not correct to concentrate on Syrians. Let’s take care of our own problems first. The government is already doing many things for these people. I hope their conditions turn favourable soon and they return to their homeland.” “The environment must be clear for looking at the issue from a wider perspective. Are they going to stay or leave after a year? It is one thing if they’d go, but at least 30 percent will not go back. They won’t leave after so many years. So, what can be done? It is difficult to make them formal. There you see a man who found a job and now working. They won’t unionize even when made formal. In future they may even cause us to lose our union authority to negotiate.”*

*“The state should follow this issue. They said we could employ Syrians to the rate of 10 percent, but did not follow it. You should see job applications made to unions. How can unions work for the formal employment of Syrians as these applicants wait? What unions can do at most is not to stand against their formal employment in their enterprises.”*

*“The war in Syria must stop and these people must go back to their country. It is preferred that they live better in their own country. Unfavourable conditions that they suffer here in Turkey take our people back too. While our people are trying to make ends meet, Syrians work for half the wage they get. That is the preference of employers. I don’t know how it can be overcome.”*

*“The public sector should take the lead on this issue. Labour unions will make their contributions of course, but one word by employers is worth a thousand words by labour unions. Sanctions should be dissuasive, employers would then abide by.”*

*“There should be no political intervention in the inspection. There are politicians who interfere. Labour unions in Adana are affected much*

*by the presence of Syrians. The whole civil society must act together provided that it is not superficial. Politicians will not interfere, but the government will support. It cannot be stopped in any other way. Why? Because it is cheap labour and I'd use that if I were to... They already enjoy social assistance and what they make by working is an extra. Their numbers are so high that we have no chance of doing something."*

Though few, there are also some labour union branches that recommend organizing Syrian workers and making their status formal: *"To turn informal workers in bakeries into formal, there is need to identify workplaces first and then to bring these workers together without letting their employers know it. In fact, workers themselves can go and report to the Ministry, but we don't try these ways so often. Labour inspection boards may be called in. In short, there must be an organizing work at the beginning followed by applications to register as formal workers."*

A recommendation that assigns active role to labour unions is the establishment of commissions in provinces within governorates, giving workers' and employers' organizations their place in these commissions, and then promoting this initiative through press declarations. *"If I were the civil administrator, I'd establish a commission, analyse the existing situation, and then identify the occupations and needs of Syrians. I'd launch a campaign with social parties for formalization." "There should be no delay in the issuance of documents. There is need for residence document. Their children should attend school; all should be in an inventory. There are addresses and social services should go to visit them for inventory. Then there is consideration of some incentives against informal employment. There is this thing known as Syrian quota. It can be informally taken as mandatory for Syrians."*

Expecting active policies from the Government sector, labour unions think the dissuasive nature of sanctions would contribute to the solution of the problem.

In sum, organizations think about three basic mechanisms that can be operated to support the provision of decent work opportunities to SUTPs. The first one is ensuring that Syrian refugees acquire qualifications through vocational training and obtain jobs in line with the needs of labour market. Organizations think that they can



contribute to this by vocational training projects. It is recommended that competencies must be identified of those with some qualification. The second is ensuring that SUTPs work formally since it is a precondition for decent work. As stated in almost all interviews it is the common view of all organizations that informal employment must be stopped first before being able to provide decent work opportunities to Syrian refugees.

However, given that the problem of informal employment has yet not been solved for local workers either in the labour markets, it seems not so feasible to prevent the informal employment of Syrian refugees through the efforts of social parties. The solution is sought more in public inspection and sanctioning mechanisms. Thirdly, there is the recommendation about information and awareness building campaigns together with social parties, but with the participation of the government as well. A last recommendation which sounds quite weak is to have labour unions organize informal Syrian workers in their enterprises and get them formally registered.

#### **6.1.8.Desired performance: Ensuring that rank-and-file members of the organization have a solidarity-oriented and inclusive approach promoting decent work opportunities for SUTPs**

What are the opinions of your members about Syrian refugees?
Which of the following best describes your members' attitude towards Syrian refugees?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inclusive, solidarity-oriented</li><li>• Indifferent</li><li>• Exclusionary, negative</li></ul>

The large majority of representatives from organizations say their members have negative attitude towards Syrian refugees which may even go as far as hostility. The first reason for this is stated as negative impacts on labour markets. However, problems of security and social adaptation come to the fore in our interviews and focus group meetings as much as and in some cases even more than labour market outcomes.

TISK describes its members' attitude towards SUTPs as "indifferent".

According to TESK, ordinary tradesmen have reactions to Syrian refugees.

*"There were international proposals made to us earlier to develop projects for providing decent work opportunities to Syrian refugees. Our reservation was this: Our members say that support given to these people may be to the detriment of our bread earning. Is this approach correct in terms of Turkey's policies? Of course not... Their formalization is to the benefit of local tradesmen in the long run. TESK has no reservation, but tradesmen have reactions. Activities related to Syrian refugees may be introduced gradually. The overall tendency of tradesmen favours their return. I don't think they will bother discussing about decent work opportunities. Being a tradesman in Turkey is easy for Syrians; and they turn out as our rivals."*

*"I have talked to our chambers and there are different opinions. Hatay is one of the provinces that are most adversely affected. There is the opinion that they should go back. Initially, the reaction was deep in Gaziantep and gradually we have been accustomed to their informal employment nearby. Mersin says we are in a dilemma. In humanitarian terms there is a fierce battle there, but when it comes to employment and jobs, the opinion is mostly negative. They create serious problems. They are not asked so many documents as we are when starting a business. Our people complain about their nationalistic sentiments. They shop from the stores of their own people. Our friends are disturbed about this. When you put them the question if there can be training for refugees they say it could be in such fields as hygiene, language and occupation building. They think as if chambers have no training needs. Our people think their rights are taken away. It seems that citizenship is granted too easily. Shopping within the community is another problem."*

