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**Qudra 2 – Resilience for refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities  
in response to the protracted Syrian and Iraqi crises**

**KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE MUNICIPALITY  
MIGRATION COORDINATION DIALOGUE WORKSHOP  
(26-27 October 2022)  
ISTANBUL**

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### Moderator of the Workshop

Dr. Nuriye NIGDELIOGLU HAPPANI

### Rapporteur

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## 1 SUMMARY

Turkey has been among the countries hosting largest number of migrants and refugees<sup>1</sup> given the protracted nature of Syrian civil war starting from 2011 on and geographically being at the transitory road for Afghans, Iranians and Iraqis to move to Europe. According to the Annual Presidency Report 2022<sup>2</sup>, as of September 2021, there are 5,4 million refugees in Turkey of which 3,71 million are Syrians under TP; 1,22 million are the ones having residence permit and 350,000 are IP applicants.

Responding to the influx and continued presence of migrants in Turkey, local actors, including municipalities, district governorships, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, remain at the forefront and are pivotal actors in terms of providing basic services equally to the refugee. However, there is a need to address the lack of coordination among those actors in order to provide a concerted response to the problems faced by migrants and refugees.

As part of the cooperation between Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Qudra 2 Programme and Küçükçekmece Municipality, a two-day workshop on migration coordination at the local level was held with the participation of 81 individuals, representing 28 local, national and international institutions, working in the field of migration management.

The workshop in which representatives of local authorities, national and international organizations and academics from reputable universities participated, was moderated by Dr. Nuriye Niğdelioğlu Happani and organized mainly as three panels and two roundtable discussions. Workshop Agenda and participant list were prepared in cooperation with Küçükçekmece Municipality Strategy Development Directorate. Küçükçekmece Municipality, which has been working and is experienced in the field of migration and refugees in cooperation with international organizations for many years, provided the roadmap of the workshop. In the two day workshop panels, the components of protection, education and access to livelihoods of refugees were informed by experts in the field, and in the roundtable meetings, the problems and solution proposals encountered in the field regarding these three main components were evaluated by the participants.

The program flow was as follows:

October 26th-1st day:

- Opening speeches given by Dr. Nuriye Niğdelioğlu Happani, Dagmar Blickwede (GIZ) and Mehmet Erdönmez (Küçükçekmece Municipality)
- Presentation were made by experts from Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (PDMM), Nursel Kemal Ertekin and Bertuğ Uygunkara on “*Migration Management in Turkey and Harmonization*”

❖ Panel 1: Legal and Psychosocial Support for Migrants, Works on Schooling and Social Cohesion Activities.

<sup>1</sup> Turkey is a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, but maintains a geographical limitation to the Convention. Due to this geographical limitation to the definition of a refugee, Turkey considers Syrians as temporary protection status holders and other non-European nationalities as international protection status holders (ICMPD, Jan 20219). Therefore, refugee here is used as an umbrella term to indicate Syrians under TP and IP applicants and status holders.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Presidency Report 2022 [https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022\\_Yili\\_Cumhurbaskanligi\\_Yillik\\_Programi.pdf](https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022_Yili_Cumhurbaskanligi_Yillik_Programi.pdf)

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- Panelists were Mete Lakzadeh from UNHCR, Suzan Oktay Erol from Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), Melike Seven Haq from Support to Life Association, Selim Hüzmeli and Cemile Nurcan Uzun from ASAM

❖ Panel 2: Public and Civil Society Relations / Strengthening Interagency Coordination.

- Panelists were Mehmet Erdönmez from Küçükçekmece Municipality, Hülya Alper from WALD, Mete Lakzadeh from UNHCR

Round Table Discussion questions were determined according to the activities of the institutions that actively provide services in the field of migration and refugees in the European Side of Istanbul.

➤ Roundtable Discussion 1: Improving Protection Mechanisms for Refugees

- Participants were divided into 6 groups and 5 different questions discussed:
  1. Which kind of balance should be struck in terms of protecting the demographic structure and accessing human rights? Do you think it is right to restrict access to fundamental rights and freedoms due to informality? What should be done to prevent violations of rights?
  2. What are the main problems underlying refugee children out of school? What should be done to increase continuity in formal education and reduce child labor?
  3. What are the activities carried out by public institutions and non-governmental organizations to strengthen social cohesion? Assuming that you are an expert in a commission established by the Directorate of Migration Management and especially responsible for social cohesion, what kind of process could be planned and what activities could be carried out in order to strengthen social cohesion?
  4. Which methods can be used to ensure interagency coordination? Can regular face-to-face meetings, Mailing or WhatsApp groups be created? Which institutions should participate in coordination meetings?
  5. What can be done to minimize the differences in practice between the host community and the refugee community in terms of access to fundamental rights and services? What should be done to ensure sustainability in services, especially after the fund transfers and resource supports of international organizations/donors are completed?

