

Regional Dialogue on Labour Market Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt
Istanbul, Turkey, 28-29 July 2015
Agenda

Tuesday 28 July	
9.00 – 9.30	Registration and coffee
9.30 – 10.00	ILO welcome remarks and introductions Mr Numan Özcan, <i>Director, ILO Office for Turkey</i> Mr Frank Hageman, <i>Acting Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Arab States</i>
10.00 – 11.30	The Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Labour market: Country presentations <i>Chair: Mr Yasser Ahmed Hassan, Senior Adviser for Africa and Arab States/ Director General Cabinet, ILO</i> Jordan <i>Dr Nidal Katamine, Minister of Labour, and Mr Waddah Mahmoud Rashid Al-Hamoud, Ministry of Interior</i> Lebanon <i>Ms Hala El-Helou, Minister's Adviser on Humanitarian and International Affairs/ Ministry of Social Affairs</i> Turkey <i>Ms Nurcan Onder, Director General for Labour, Ministry of Labour and Social Security</i> Egypt <i>Ms Iman Zakari, Ministry of Labour, and Ms Heba Ismail, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i> Iraq <i>Mr Saeed Nehme Jahooti, President of General Federation of Iraqi Workers</i>
11.30 – 12.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
12.00 – 13.00	Overview of the labour market dimensions of the Syrian refugee crisis in host countries in the context of the 3RP Ms Mary Kavar, <i>Senior Employment Policy Specialist, ILO Regional Office for the Arab States</i>
13.00 – 14.30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14.30 – 16.00	Roundtable Discussion One: Regulatory framework and access to work procedures <i>Facilitator: Ms Maha Kattaa, Response Coordinator of Syrian Refugee Crisis in Jordan, ILO Regional Office for Arab States</i> <i>Chair: Mr Numan Ozcan, Director, ILO Office for Turkey</i> This roundtable will highlight and facilitate the sharing of information on the international and national laws, policies and practices governing refugees and their access to work in host countries. The governments have stood by their international humanitarian obligations by not closing the borders the objective is to discuss access to work and related lack of clarity in terms of refugee policy. While there are differences between the countries, the absence of a clear approach to address the employment of Syrians has only fuelled a situation where Syrians are working outside the labour laws.

Wednesday 29 July

9.00 – 10.30	Roundtable Discussion Two: A review of livelihoods/employment creation programmes for host communities: are they sufficient? What can be learned? <i>Facilitator: Mr Nejat Kocabay, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Office for Turkey</i> <i>Chair: Ms Rie Vejs-Kjeldgaard, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</i> The National Response Plans for both Jordan and Lebanon aim at strengthening capacity of poor and vulnerable households in host communities to cope with and recover in a sustainable way from the impact of the Syrian crisis, and mitigate future effects on their employment and livelihoods. The aim is to achieve this through stabilising and increasing livelihoods and creating more and better job opportunities for the poor and reviving local economies. This has been translated into projects and programmes mostly managed by international organisations. In Turkey however, there are extensive governmental programmes including vocational education and public employment services. This roundtable will focus on the impact of these programs and the lessons learnt on how they could be scaled up in a manner which does not exclude Syrian refugees.
10.30 - 11.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11.00 - 12.30	Roundtable Discussion Three: What would be the economic value in providing Syrian refugees with access to work? Can the Syrian labour force fill some skill gaps in some sectors which lack local labour supply? <i>Facilitator: Ms Mary Kavar, Senior Employment Policy Specialist, ILO Regional Office for Arab States</i> <i>Chair: Mr Frank Hagemann, Acting Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Arab States</i> The impact of the Syrian crisis especially on vulnerable host communities is certainly significant. Yet, can the Syrian refugees' economic participation and/or investments bring an economic dividend for the host country? This could happen in several ways. Can the supply of Syrian labour boost certain sectors, for example, through the unskilled labour in sectors which are not attractive to the national workforce and where there is high demand, such as agriculture? Can Syrian talent and skills help revitalise certain sectors, such as handicrafts? Finally can an enabling environment for investment promotion of Syrian industry relocating from Syria be promoted? This roundtable will address these questions as a means to move beyond the thinking of Syrian refugees as a threat to national economy.
12.30 - 13.30	The way forward <i>Facilitator: Ms Rie Vejs-Kjeldgaard, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</i> This concluding session will focus on possible policy and programmatic options and workable solutions. For the ILO, this will provide the clarity needed to better support the countries involved in addressing this challenge from a comprehensive perspective.
End of programme	