*"As the president of a chamber I am confronted by our members. They say 'you either remain silent or favour them, whose president are you, ours or theirs?'"*

*"Reactions from the bottom are generally negative. In fact, local tradesmen benefit in many ways from the presence of Syrians. They employ them, they are important in agricultural works as well. It is be-*

*cause our rural people do not work, they leave olive, pistachio, pepper etc. remain on trees and fields. There is shortage of rural labour. They have come and now work for low pay. They made their subsistence and contributed to national economy. One should see this side of the picture too. People are prejudiced. Their mentality goes as the state does not take care of us, it takes from us and gives to Syrians. This assistance does not bring peoples closer, pushes them further away from each other."*

Asking union leaders about the attitude of rank-and-file members to SUTPs, it is observed that their attitude is widely exclusionary. A unionist tells about the reactions of unionized workers in textiles: *"Textile workers regard Syrians as a potential danger. Not qualified ones but unqualified workers are disturbed. They have worries that they may be laid off and their work is given to sub-contractors and other working under stairs. This tension further builds up as the number of migrants increases."* Even those workers who do not face the problem of Syrian refugees employed in their sectors are worried about the possibility of Syrians workers coming in to create the pressure of unemployment and downward trend in wages.

Touching upon prejudiced approach of rank-and-file members to the issue of SUTPs, a labour union training specialist says: *"As a union I tell them about the causes of refugee problem and that Syrian refugees are victimized as a part of the working class. But workers look at the issue not in terms of class fraternity but its effects on their daily life. In some border settlements with a significant number of local people of Kurdish and Arabic origin, the relative tolerance to Syrian refugees is mainly on the basis of ethnicity. Workers of Kurdish origin may be in solidarity with Kurdish refugees and Arabic origin with Arabs. Islam does not appear as a dominant axis of solidarity in workers' approach to Syrian refugees. Positions in the realm of labour is totally ignored."*

Our focus group meetings conducted directly with rank-and-file members clearly show an exclusionary approach to Syrian refugees, almost to the degree of hostility.

First of all, the rank-and-file union member does not see the open-door policy as a positive way to follow. The rhetoric frequently heard in this context is the resentment that Syrians fled to Turkey instead

of fighting to defend their homes, families and land, and now our soldiers are fighting and dying in Syria in their place. The following is repeated by many as if by rote: *"We gained our independence by fighting to the end in the war of independence. Our grand grandfathers fought imperialism and did not leave this land. But Syrians left their homeland instead of staying there and fighting."* Recommendations include the gathering of women and children in buffer zones on the Syrian border for protecting them and sending back others who can use weapons.

These negative ideas and sentiments regarding SUTPs lead labour unionists to lose their hope for any solution. *"It is quite difficult to make them formal workers. Our people have ill-will. There are 10,000 tradesmen in Adana and 7,000 of them employ Syrians. How can you gather and make them formal? It seems hopeless. There must be clear cut and precise legislation. There must be no political intervention. It is not an issue that can be handled by labour unions or civil society. It must not be superficial. It is a big problem. They assault our women, wonder in streets with knives in their hands, and not a day passes without an event. It is a problem extending beyond labour markets. The people will rise up one day, local people are afraid to go out of their home. We have no chance in preventing informality, they have their Turkish identities and they work. So, what can you do?"*

*"No labour union can solve these problems. They enjoy state assistance. Eighty percent have their cars. Assistance first goes to these people. The state says to have spent 245 billion liras in assistance. We have our own poor and jobless people. People look at the issue no more in good faith."*

The policies of the European Union on the issue of SUTPs are also criticized: *"Europe is too boastful in human rights issues, but favours restriction of rights when it comes to refugees. They regard as a dump site. Our people here are worthless and their people there are valuable. They say let me take qualified Syrians, doctors, engineers etc. and leave the rest to you, I pay for it, grant visa exemption and so on. Politicians keep bargaining around these issues. They live in distinguished quarters of modern cities and see refugees only as they are begging or scavenging. But the environment where they insert migrants is our environment, of workers, low or medium income level*

*people. While we take up the burden, they bargain for money. I am telling all these to politicians. Okay with its humanitarian and agitation dimension, but in reality it reflects differently to us. In other words, you have the advertising facet behind which a lot of bargaining goes on."*

The overall opinion of workers is that Syrians work for lower wages and thus grab the jobs of local workers. Even "jobs" of local beggars are taken away by Syrians. It is considered that informal employment which is already common in Turkey will further spread, secondary labour markets will be further fragmented, and Syrians could be included in labour markets only as a new sub-stratum due to their low qualification and poor work ethics.

The second dimension of the reaction of rank-and-file union members towards Syrian refugees is the perception of a deep cultural difference. The difference in language is a strong factor consolidating the perception of cultural difference. Common objections are articulated as different ways of life that Syrians have, their culturally distant position, and as newcomers disturbing the established social life. No positive response was given when asked about affinity that may come from the fact that both communities share the same religion.

*"You cannot go out with your child here in Gaziantep. There is that negative side in social terms. Syrians wander around in groups. There are some who work in decent jobs. But there are others as well. Hundreds of them can be seen in day-labourer markets."*

*"Syrians are here to disturb balances here in Turkey. They will be voting in elections tomorrow and vote for a single person. They must be placed in buffer zones. The state uses the present situation as a population movement mechanism. They are implanted to replace Alevi population."*

*"There are neighbourhoods inhabited by Syrians. They feel stronger when they have their own neighbourhoods. They are 40 years behind us. There are 7-8 quilts in a single room and they go to bed and get up with same clothes on. Their culture is that they chat until 2-3 a.m. with their water pipes. They have dinner at 11 p.m. at night. There are Syrians families in the site I live. In fact, their income is not so low. Their children play and make noise in the park till past midnight. I feel*

*like in another country when I go to that neighbourhood. They smoke water pipe on the pavement with their bedroom dress. All seems to create trouble now. Okay, they have fled war, but there must be integration with some rules: education, training, dressing, behaviour, etc.”*

The third dimension of the reaction of union members towards Syrian refugees is related to security considerations. One dimension of the problem of security is the possibility that different terrorist organizations may have their extensions among SUTPs. Another dimension is related to possible clashes that may break out between local people and Syrian communities living in specific neighbourhoods with some solidarity among. There is the common prejudice that “Violence, theft, trafficking and prostitution in Syrian neighbourhoods disturb public order and ethics.” Media news about fights between local people and Syrian refugees in various cities of Turkey add further weight to concerns about urban security.