October 27th- 2nd day:

❖ Panel 3: Employment Strategies for Migrants and Refugees / New Urban Economy Model Cooperative Activities

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- Panelists were Nesrin Başpınar from EKIP, Lawyer Büşra Reisoğlu from WALD, Özgür Oran from Küçükçekmece Municipality
- Roundtable Discussion 2: *Employment Strategies for Migrants and Refugees / New Urban Economy Model Cooperative Activities*
  - Participants were divided into 5 groups and 5 different questions are asked:
    1. What are the employment areas of refugees in Turkey? In which sectors can new employment areas be created?
    2. What are the employment conditions of refugees in Turkey? How can employment conditions be improved?
    3. What are the pros and cons of refugees' involvement in employment? Can we talk about the fact that the host community sees refugees as competitors in the labor market due to unregistered employment, which also increases social tension?
    4. What is the role of social enterprises or cooperatives in employment strategies?
    5. What should be the sustainability strategies of cooperatives opened with the support of international organizations/donors?

## 1.1 Opening Speeches

The workshop started with the opening remarks of moderator Dr. Nuriye Niğdelioğlu Happani giving brief information about the Qudra 2 programme, its importance for the workshop in contributing to strengthening the cooperation among local governments, non-governmental and international organizations in the field of migration.

GIZ Qudra 2 Programme Turkey Country Coordinator Dagmar Blickwede stressed the importance of this workshop as a means to foster experience sharing and formation of cooperation among various actors.

Küçükçekmece Municipality Strategy Development Manager Mehmet Erdönmez mentioned the significance of social cohesion between local and migrant/refugee communities given that 66,000 refugees live in Küçükçekmece district whose overall population is 805,000. As a result of a field survey conducted with 750 Syrians under TP and 750 local community members, a lack of coordination in the field of provision of services was detected, upon which the migration coordination center (?) was established within the scope of Qudra 2 programme.

In order to inform the participants about Turkey's legal and procedural framework regarding the migration, refugees and refugees, experts from Istanbul PDMM made a presentation on "Migration Management and Harmonization". In this context, information was given by PDMM Representatives on Residence Permit, International Protection, Temporary Protection, Irregular Migration and Social Integration of Refugees. While the questions asked by the participants were answered by the PDMM Representatives, consultations were held on the adaptation processes to living together. In the presentation, where the new applications in the address records of residence applications were mentioned, the participants had the opportunity to directly ask the Provincial Directorate of Migration Management Representatives about the problems encountered in the field regarding refugees. Contrary to many of the statements made

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by partners and beneficiaries on the ground, they emphasized what is important in their current practice.

## 1.2 **Panel 1: Legal and Psychosocial Support for Migrants, Works on Schooling and Social Cohesion Activities**

Panelists gave information about the activities related to services to migrants provided by the institutions they represent.

Accordingly, Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Ministry of Family and Social Services (PDMoFSS), through Social Services Centers provide psycho-social support to vulnerable families, children and adolescents as well as carry out activities to foster social cohesion with trainings regarding legal and family life. During 2022, 1,446 individuals received support from 45 consultants of the PDMoFSS.

UNHCR Istanbul Field Office is responsible for 11 provinces in the Marmara region and in cooperation with NGOs together with public institutions. UNHCR's main purpose is to increase the capacity of the government of Turkey in order to respond more effectively to the needs of refugees. Legal support is provided through lawyers at the partner NGOs, which is strengthened by the Project implemented with the Union of Turkish Bar Association (UTBA).

SGDD-ASAM specifically focused on schooling activities and projects implemented by UNICEF. In Turkey out of 1 million children at school age, there are 393,000 children who cannot have access to education. Main goal of this Project is to support the Ministry of National Education in terms of re-schooling children who dropped out of school. In order to provide long-term solutions, root causes of child drop-out should be addressed, therefore, child protection goes hand in hand with schooling.