Lastly, labour union members seem not to approve social spending made for Syrians. They object to assistance to Syrians while there are poor people in Turkey. It is understood in this context that the reaction of unionized workers is not different from the public in general.<sup>35</sup>

During our interviews and focus group meetings stereotype anecdotes feeding prejudices about SUTPs were frequently repeated: Turks defending their country during the war of independence vs. Syrians fleeing; our young people falling in Syria vs. Syrian youth getting their kicks in Turkey; a Turkish citizen who knows Arabic hearing one Syrian saying “These Turks give us whatever we want, extend all kinds of assistance, they may even give us their wives if we want to”; scholarships of 2,000 TL a month given to Syrian university students, etc.

While pointing out to the negative attitude of rank-and-file members it is necessary to add that this attitude of course does not cover all workers: *“It is not possible to limit the opinion of our members about Syrian refugees to a single approach. The diversity of their opinion derives from different political ideas, ethnic identity, locality concerned and position in relations of production. We can say that our members with kinship with Syrians or sharing the same ethnic origin have a tolerant, equalitarian and protective discourse. Also, some mem-*

<sup>35</sup> Erdoğan (2014), “Syrians in Turkey. In this study on social acceptance and adaptation” conducted two years ago, the author identified similar trends in society in general.

bers who have an idea about the underlying causes of war and its political background share the common view that Syrian refugees are exploited and used as cheap labour. These members further regard refugees as a part of Turkish working class that has no social protection, justify and support interventions targeting formal jobs and upholding human rights. It must be noted, however, that such positive approaches stemming from a political stance cannot be attributed to all our members. There are some members who say Syrian refugees as cheap labour have taken away their employment opportunities or affected their economic life directly by purchasing some fertile land here.”

“There are some members looking positively to the issue: They are all Moslems and come in as refugees. We had to open our doors. But there is the negative side of the picture too. The share of those who have a negative approach is as high as 70-80 percent.”

“The worker says okay, we share our bread, but not our jobs... In fact, we are not so different culturally. May local villagers live together with Syrians. There are some clashes of course. There are people who are moderate, but it turns negative if they were to take away our bread.”

Union leaders want to eliminate this negative attitude at the bottom and establish the dominancy of a more solidarity-oriented stance: “People keep saying they have come doing this and that, they make noise and so on... I don't approach the issue this way; I regard them as human beings first... Our members have their problems. They are trying to make ends meet with their wage and there are work accidents. Others take a negative view thinking that while they can hardly make their living these newcomers cheapen the market. But this is wrong. There must be informing. There is need for correct information. Then how people look at the issue will change. Presently everybody looks out from his own window. While I look at the issue from above as a union leader and say we must embrace these people, the rank-and-file are worried about losing their jobs.”

“Lately I went to Urfa and made a speech about refugees there, like supporting, helping these people. Then, during our informal conversation I noticed that the general attitude was negative and prejudiced. It saddened me. They are hired for 30-40 liras a day and still approached negatively.”

The importance of informing and training is underlined in the context of an approach upholding solidarity: *“There is need for training supporting solidarity since dominant feeling in society is towards rejection, rejection without knowing. For refugees to find decent work the society here must accept them. So, there must be training encouraging a culture of solidarity.”*

In conclusion, we can say that the general tendency at the rank-and-file level of organizations is not pro-solidarity but exclusionary. It can be inferred that other than competition brought in labour markets by informally employed Syrians, the reasons for such attitude also include problems related to social and cultural adaptation of refugees now constituting a significant percentage of urban population and concerns about security stemming both from the possibility of terrorist actions and other ordinary crimes.<sup>36</sup>

If workers’, employers’ and tradesmen’s organizations are to promote decent work opportunities for SUTPs, they must first adopt an approach that is solidarity-oriented, inclusive and respectful of human rights. And this points out to the role of organizations in organizing comprehensive training programmes to make their members free from prejudices on the basis of a culture of solidarity.

## **6.2. Part II. Training Needs and Recommendations**

An important criterion with respect to training needs is the level of priority that organizations assign to the issue of SUTPs. Table 3 depicts the responses to the following question:

### **1. What would be the priority of the issue of Syrian refugees for your organization.**

- High priority
- Medium priority
- Limited priority
- Not a priority

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<sup>36</sup> While the rank-and-file union members have a negative and exclusionary attitude towards Syrians, two studies conducted before the Syrian crisis captured that union members had non-negative attitudes towards migrant workers (Gökbayrak and Erdoğan, 2010; Erdoğan and Şenses, 2015).



**Table 3. Priority of SUTPs in the Organization**

Organization	High priority	Medium priority	Limited priority	Not a priority
Employers' organization		1	1	3
Tradesmen's organization-Central			2	3
Tradesmen's organization-Local	4			
Worker's Organization-Central	1	5	5	
Metal-Local		1	3	1
Textiles-Local		1		1
Construction-Local	2			
Food-Local	1		1	1
General Work- Local	1	3	3	
Agriculture-Forestry		1		
Total	9	12	15	9

For employers' organizations, the issue of Syrian refugees does not constitute a priority issue for members though important for the country. As shown by the data from TISK's labour statistics, a large majority of enterprises that have membership with employers' organizations are medium- and large-scale institutionalized enterprises employing unionized workers and therefore the issue of Syrian refugees is not of any direct concern to these enterprises. It is the reason why employers' organizations, with the exception of INTES, did not respond to the questionnaire on needs analysis transmitted by TISK. From the perspective of TISK, the issue is of medium priority with its dimension having some implications for labour markets in general. In terms of training needs, it can be figured that participation by TISK and affiliated organizations would be at expert level. It is observed that TESK and affiliated federations do not assign any priority to SUTP-related issues for their members, while they take the issue as important in humanitarian terms or for the agenda of the country. One reason why TESK does not prioritize the issue of providing decent work opportunities to Syrian refugees is concerns that their members may react to such agenda due to unfair competition. At local level, Syrian refugees are regarded as a priority issue in terms of unfair competition in all provinces where there are

large communities of Syrians. As far as training is concerned, it can be said that TESK and affiliated organizations will participate at the level of experts and managers. Coming to local level, it is probable that ESOBs participate actively with its leaders and experts.

As a labour confederation, HAK-IS considers the issue of Syrian refugees as a priority in humanitarian terms and with respect to its implications for working life. While TURK-IS and DISK did not directly respond to the question, it can be said that these two confederations assign medium priority to the issue. As far as labour union headquarters are concerned, the issue has low or medium priority. The picture appears to be more or less the same at local level. There are also some organizations that think differently when it comes to humanitarian concerns or Turkey's political position while not assigning it priority with respect to their members. For example, a local labour union branch assigning low priority to the issue with respect to labour union activities finds it "hundred percent priority for the country as a whole". With respect to priority assigned to the issue it will be more meaningful if training programmes are attended by experts, local union leaders and workplace representatives.

A problem confronted when questions about training were responded was that interviewees mostly thought that training was meant not for workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations but for Syrians. This tendency might have derived from the fact that there were already educational & training activities for Syrians in the context of the education of school-age refugee children, and language and vocational training. Organizations' responses to questions about training are grouped in the following table.

Table 4. Responses of Organizations to Questions about Education

Organization	Members' attitude: -Inclusive/solidarity-oriented -Indifferent -Exclusionary/ negative	Opinion on training	Training content -Informing -Building solidarity-oriented attitudes in members -Policy development -Action plan development	Recommended topics	Duration of training: 1 session 1 day 2 days Longer	Target Groups: -Central or branch/local level leaders -Experts -Workplace representatives -Members -All
TISK	Informal	Positive	Informing Solidarity-oriented attitude Policy development Action plan	Rights of Syrian workers A better OSH model for all foreign workers Issues of discrimination	Must not be too long	Experts
INTES	Inclusive	Positive	Policy development	Identification of competencies Vocational training	Longer than 2 days	Experts and advisors
TESK	Exclusionary /Negative	TESK is positive (Members may have their reservation)	Decent work for Syrians as a social responsibility project	-	-	Presidents and Secretaries-general of federations and unions
Barbers	Exclusionary /negative	Positive	Informing	Causes of armed conflict in Syria Informing	2-3 days	Regional chamber managers
Bakers	Exclusionary /negative	Positive	Solidarity	Solidarity	No idea	All organizations including TISK
Restaurant operators	Inclusive in humanitarian terms / Negative in terms of work	Chambers do not consider it so necessary	Must be asked to potential trainees	-	Maximum half day in the sector and full day at the centre	All levels
Drivers	Depends on person concerned	Positive	-	Legal dimension Skills map	3 or 4 half days	Chambers of tradesmen and experts
Gaziantep ESOB	Members are negative in general	Positive	Training staff for counselling application centre	-	4-5 days	Planning at central and implementation at local level
Adana ESOB	Exclusionary, negative	Positive	Integration to our culture	-	Must be lasting information	TOBB must participate. It could be at two stages: Training of trainers and training

Hatay ESOB	Exclusionary /negative	Positive	Developing policy and action plan	Problems of language and training of Syrians; Adaptation to Turkey with ways of life; Things to be done for registration	-	Persons to decide on policies. Names must be selected and the same persons must attend meetings related to refugees
Mersin ESOB	Negative /reactive	Positive	Developing policy and action plan	-	2-3 days	At the level of presidents and experts with the participation of representatives of public institutions. Chamber presidents at local level
TURK-IS	-	Positive	Informing	Rights and expectations of refugees and relevant demographic information	1 day	Experts and advisors, branch leaders, workplace representatives, members.
TURK-METAL	Members are worried	Positive	Informing Policy development Action plan	Their status and qualifications in Turkey What can be done?	2 days	Central and branch leaders Experts Workplace representatives
YOL-IS	Indifferent in general, pitying in humanitarian terms. Favouring their return to homeland	Positive on the condition that there is frank discussion	It must not be only for Syrians and the issue of migration too must be discussed as well	Problem of migration and its underlying causes Universal principles of labour and solidarity with migrants	1 session for informing and then participatory discussion	All levels, but in particular branch executives and experts. Then it must be spread down
TEKGIDA-IS Ankara	Disinterested in general, milder attitude on the part of those working at the same place with Syrians	Positive	What method can be used for organizing? Policy development and action plan		1-2 days	Branch presidents Representatives