Support to Life Association supports social cohesion between local and refugee communities by providing equal opportunities to these two groups. Together with UNHCR, social cooperatives are established, which have a direct impact on harmonization and multiculturalism since the working environments create a platform where people get to know each other closely. With respect to schooling, peer pressure stands out as a major challenge and in order to address this problem by mitigating social tension, awareness-raising sessions are carried out for both families and teachers at schools.

In the panel Legal and Psychosocial Support for Refugees, Schooling Studies and Social Cohesion Activities were discussed, the activities of the representatives of the institutions in the field of legal, health, education and social cohesion were mentioned. In this regard, the problems of the beneficiaries and the solution proposals of the institutions on the issues that constitute the main foundations of protection were evaluated. Before the Covid-19 Pandemic, representatives of non-governmental organizations in the field were making home visits under the control of the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services. It was shared that the recognition processes of non-governmental organizations that were suspended after the pandemic were continued by the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Family and Social Services. Activities carried out within the framework of Schooling Activities will support the prevention of both child labor and child marriage. The increasing social tension with the economic inflation issue in Turkey has revealed the importance of social cohesion activities that local people can participate in. In addition, in the question-answer section held at the end of the panel, the information that the people collecting papers in the streets were requested to be recorded, based on the new official letter from the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change,

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was shared with the panelists by the participants. It was also stated that it would not be possible for them to be registered because more than 50% of these people were Afghans and are overall unregistered.

### 1.3 **Panel 2: Public and Civil Society Relations / Strengthening Interagency Coordination**

Panelists gave information about the coordination they formed with public and civil society institutions.

WALD having strong relations with municipalities acts as a bridge between international/donor institutions and municipalities to implement projects. In cooperation with UNHCR, capacity development activities for municipalities are conducted. At district level, coordination meetings are held with the participation of various public, private and non-governmental organizations to provide better services to the refugees. Starting from the local level, the scope of this model has been expanded to the regional level among municipalities across the Marmara region as well as to the international level among municipalities across the world. With the help of these coordination platforms, facilitating mechanisms can be established.

Küçükçekmece Municipality has a Strategy Development unit that has experience in project implementation with various donor institutions. However, most municipalities do not have such departments and rather than reaching out to the experts in the municipality, donor institutions try to directly contact mayors and deputy mayors, which makes it difficult to form coordination. The reason Küçükçekmece Municipality has been implementing different projects with various partners is the existence of a project management team which makes it easier to form partnerships.

Within the framework of 3RP Regional, Refugee and Response Plan, UNHCR has a mission of coordination to determine protection sector needs. The purpose of the coordination meetings is to map the services in the local area, to discuss and improve these services with local governments, and to ensure that asylum seekers and refugees have access to these services. Therefore, it is suggested by Mr. Lakzadeh that coordination/dialogue meetings should focus on the problems of the district that it takes place in.

Provincial and district-based services are provided in many different fields by international organizations, municipalities and non-governmental organizations, especially public institutions serving in the field of migration and refugees. However, although the services provided by the institutions working in this field were known, many institution representatives did not know each other. For this reason, in order for the beneficiaries to reach the services more quickly, the representatives of the institutions working in the field should know each other. Inter-institutional coordination needs to be strengthened in order to properly plan the services provided and aid distributed and to ensure sustainability.

### 1.4 **Roundtable Discussion 1: Improving Protection Mechanisms for Refugees**

Problems and solutions are discussed by each group regarding the questions they were given.

#### 1.4.1 **Group 1:**

**Question:** Which kind of balance should be struck in terms of protecting the demographic structure and accessing human rights? Do you think it is right to restrict access to fundamental rights and freedoms due to informality? What should be done to prevent violations of rights?

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### **Main Outcomes:**

- Equality and humanitarian approach should be the first stage.
- Communitization as a problem might turn out to be an advantage in terms of outreach of services to the beneficiaries since they live in the same area.
- To reduce disinformation, channels that provide services to the beneficiaries should also disseminate coherent information. (?)
- Forming a common platform where reliable information is provided.
- Increasing job opportunities and the quality of services in other cities so that those who are registered in one city do not move to a metropolitan city.
- Referring unregistered individuals to the cities where they can register and supporting them with transportation, accommodation, counseling and employment
- Inclusion of Syrians in the mainstream media by depicting their presence on TV shows and serials under the “If you get to know, you like them” motto.

### **1.4.2 Group 2:**

**Question:** What are the main problems underlying refugee children out of school? What should be done to increase continuity in formal education and reduce child labor?