## 6. Findings

HAK-IS	Inclusive /in solidarity with	Positive	In order of importance, creating solidarity-oriented attitudes in members Informing Policy development Action plan development	Turkish language training (it must be at least at level A2) Working life, rights and legislation Informing Training in occupational safety and health (OSH) Unionization and importance of being unionized Acquisition of vocational skills (responded with training of Syrians in mind)	Language training for longer periods, others for 2 days	All
CELIK-IS	Negative	Positive	Informing Action plan	-	2 days	Mixed groups from HQs and branches
OZ IPLIK-IS	Negative at local level	Positive	All headings	Rights of refugees	2 days	Branch leaders and workplace representatives at local level
OZ INSAAT-IS	"will be embraced"	Positive	"Horizon enlarging"	Characteristics of refugees	-	-
HIZMET-IS	Negative at local level	Positive	It must be geared to developing an action plan (It will be accompanied by a policy as well and solidarity will develop in time)	Group work on what organizations can do after an overall informing	3 days the longest	It must cover volunteers with sufficient capacity
OZGIDA IS	Extremely negative	Positive. "May be we realise some points that we missed"	Solidarity	Not only labour markets but social life and security dimensions must also be addressed. There must be an integrated approach.	At least 2 days of participatory training	Representatives of employers must be included Managers and workplace representatives

TEKSTIL-IS	Disinterested in general, negative in Gaziantep	Positive	Solidarity Informing Policy development Action plan	What is the problem and where does it derive from? Where do we stand in respect to the problem as individuals and institutionally? Which instruments must be given priority in finding solutions?	1 day	Central and branch leaders Workplace representatives
GENEL-IS	Varying with respect to level of awareness, locality and position in labour market; positive and negative.	Positive	Policy and action plan must have priority informing and solidarity as well	Information regarding legislative arrangements Training programmes for the unity of workers, preventing xenophobia, Refugees and labour unionism in the context of human rights	Longer than 2 days	All levels, but firstly workplace representatives, experts and advisors
GIDA-IS	Positive in some sections and negative in others	Positive	Building solidarity-oriented attitudes in members Policy and action plan development	Joint struggle of Syrian and Turkish workers Ensuring the formal employment of Syrian refugees Improvement of working conditions of Syrian refugees	2 days the shortest	All levels
BIRLESIK METAL-IS	Large majority is negative	Positive	Informing	-	1 day the shortest	Mixed. Participation from all levels
TARIM ORMAN-IS	Our members who are public servants are in solidarity with, workers in the field are exclusionary and confrontational	Positive	Informing Overcoming prejudices, solidarity, Development of policy and action plan	-	2-3 days	Those who will work in the field. A model like training of trainers can be considered.
Gaziantep GENEL-IS	In solidarity with in humanistic terms, but negative in economic and social terms	Positive	All headings must be covered	-	2-3 days	Must include all levels Weight must be given to local level

## 6. Findings

Gaziantep HIZMET-IS	People are divided in their opinions some are negative while others are receptive considering them as neighbours	Positive	Solidarity first, policy and action plan are important too	-	3 months with intervals	Local level.
Gaziantep OZ IPLIK-IS	Extremely negative	Positive	It must be solution focused	-	1 day	Local level
Adana CELIK-IS	Negative in general	Positive	Informing Participatory discussion focusing on solutions	-	2 days	Branch leaders at local level and HQs at central level
Adana HIZMET-IS	Extremely negative	Positive	It must be solution focused		2-3 days.	Must be conducted together with employers
Adana YOL-IS/ Teksif/ Tek gıda	Extremely negative	Training programmes will prove useless unless there is change in mentality	It can be taken from different perspectives: Humanitarian side, labour markets			Training programmes must target employers
Adana GENEL-IS	Negative	Positive	Policy and action plan	Areas of employment in case formalized Union organization	Short term	Participation at the level of academics and experts, priority to local level
Hatay CELIK-IS/ HIZMET-IS	Negative. Humanistic in terms of helping, but negative in economic terms	Positive	It depends on whether Syrians will stay or leave		-	-
Hatay Turk-Metal	Negative	Positive	Action plan	Informing on the first day, work on the second day and preparing an outcome report on the third	3 days	Tradesmen's organizations, representatives from the public sector must attend
Hatay YOL-IS	Very negative. Favours humanitarian aid	Positive	Causes of Syrian refugee crisis	Ways of solution When they will leave		
Hatay GENEL-IS	Extremely negative	Positive	Solidarity	-	6 months with intervals	Local level is important. Women's participation is very important in Hatay. There must be partnership with Syrian refugees

Mersin YOL-IS	Negative in general, more enlightened members may take a humanistic stand	Positive	A good informing Elaborating the humanitarian dimension Economic, social and political dimensions	-	Must be for 2 days and all aspects must be discussed	Mixed. Bringing the top and bottom together.
Mersin GENEL-IS	Negative in general and it gets stronger as the problem assumes further dimensions	Positive	Content allowing empathy for participants	-	Must be for 2 days with details covered	Mixed.
Urfa HIZMET-IS	80 percent negative, there are also some taking a humanistic attitude	Positive	Action plan	-	2-3 days	Mixed. Workplace representatives must be included

## 2. What kind of training programme you need for SUTPs? List by priority.

- No need.
- It must be geared to informing.
- It must be geared to building attitude of solidarity among members.
- It must be geared to policy development.
- It must be geared to developing an action plan.

An important outcome of our survey is that all organizations approach positively to a training programme organized by ILO on the provision of decent employment opportunities to SUTPs. The idea of TESK headquarters that a training programme related to Syrian refugees would not be adopted at local level did not prove correct at least at idea level. A frequently articulated expectation is that training programmes should be participatory and solution-focused indeed.