### **Main Outcomes:**

- Due to the economic situation, children have to work.
- Child marriage for girls because of cultural factors.
- There is a quota schools have in place for registrations, if it is reached, registration is closed and therefore, some children cannot have access to the nearest school in their neighborhood, which causes extra transportation costs. Some families cannot afford it and this triggers and causes increased child drop-outs.
- Language constitutes a barrier for refugees.
- Negative attitude of host community and school management affect schooling adversely
- Cash based interventions can be provided to the families to prevent child labor.
- Increasing number of awareness-raising sessions for child labor, child marriage, peer pressure, social tension at schools.
- Providing more Turkish language courses
- NGOs and local governments can provide psycho-social supports for children
- Creating a surveillance mechanism for complaints
- Adolescents can be referred to vocational training centers where they can have skills to earn money as well as get training.
- For higher education, quotas and scholarships for foreign students can be increased.

### **1.4.3 Group 3:**

**Question:** What are the activities carried out by public institutions and non-governmental organizations to strengthen social cohesion? Assuming that you are an expert in a commission established by the Directorate of Migration Management and especially responsible for social cohesion, what kind of process could be planned and what activities could be carried out in order to strengthen social cohesion?

### **Main Outcomes:**

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- Receiving feedbacks from both local and refugee communities by placing suggestion boxes at schools and buildings of mukhtars, organizing meetings at neighborhoods, and conducting surveys.
- Determining main sources of social tension. Local community sees refugees as a threat for employment as well as a security threat, which paves the way for stigmatization, stereotyping, cultural clashes, exacerbated by disinformation in the media.
- With the help of media channels, false facts about refugees can be counteracted with a mainstreaming approach; in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education refugee and war psychology trainings can be provided; increasing employment opportunities both for men and women; raising number of Turkish language courses for those who have basic level and ensuring child care service to women who want to attend the courses.

#### 1.4.4 Group 4:

**Question:** Which methods can be used to ensure interagency coordination? Can regular face-to-face meetings, Mailing or WhatsApp groups be created? Which institutions should participate in coordination meetings?

#### **Main Outcomes:**

- Through digital platforms, services provided by different institutions can be mapped. UNHCR has services advisor platform, yet, it is not up to date. Such a digital platform with the contact details of focal persons can provide a beneficial channel. This platform should be updated every 3 months and every 6 months focal persons and decision-makers should come together at the centers of the institutions active in the field.
- A communication center can be established in 39 districts of Istanbul, where each district is mapping its own services, ensuring inter-institutional coordination, conducting surveys and field research to determine the needs.
- To facilitate information flow between the same units, mailing and whatsapp network can be formed (such as among those who provide MHPSS)
- Thematic meetings such as on GBV, child labor can be organized.
- Monthly news bulletins of each institution can be consolidated.
- Among the following institutions at the district level, coordination can be formed: Police, education, religious affairs departments at district level, social services centers, employment agencies, mukhtars, district governorships, trade associations, international organizations.

#### 1.4.5 Group 5:

**Question:** What can be done to minimize the differences in practice between the host community and the refugee community in terms of access to fundamental rights and services? What should be done to ensure sustainability in services, especially after the fund transfers and resource supports of international organizations/donors are completed?

#### **Main Outcomes:**

- Prevalence of informal employment among refugees for various reasons. Employers do not want to provide social security to the employees, refugees do not want to lose ESSN

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aids. Also, refugees are underpaid compared to the host community. Surveillance over informal employment should be increased to minimize the difference between the host and the refugee community.

- Refugee employees should also be supported both in terms of social inclusion at the workplace and getting necessary training to improve themselves.
- In cooperation with school management, Syrian children can be integrated into the Turkish education system by organizing activities with Turkish children.
- Increasing opportunities for vocational training can not only raise human capital but also reduce labor accidents.

#### 1.4.6 Group 6:

**Question:** Which methods can be used to ensure interagency coordination? Can regular face-to-face meetings, Mailing or WhatsApp groups be created? Which institutions should participate in coordination meetings?

#### **Main Outcomes:**

- Due to lack of communication among stakeholders (within NGOs, within public institutions and between NGOs and public institutions), which makes data sharing difficult. Also, there is no reliable source to access for demographic information.
- Solutions can be listed as creating an online platform to ensure coordination, forming a consultancy platform for Project implementation, cooperating with academics for needs analysis, circulating reports among stakeholders, and creating a supervisory body to oversee all these mechanisms.

### 1.5 **Panel 3: Employment Strategies for Migrants and Refugees / New Urban Economy Model Cooperative Activities**

Panelists gave information about the activities related to access to livelihood opportunities provided by the institutions they represent.

Cooperatives are important for local development, hence, support of local governments is essential. EKİP<sup>3</sup> is presented as an example of a successful cooperative, which was established in 2017 with the fund provided by the World Bank. Its implementing partners are Carma, Bilgi University, Küçükçekmece Municipality, Impact LAB, LF Türkiye, TAPV, Grupo Cooperativo Tangente and Support to Life Association. 414 women applied to EKİP and are trained in entrepreneurship and management, financial literacy, women empowerment, Turkish language courses, health and nutrition. 31 out of 414 women were selected to work at the cooperative. EKİP started to produce healthy salads in Küçükçekmece district, continues its activities at a production site allocated by the municipality now expanding its market via e-commerce platforms. To increase social cohesion, women's day and breakfast activities were organized. The results of a research which was conducted in cooperation amongst local actors, international institutions, cooperatives' partners, ministry of trade, chamber of artisans via surveys and focus group discussions and prepared for the advancement of cooperative activities are reported. Accordingly, the main problems regarding social enterprise are as follows: There is a lack of resources for social enterprises and there is a need to raise awareness, have reliable

<sup>3</sup> The Effective Women's Business Platform (EKIP) Küçükçekmece Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperative which was established in 2019, continues its activities with the restaurant it opened with the support of Küçükçekmece Municipality.

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data source, statistics and support from universities. Suggested recommendations are the existence of a legal body to spread information about and support for cooperatives, tax exemption of donor institutions, support for cooperatives in terms of access to markets, digital capacity building and training for business development. Another important point that needs further attention is the need to get financial support at least for 3 years so that cooperatives gain their own independence and sustainability is ensured.

WALD supports the establishment and continuation of two cooperatives in Gaziosmanpaşa and Sultangazi districts in cooperation with the respective municipalities and UNHCR. In order to establish a cooperative in Turkey, there need to be at least 7 partners signing articles of association which are approved by the registry of commerce. The conditions to become a partner of cooperatives are to have capacity to act, a petition presented to executive board, committing required capital and paying ¼ cash in advance in addition to fulfilling other conditions. Legally there is no restriction for refugees to become partners yet they cannot become a member of the executive and supervisory body. Examples of Sultan Women and Snowflakes Women Cooperatives are given.

The Qudra 2 programme provides funds to the municipalities to improve their services with a covenant including refugees through so called Community Support Projects (CSPs). 1/3 of the CSPs are implemented in the area of creating livelihood opportunities. International institutions should engage in more advocacy in order to relay the needs of local governments so that funds are allocated accordingly. Given that projects are time-bounded and have an end, Qudra 2 aims to perpetuate the outcomes of the programme, by circulating final reports among various stakeholders to help municipalities strengthen their capacities.

Küçükçekmece Municipality Strategy Development Unit implements projects by attracting funds from donors. As a result of a field research, a lack of coordination was identified and the migration and refugee coordination center was established, supported by the Qudra 2 programme. Likewise, access to food was among the main findings of the field research and social markets were initiated in the 2nd phase of the Qudra 2 supported project. Access to livelihood is another area that stands out among others. In order to respond to the demands, Küçükçekmece Municipality has been carrying out the İŞMEP Project together with ILO, which aims to provide full and productive employment and decent work for 2,000 young, women and handicapped individuals by the end of 2022. 50% of those individuals should be under TP, the other half should be Turkish citizens. By providing a bridge between employers and employees, vocational training (90% of which is on-the-job) support employees to improve themselves.

## **1.6 Roundtable Discussion 2: Employment Strategies for Migrants and Refugees / New Urban Economy Model Cooperative Activities**

Problems and solutions are discussed by each group regarding the questions they are given.

### **1.6.1 Group 1:**

**Question:** What are the employment areas of refugees in Turkey? In which sectors can new employment areas be created?

#### **Main Outcomes:**

- Textile and waste collecting are prevalent work areas for refugees.

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- Professions of refugees should be determined and they need to be referred to jobs accordingly. In the current situation, even highly qualified refugees have to work in unskilled jobs to make ends meet.
- Language barrier constitutes a major problem in terms of communication between employers and employees, which results in violation of rights.
- Illegal work areas should be legalized.