As to the content of training, there are equal mentions of such alternatives as informing, promotion of solidarity-oriented attitudes, policy development and action plan development. There is also considerable number of respondents favouring the inclusion of all headings. In one response it is recommended that training programmes should not be limited to the issue of Syrian refugees only but cover the issue of migration in general. Gaziantep ESOB recommended



training staff for the Counselling Centre that it proposed to establish while TESK recommended the development of training as a social responsibility project. In the light of responses given, it can be said that it would be better if all headings mentioned are covered, adding that the development of an action plan comes to the fore among all recommendations. This preference for action plan is understandable since from the beginning of the crisis, no solution could be found to the insistent complaints of tradesmen and workers regarding informal work/employment. Further, the rapid increase in the number of off-camp Syrian refugees, having some towns and neighbourhoods turning into refugee towns and neighbourhoods, and the heavy pressure on local people of social and cultural adaptation problems of refugees are factors that lead organizations to prefer solution-focused approaches.<sup>37</sup>

An important problem with respect to the content of training programmes stems from the dual position of tradesmen's organizations. These organizations complain about unfair competition posed by informal activities of Syrian refugees, but, at the same time, Syrians are employed informally in the services sector, by micro and small-size enterprises and by tradesmen themselves. In this context, a common ground for tradesmen's representatives with respect to policies and recommendations for action can be ensured by giving priority to the issue of child labour. Since apprenticeship training is now within the scope of compulsory education<sup>38</sup> and the state covers two thirds of the minimum wage to be paid to apprenticeship trainees, the recommendation to include Syrian apprentices in the project may be adopted by all participants.

The fact that the content of training is focused on participation and action plan does not mean the stage of informing is not important. During our interviews, it was observed that there is a general lack of information relating to legislation on human rights and the right to work of SUTPs in Turkey. There are justified reasons of confusion on this issue. From the point of human rights, we call Syrians "refugees", but their legal status in Turkey is "under temporary protection." Issues like the denial of the status of refugee, specific features

<sup>37</sup> According to UNHCR (2017) data, while the share of refugees living in urban areas is 60 percent in other countries it is 92 percent in Turkey.

<sup>38</sup> Law No. 6764 adopted on 02.12.2016; <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eski-ler/2016/12/20161209.pdf>

of temporary protection, etc. are areas with their historical background and with relevant legislation formulated only in recent years. The registration of Syrians is mixed with citizenship and people are not informed about their rights in the context of local labour and social protection legislation. There are views that Syrians have no right to work formally or become union members. Informing is also required to replace rhetoric with facts when it comes to social and cultural adaptation issues on which stereotypes related to Syrians are produced and also security concerns.

It is important to ensure the participation of Syrian refugees who are members of chambers and unions in the training programmes to make it possible for organizations to meet their registered Syrian members. The presence of Syrian members in training programmes is very important to have all participants informed and improve the content of solidarity.

To sum it up, the need to inform is obvious in all performance areas for the promotion of decent work that we summarise under eight headings in our survey. Such information will lay the basis for further developing the content of solidarity.

To summarize, it is inevitable to have informing in all performance areas related to the promotion of decent work which we gathered under eight headings in our survey. This information will lay the ground for further developing the content of solidarity. [here]

The content of promoting a solidarity-oriented attitude is not a heading per se but what needs to be mainstreamed in other headings. The stages of informing, policy development and action plan may be arranged in a way to encourage solidarity.

It seems inevitable that content related to policy development goes, to a certain extent, into the roots of the Syrian refugee crisis. During our survey, we observed that the warm approach at headquarters level to inclusive policies based on human rights and the right to work of Syrian refugees evolved, as going down to local and grass-roots level, to an exclusionary and even hostile attitude as a result of social and cultural adaptation problems, security concerns and threat of competition in labour market. It is an important problem that there is no organizational articulation relating to policies concerning SUTPs. The objective of the training should of course not

be the development of a brand new policy but to solicit recommendations to further improve policies developed by organizations' headquarters and to ensure the extension or more correctly the internalization of these policies at local and membership levels. This may require going deeper into the root causes of the Syrian refugee crisis. Since highly politicized this can be the most problematic part of training.

Hints related to the development of an action plan emerged during our interviews. These include establishing contact/counselling/organizing points for SUTPs; organizing vocational training and language courses for SUTPs by using existing infrastructure and means; informing the rank-and-file about SUTPs; organizing training and publications; and development of projects to secure national and international funds for the action plan.

### **3. If you were to recommend 3 topics for a training programme for SUTPs, what would they be?**

This question was quite challenging for interviewees. In general, the representatives of organizations stated that they expected participatory and solution-focused training. Topics they recommended are grouped as follows:

- Political issues such as causes of the war in Syria, problem of migration and its underlying causes, and when Syrian refugees will return to their country;
- Solidarity-related topics such as universal principles of labour and solidarity with migrants; issues related to discrimination; training programmes for the prevention of xenophobia by emphasizing the unity of workers in working life, and the case of refugees in the context of human rights;
- Rights of Syrian workers and rights of refugees, their expectations, working life, relevant legislation in effect, their status in Turkey;
- Statistics related to demographic and other characteristics of Syrian refugees;
- Vocational training related issues including assessment of competencies;

- Issues related to working life such as formal registration of SUTPs, improvement of working conditions, occupational safety and health for Syrian refugees, unionization of Syrian refugees and joint struggle of Syrian and Turkish workers;
- Issues related to social adaptation, language and education/training problems and life styles of Syrian refugees.

During responses to this question, it was observed that some interviewees repeated their misunderstanding at the beginning and recommended topics not for giving training to organizations but to Syrians.

#### **4. What should be the duration of a training programme for SUTPs?**

- 1 session
- 1 day
- 2 days
- Longer

The majority of recommendations for duration concentrated on 2 and 3 days. The leaders of chambers of tradesmen say it is difficult for them to leave their jobs and so half-day training is better. There are also recommendations of three-months long training with intervals or six-months long training with intervals regarding local level training programmes.

#### **5. Who should participate in SUTP-related training programmes? List by priority.**

- Central level leaders of the organization
- Branch/local leaders of the organization
- Experts and advisors of the organization
- Workplace representatives (shop stewards)
- Members.

Employers' unions state that the target group for participation should be experts.

TESK envisages training at the level of federation and union presidents and secretaries-general.

Federations affiliated with TESK think that the participation of chamber presidents at local level will be useful. While ESOBs give weight to local scale, the TOBB made some recommendations including a two-stage training as training of trainers and training, delivery of training to policy makers, and participation of representatives from governmental organizations.