### 1.6.2 Group 2:

**Question:** What are the employment conditions of refugees in Turkey? How can employment conditions be improved?

#### Main Outcomes:

- For informal employment, main problems are as follows: Lack of social security, labor safety at work places and opportunities for vocational improvement, irregularity of payments, long working hours, language barrier, labor accidents, work permit fee paid by employer yet charged over employee and this leads to informal employment, employers lack of knowledge regarding procedures and rules to be followed to hire refugees, irregular migration and unregistered individuals as a factor increasing informality.
- For formal employment, cutting work permit fees off an employee's salary can still be common. Social security is provided and labor safety at the workplace is mostly ensured yet language remains as an obstacle. Temporary opportunities are given to those under TP and they are the first ones to get fired in case of a shrinkage, which hampers sustainability and vocational development.
- A solid inspection mechanism is needed to take irregular migration under control and to prevent labor accidents. Collaboration with private sector to prevent child labor and work safety and to raise awareness on these issues, increase in projects bolstering employment, and loosening rules for social aid (cutting ESN aid poses a problem for formal employment) are among the recommended solutions.

### 1.6.3 Group 3:

**Question:** What are the positive/negative aspects of refugees' involvement in employment? Can we talk about the fact that the host community sees refugees as competitors in the labor market due to unregistered employment, which also increases social tension?

#### Main Outcomes:

- Including individuals under Temporary Protection and International Protection in formal employment contributes to the economic growth, answers the need of semi-skilled workers, reduces the crime rates, and enables economic independence which in return helps rechanneling social aids provided by municipalities and NGOs to other areas. Those refugees who speak different languages can be employed in different employment areas.
- Social tension is equally high for both formal and informal employment. Host community considers refugees as those taking job opportunities away from them.

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- With the help of powerful people such as Fatma Şahin who says that refugees strengthen our industry, sharing success stories of refugees via social media, listening to their stories and connecting to them with the “If you get to know, you like them” motto, and implementing regulations to prevent racism social tension can be reduced. Incentives can be increased to reduce informal employment, the amount of work permit fees can be reduced and opportunities for individual application to work permit can be given. Internal and external auditors should be more active to deter illegal acts.

#### 1.6.4 Group 4:

**Question:** What is the role of social enterprises or cooperatives in employment strategies?

#### Main Outcomes:

- Spreading success stories and good examples inspire entrepreneurs, which paves the way for surge of new employment areas.
- Increasing tax incentives and loans with lower interest rates for existing and newly-emerging cooperatives and social enterprises, including different actors from various profiles into these structures, encouraging other sectors to contribute to cooperatives through volunteerism, providing technical help for marketing via online platforms to increase the outreach and collaborating with private sectors to purchase gifts and catering services from cooperatives are the recommendations to encourage entrepreneurship.

#### 1.6.5 Group 5:

**Question:** What should be the sustainability strategies of cooperatives established with the support of international organizations/donors?

#### Main Outcomes:

- Tax exemption should be provided not only for women cooperatives but for other types as well. Taxes should be decreased or terminated for cooperative products.
- National and international markets should be expanded.
- With the help of advertisements and promotional activities, visibility should be raised.
- Providing partners with capacity development trainings, abiding by the principles of objectivity and clarity, forming a plan for crisis/risk management, analyzing supply/demand for the products, expanding the period of financial support taken from donors, getting support from local governments and municipalities for marketing activities and sites, forming coordination among cooperatives sharing the same objectives, governments providing social security for cooperative employees, cooperating with the Ministry of Education to increase awareness for cooperatives and to provide trainings for the establishment of cooperatives, and asking support from public institutions for qualified personnel to ensure sustainability are among the recommended solutions.

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## 2 Policy Recommendations for Solutions

The main purpose of the workshop which was held in Istanbul, Küçükçekmece, on 26-27 October 2022 was to strengthen inter-institutional coordination in the field of migration and refugees in the district. The workshop components of Social Protection, Education and Access to Livelihoods were evaluated and brought together representatives of public institutions, local authorities, international organizations, academics and non-governmental organizations. In the round table discussions held after the panels, the thematic topics selected for each table provided ideas for potential improvements and solutions to the migration and refugee problems through inter-institutional dialogue. The main objectives of the workshop were to strengthen existing collaborations and to be a platform for potential new collaborations and solution partnerships in Küçükçekmece district. In this report, policy recommendations for addressing migration and refugee problems are examined under three main headings:

- Protection
- Education
- Access to Livelihoods

### 2.1 Protection

- Contributing to the protection of Syrians under temporary protection should support participation and access to health, education and social services, including municipal services and local solutions. A strategy should be developed to align (?) these services to national services.
- The issues of protection, gender, child marriage and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse should be expanded across all sectors.
- A multi-stakeholder inter-institutional communication network should be established by interacting with the private sector, national and local actors (central government, municipalities, district governorships, NGOs).
- Institutional capacity should be supported by giving priority to strengthening inter-institutional guidance and follow-up mechanisms.
- The challenges of misinformation that cause social tensions need to be addressed by increasing efforts for awareness-raising among the host community. Meetings should be held in cooperation with local governments including the host community and opinion leaders.
- Since municipalities and district governorships are at the forefront of interactions on community level, they play a key role in the implementation of cohesion and social cohesion programmes. For this reason, they should take the lead in addressing increasing social tensions. As one of the districts with the largest refugee population in Istanbul, Küçükçekmece Municipality can be a good role model for local governments when undertaking this task.
- The inclusion of refugees in national systems and service delivery will facilitate the promotion of social cohesion and effective migration management.
- Trainings should be organized in order to empower refugees and to increase cohesion. (for instance, language, vocational and non-vocational skills training)
- It is crucial to continue the support to the promotion of dialogue and coexistence, through means such as meetings, social and cultural interactions and participation

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among community leaders, as well as awareness-raising information activities. Engaging refugees in local initiatives that can help identify and resolve potential areas of tension can strengthen community engagement. To promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence, separate work should be done in the communities of women and men.

- Social cohesion components need to be disseminated by different public institutions and processes.
- With the help of media channels, known misperceptions about refugees can be regulated. Friendships with refugee neighbors can be featured in TV series or movies.
- It should support the promotion of dialogue and coexistence among community leaders through meetings, social and cultural interactions and participation, as well as awareness-raising information activities.
- Coordination meetings should be held both at the general level in Istanbul and in 39 districts of Istanbul on a regular basis. Health, education, legal, security, religious affairs offices, social service centers, employment agencies, mukhtars, district governorships, chambers of commerce and international organizations should attend these meetings. Coordination meetings, which should be organized in cooperation with district municipalities and district governorships, can be held quarterly in order to strengthen the follow-up mechanisms.
- Refugees receive different cash aids through public and international organizations. In order to ensure the control of the aids, a database should be created under the control of the central administration.
- The services offered by different institutions can be mapped through digital platforms that can be used all over Turkey under the control of the central government.  
(For instance; Mail groups WhatsApp.)

## 2.2 Education

- As education is a fundamental right for all children, enrollment in formal education for all children aged 5-17 should be supported and access to educational opportunities should be ensured.
- School enrollment, participation and attendance at all levels should be supported by cash interventions to stop child labor and child marriage for girls.
- It is important to provide teachers and education staff with the opportunity to meet the needs of students with different language, academic and physical abilities, as well as provide the psychosocial support needed to support children and youth with new learning models.
- A resilient national education system needs to be established that can provide quality education to children and youth by promoting enhanced and gender-inclusive access to learning opportunities for refugees.
- For the effective implementation of the education strategy, the economic, health, protection and basic needs problems in front of education should be eliminated.
- The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) play a key role in ensuring access to higher education. For this reason, it will be important to increase the quotas provided to refugees.

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### 2.3 Access to Livelihood

- Local actors such as municipalities, district governorships and business associations should be closely contacted in identifying various local needs through regular needs assessments as well as dialogue and negotiations in accessing refugees livelihoods.
- As the economic impact of the crisis affects both Syrians under temporary protection and international protection, as well as Turkish citizens, job- and income loss can lead to competition for employment opportunities and also cause social tensions. Self-sustaining policies should be established through holistic approaches consisting of active work and employment policies, income/job protection support, increased access to the social protection system.
- Long-term strategies should be established to protect employment, increase access to formal employment, minimize health risks in the workplace, especially for vulnerable groups, including women and youth.
- Possible initiatives to contribute to the transition to formal employment should be supported by both the central government and international organizations.
- There is a need to develop strategies for recruiting Syrians and international protection applicants and status holders that do not affect the employment of Turkish citizens.
- Cooperation with chambers of commerce and industry should be increased in access to livelihoods.
- Supporting small and medium-sized businesses run by Syrians.
- More investment is required for the transition to the formal economy, and support should be provided, especially for young people, to access formal employment.
- Priority will be given to increasing access to official employment in close cooperation with public institutions and the private sector.
- In addition to creating incentives in the field of employment in the labor market, it will support local institutions in the field of service supply and contribute to social cohesion.
- In order to determine their needs for qualified workforce, negotiations with the private sector will be made and the development of cooperative business models will be ensured.
- In order to better and coordinately meet the identified needs of Syrians and local people, coordination with key actors such as the World Bank and Agricultural Credit Cooperatives needs to be strengthened.
- To increase job creation, especially for more vulnerable groups such as women, cooperatives should be supported in terms of quality standards, legal processes or marketing strategies.
- Harmonization, social cohesion and sustainable solutions in access to livelihoods should be promoted.