While labour unions favour training programmes for branch leaders and workplace representatives they also find it necessary to have labour union experts and central-level leaders undergo training. In general, the training of rank-and-file members is not given priority.

Based on research findings, Annex 3 present the proposals for a participatory training programme using adult education tools in groups of maximum 20 persons for 2 days/6 sessions.

At a meeting organized by the ILO Office for Turkey on December 7, 2017 in Ankara, with the representatives of the workers', employers' and tradesmen' organizations at central level, the findings from the needs analysis to increase the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations for promoting decent work for SUTPs in Turkey were shared and the opinions and recommendations from the participants were received on the planned capacity building training.

The participants at the meeting pointed out that on the initiative of the public authorities a Strategy Document should be prepared for SUTPs, in which the social partners are involved under central coordination and the tasks and definitions are clear. Speakers underlined the need that the Action Plan to be formulated under this Strategy Document should identify what workers', employers' and tradesmen's organizations can do in cooperation with public institutions for employment of SUTPs in decent jobs. During the course of our research, this view came to the forefront and it was frequently mentioned at the interviews that the efforts of the social partners would not be sufficient unless the strategic leadership and active support of public institutions are secured.

Another point underlined by the speakers is that the root causes and the international political dimension of the refugee crisis are addressed in the training programmes and both the consequences

of the Syrian refugee problem and the causes are discussed. In this context, it is recommended that Syrian refugee problem cannot be understood unless the political questions such as reasons of civil war in Syria, the question of Middle East policies of the countries outside the region, the problems of democratization in the region are addressed. It has also been recommended that the questioning of the EU's immigration policy and the discussion of the Readmission Agreement should be included in the training programmes.

A sub-topic that was emphasized was Syrian child labour. It has been emphasized that it is important to include in the training programmes what is to be done about the prevention of Syrian child labour besides unregistered employment.

The view featured in our research that there is no organizational articulation in the attitude towards the Syrian refugees and that the inclusive attitude of the organizational centres is not shared by the rank-and-file workers and tradesmen is shared by the participants of the meeting. In this regard, once again, the importance of training in the development of capacities for workers', craftsmen's and employers' organizations to promote decent work for SUTPs has been confirmed.

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## Annex 1. List of Interviews

	Name of the Organization	Type of Interview	Place of Interview
1	TISK	Face to face	Ankara
2	INTES	Written reply	
3	MESS	-	
4	TUGIS	-	
5	TTSIS	-	
6	TESK 1	Face to face	Ankara
7	TESK 2	Face to face	Ankara
8	Federation of Restaurateurs and Confectioners	Face to face	Ankara
9	Federation of Drivers and Motorists	Face to face	Ankara
10	Federation of Barbers and Hair Dressers	Face to face	Ankara
11	Federation of Bakers	Face to face	Ankara
12	Federation of Grocers and Sales Agents	Face to face	Antakya, Hatay
13	TURK-IS	Face to face and written reply	Ankara
14	TURK METAL	Face to face	Ankara
15	YOL-IS	Face to face	Ankara
16	TEK-GIDA Ankara Branch	Face to face	Ankara
17	TEK-GIDA Ankara Bakeries Branch	Face to face	Ankara
18	TEKSIF	-	
19	BELEDIYE-IS	-	
20	HAK-IS	Written reply	
21	CELIK-IS	Face to face	Ankara
22	HIZMET-IS	Face to face	Ankara
23	OZ GIDA-IS	Face to face	Ankara
24	OZ INSAAT-IS	Face to face	Ankara
25	OZ IPLIK-IS	Face to face	Ankara
26	DISK (Press scan)		
27	BIRLESIK METAL-IS	Written reply	
28	BIRLESIK METAL-IS Anadolu Branch	Face to face	Ankara
29	TEKSTIL-IS	Written reply	
30	GIDA-IS	Written reply	
31	GENEL-IS	Written reply	
32	DEVIRIMCI YAPI-IS	-	
33	TARIM ORMAN-IS BIRLESIK KAMU IS CONFEDERATION	Face to face	Ankara

<b>PROVINCE LEVEL</b>			
34	ADANA ESOB 1	Face to face	Adana
35	ADANA ESOB 2	Face to face	Adana
36	TURK-IS 4. Region Representative	Face to face	Adana
37	YOL-IS, Adana Branch Nr. 1	Face to face	Adana
38	TEK-GIDA IS, Adana Branch Nr. 1	Face to face	Adana
39	TEKSIF, Adana Liaison Office	Face to face	Adana
40	HIZMET-IS Adana Branch	Face to face	Adana
41	OZ IPLIK-IS Adana Branch	-	
42	CELIK-IS Adana Branch	Face to face	Adana
43	GENEL-IS Adana Branch	Face to face	Adana
44	Hatay ESOB	Face to face	Antakya, Hatay
45	TURK METAL Iskenderun Branch	Face to face	Iskenderun, Hatay
46	CELIK-IS Iskenderun Branch	Face to face	Iskenderun, Hatay
47	HIZMET-IS Iskenderun Branch	Face to face	Iskenderun, Hatay
48	GENEL-IS, Hatay Branch	Face to face	Antakya, Hatay
49	YOL-IS	Telephone interview	Antakya, Hatay
50	Mersin ESOB (Group interview of 4)	Face to face	Mersin
51	YOL-IS Mersin Branch	Face to face	Mersin
52	GENEL-IS, Mersin Branch	Face to face	Mersin
53	Gaziantep ESOB (Group interview of 2)	Face to face	Gaziantep
54	TEKSIF, Gaziantep Branch	Face to face	
55	OZ IPLIK-IS, Gaziantep Branch	Face to face	Gaziantep
56	HIZMET-IS, Gaziantep Branch	Face to face	Gaziantep
57	GENEL-IS, Gaziantep Branch	Face to face	Gaziantep
58	Urfa ESOB		
59	HIZMET-IS Branch	Telephone interview	Urfa
60	TURK METAL, Bursa Emek Branch Focus Group of 11	Face to face	Bursa
Total	50 interviews (40 face to face; 7 written replies; 2 telephone interviews) and 1 focus group		

## Annex 2. Questionnaire

### **Needs analysis to increase the capacity of workers' and employer' organizations for promoting decent work for Syrian refugees in Turkey**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

##### **I- General**

1. Are there Syrian workers at workplaces where you are organized? If possible please specify the province.
  - Registered
  - Unregistered
2. Do you have Syrian refugee members? If yes please specify the province, branch and number.
3. Are there platforms on which you come together with Syrian refugees as an organization? Please specify the name.
4. Is the issue brought to the agenda in the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Board of Presidents? If yes, which topics are discussed with their negative and positive aspects? Please explain.
5. Are there statements made by the representatives of the organization? If possible please indicate the source.
6. Is there any General Assembly resolution referring to Syrian refugees? If yes, please indicate the date of the General Assembly.
7. Does your union cover SUTP-related issues in its publications? If possible please indicate.
8. Does your union cover SUTP-related issues in its training activities? If yes, please indicate the content and the target group.
9. Did you cover the issue of Syrians in the meetings of international organizations that you are affiliated with?
10. Have you engaged in activities related to:
  - Humanitarian aid to Syrians under temporary protection.
  - Vocational training for Syrians under temporary protection.
  - Legal aid to Syrians under temporary protection.
  - Work for organizing Syrians under temporary protection.
  - Preventing informal employment of Syrians under temporary protection

11. Have any Syrian refugees requested assistance from you? If yes, please explain how it was responded to.
12. Have the representatives of your organization stated any opinion related to Syrians under temporary protection in social dialogue bodies? Please explain.
13. Have the representatives of your organization taken any initiative to have seats in migration related advisory bodies within the Directorate-General of Migration Management and Ministry of Labour and Social Security?
14. Have the representatives of your organization brought to the agenda of issues related to Syrian refugees in Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards? If yes, what were their arguments?
15. Have you participated in meetings related to Syrian refugees organized by international and/or public organizations?
16. Do you have contact with NGOs and refugee associations related to Syrian refugees? Have you had any joint activity? If yes, please specify.
17. What can be done to ensure that Syrian refugees have formal jobs under decent working conditions?
18. If you were to develop a project for the formal employment of Syrian refugees under decent conditions what would you recommend?
19. What are the opinions of your members about Syrian refugees?
20. Which of the following best describes your members' attitude towards Syrian refugees?
  - **Inclusive, solidarity-oriented**
  - **Indifferent**
  - **Exclusionary, negative**
21. Is there anything you want to add?

## II- Training Needs and Recommendations

1. How would you rank the issue of Syrian refugees in terms of the priorities of your union?
  - Priority
  - Medium priority
  - Low priority
  - Not a priority
2. What kind of training programme you need for Syrian refugees? List by priority.
  - No need.
  - It must be geared to informing.
  - It must be geared to building attitude of solidarity among members.
  - It must be geared to policy development.
  - It must be geared to developing an action plan.
3. If you were to recommend 3 topics for a training programme for Syrian refugees what would they be?
4. What should be the duration of a training programme for Syrian refugees?
  - 1 session
  - 1 day

- 2 days
  - Longer
5. Who should participate to training programme for Syrian refugees? List by priority.
- Central level leaders of the organization
  - Branch/local leaders of the organization
  - Experts and advisors of the organization
  - Workplace representatives (shop stewards)
  - Members
6. Is there anything you want to add?

## Annex 3. Draft Training Programme

### Day One

#### Morning session:

Presentation I: Basic information on SUTPs (demographic information, information on their settlements, legal status, social assistance and services)

Discussion: What we want to know and responses.

Presentation II: SUTPs in working life: Sectors, working conditions, impacts on working life and our organizations, SUTPs as our members.

Discussion: Ways of organizational contact with SUTPs in our sectors and of institutionalizing these contacts.

#### Afternoon session:

Presentation III: Our organizational policies regarding SUTPs.

Discussion: Our opinions and recommendations regarding these policies.

Presentation IV: Our members' attitudes and approaches to SUTPs.

Discussion: How can we ensure the adoption of our policies on SUTPs by local organizations and branches? (Publications, visual materials, symposiums, panel discussions)

### Day Two

#### Morning session:

Presentation V: What have public authorities, local governments and NGOs done so far to provide decent working conditions to Syrians?

Discussion: Our opinions on what has been done to provide decent working conditions to Syrians. Our demands.

Presentation VI: What have our organizations done to ensure decent working conditions for Syrians?

Discussion: What more can we do?

#### Afternoon session:

Group work: Working in groups on action plan to be presented to top bodies and adoption of the action plan.

## Annex 4. Workshop Note

At a meeting organized by the ILO Office for Turkey on 7 December 2017 in Ankara within the scope of “Promoting Decent Work for Syrians and Host Communities Project”, the findings from the needs analysis to increase the capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations for promoting decent work for Syrian refugees in Turkey were shared and the opinions and recommendations from the participants were received on the planned capacity building training.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of TURK-IS, HAK-IS, DISK, TISK and TESK and representatives of the unions in the general services, food, textiles and garment, forestry, metal works and construction sectors from Ankara and Istanbul. In the meeting, ILO consultant Prof. Dr. Seyhan Erdoğdu presented the main findings of the needs analysis to increase the capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations for promoting decent work for Syrian refugees. The main findings of the analysis were discussed and the lack of information on the situation of the Syrian workers and the need for education, research and reporting as well as national policy development were emphasized to raise awareness among workers, combat unregistered employment and adopt a holistic approach covering all employees. Following the presentation, the participants engaged in an open debate, expressing their views and recommendations on capacity building training activities for workers’ and employers’ organizations.





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