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### 3 Conclusion

In the eleventh year of the conflict in Syria, the humanitarian crisis caused by the intense influx of refugees continues in the countries neighboring Syria. Turkey's public system has undertaken the difficult task of providing services to Syrians under temporary protection and international protection applicants and status holders in line with the national legal framework, especially in the fields of health, education and social services. Social protection plays a vital role in promoting human and economic development as well as achieving greater equality and social cohesion. While social protection helps reduce people's exposure to risks, it also helps to increase their capacity to manage economic and social risks. Social protection supports access to basic services and strengthens families' capacity to care for their children and other vulnerable family members. With the long duration of the conflict in Syria, the displacement of refugees to neighboring countries the Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey have largely exhausted their assets and caused high-level economic problems. Rising living costs such as consumer prices, housing costs, utility bills and food prices have negatively impacted vulnerable households and their ability to meet their basic needs. Major contributing factors to raising social tensions include socio economic distress, perceived socio-cultural differences, increased social distance between communities, language barriers, reduced social acceptance, competition for employment, safety concerns, misunderstandings and pressure on support and services, as well as misinformation about available services.

Refugee response interventions often seeks to find solutions that allow refugees to rebuild their lives and live in peace and dignity. These solutions include local integration, resettlement and voluntary repatriation. Efforts to systematically increase access to complementary means of international responsibility-sharing in this area are vital. For this reason, it is necessary to increase the resilience and self-sufficiency of Syrians and international protection applicants. Due to their legal status, refugees are required to enjoy the rights and authorities that will enable them to access work opportunities and employment rights without discrimination. They need to have self-sufficient and sustainable livelihoods, not dependent on aid provided by humanitarian actors or the state. It is a priority for them to interact positively with local communities and other refugees in their daily lives and workplaces.

This workshop, which was held with the support of the Qudra 2 programme, revealed that the stakeholders working in the field of migration in Küçükçekmece district needed platforms where they could share their experiences.

Some observations on the workshop process are as follows;

- ✓ There was an intense participation in the workshop from different institutions. Municipalities or district governorships can organize this type of meeting more easily because it is a public institution.
- ✓ The gathering of non-governmental organizations, international organizations, public employees and academicians working in the field ensured that the discussions were carried out in a systematic and certain order.
- ✓ Roundtable discussions during the workshop strengthened inter-institutional communication by providing motivation to develop dialogue. NGOs working in the

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field of migration and refugees shared the problems they experienced in the field with representatives of public institutions, municipalities and international organizations.

- ✓ As a result of the participation of the representatives of international organizations in the workshop, it was discussed in which areas more investment and support was needed.
- ✓ It has been observed that all participants are willing to be a part of the mechanism to be established to ensure coordination in the Küçükçekmece district.

The most important achievement of the Küçükçekmece Migration Coordination Dialogue workshop was that institutions working in the same field were brought together on a common platform and developed a dialogue. This meeting formed the basis for coordination in the Küçükçekmece district. It is hoped that such dialogue meetings will continue regularly under the leadership of the district Municipality, district governorship or central government. Ensuring the continuity of the dialogue activities in which NGOs Representatives working in the field, academics, representatives of public institutions/organizations and international organizations participate is very important in terms of ensuring the sustainability of the services provided. In this context, with the Syrian civil war that has been going on for 11 years, the budgets provided by international organizations and the donor gradually decreased with the start of the Russia-Ukraine War. Considering all these evaluations, the Republic of Turkey should provide dialogue and coordination at the district and central level in order to produce sustainable solutions to the problems of refugees.

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