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## A Study on the Experience of Being a Refugee Entrepreneur in the Konya Shoe Industry: Syrian Entrepreneurs in Aykent Shoemakers Site

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### 1 Introduction

While Chanda (2009) tells a story about humanity and globalization, it provides a reason for many people until after the first step was taken. While the experienced mobility includes everyone from Africa to America, it actually indicates that the most important concept in the existence of humanity is mobility.

In an age without borders, mobility can be called discovery, curiosity, quest, or any other name. However, no matter what people call the pieces of land that they own as houses, villages, cities, regions, countries, or whatever, the name and the form of mobility have begun to change. As well as the late formation and effects of the concepts of property and nation, the changes to these concepts appear in different forms. With the development of economic and social systems, the demand/power of

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ownership has revealed multi-directional mobility. The mobility/migration discovered by capitalism sometimes encompasses the undesirable, sometimes the desired, and sometimes many anonymous masses.

The desire to destroy people where they are and the writing of the concept of mass migration into the literature by those who do not want to be exposed to this have become parts of human history. Even though migration begins with humanity, making it belong to wars, massacres, internal conflicts, and genocides has made/requires them to move to another, more accurately, a safe region. At the end of these, searching to find a replacement for the missing ones covers a wide area from job security to security. Experienced migration is usually massive, and functional strategies are developed and put into practice to make mobility attractive. Apart from these, the increasing diversity of migration movements, mobility toward developed economic structures and welfare societies to seize opportunities, migration of colony groups to defined regions to create living/welfare areas from developed economies to less developed ones, brain drains toward livable countries for the production of knowledge and ideas, and so on can be sorted.

As can be understood from these, the existence and reasons of human mobility are important because while it helps to understand the process, on the other hand, it facilitates the naming of immigrants, that is, why they migrate and how they are called in international law.

As a matter of fact, according to the Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees signed in Geneva in 1951, a refugee is defined as “a person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, belonging to a certain social group or political opinion, and therefore leaves his/her country and is unable or unwilling to return because of his/her fear.” In other words, refugees are people who have to leave their country because of anxiety and danger about their lives. In line with this definition, it can be said that there are some conditions for gaining refugee status. First, fear must be caused by persecution. Second, the fear of persecution must also be rooted in race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group, or political considerations. Third, in order for a person to be considered a refugee, they must be outside the borders of their own country. Finally, the lack of protection of one’s

country is a necessary criterion for being unable or unwilling to return to one's country (UNHCR, 2018).

Another concept that is often used with the same meaning as refugee is asylum seeker. An asylum seeker is a person who meets the necessary criteria to become a refugee and awaits the outcome of his or her application for refugee status. In accordance with the principle of “non-refoulement to a place where there is a risk of persecution” accepted in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the asylum seeker has the right to benefit from humane treatment standards until the refugee application is decided. There is no single legal definition of the word “immigrant” at the international level. The word “migration” is often perceived to imply a voluntary process, such as a person crossing the border in search of better economic opportunities.

The temporary protection status, which is closely related to the situation of Syrians, includes urgency, temporary, and obligation. Temporary protection status is a status that is given temporarily to those who come to/pass by Turkey in order to find emergency and temporary protection. Granting temporary protection status to a foreigner depends on the fulfillment of the conditions sought in the law. According to the law, (a) being forced to leave their country, (b) not being able to return to the country they left, (c) the purpose of finding immediate and temporary protection, and (d) mass arrival or crossing of the borders are the basic conditions for providing temporary protection to foreigners. Temporary Protection No. 6458 for Foreigners and International is the name given to the protection regime established with the Temporary Protection Regulation, which was published in the Official Gazette on October 22, 2014, according to Article 91 of the Protection Law (MHD, 2017; UNCHR, 2022).

According to the temporary protection regulation, this regime is applied to foreigners who have been forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country they left, and come to or cross the borders of Turkey individually or in groups, and whose protection applications are not taken into consideration individually. Refugees and stateless persons from Syria are admitted to Turkey under the temporary protection regime and thus can benefit from the temporary protection provided by the

Turkish government. They will not be sent back to Syria under normal circumstances unless they request it themselves.

Considering all these explanations, concepts such as migration, refugees, people under temporary protection, and asylum seekers appear as the names given to mobility across international borders. Although it is stated that a significant part of the Syrians who are the subject of the study are under temporary protection, the concepts of asylum and refugee do not seem too foreign to this situation. In this context, the concept of refugee will continue to be used for Syrians in this study.

## **2 Profession as an Opportunity for Refugee Entrepreneurship**

With the beginning of the migration, the demands of the immigrants, both in the early periods and today, to meet their basic physiological needs naturally in the region/country they go to will emerge. These demands are sometimes met by international, sometimes national, and sometimes local aid organizations. The mutual aid initiatives of public funds or non-governmental organizations are closely related to the economic situation of the immigrants. These institutions and organizations help immigrants/asylum seekers/refugees and others who need.

They aim to contribute to groups/individuals having a sustainable life status. Achieving qualifications in line with the living standards of that country will cause aid organizations to turn their attention to other people in need.

In fact, breaking the process begins here: catching up with living standards. The basic condition for this naturally starts with working. However, the important thing here is which job the employee will continue to do. In other words, whether unprofessional knowledge will be excluded is important. Regardless of refugee or immigrant, the fact that this is important should not be overlooked. This situation becomes more important for refugees, because they came to the country they came from due to necessity. In contrast, there is usually an invitation for immigrants. The invitation in question also contains clear information for the professions

where the conditions are clarified and set forth. For example, Germany has taken them as immigrants by explaining the profession and qualification information for the Turks it has received since the 1960s. However, Syrian or Afghan refugees who came to Turkey had to leave their countries without an invitation from Turkey, as a result of the war and the force of the political regime (Deniz & Reyhanoğlu, 2018; Yıldırım & Yüksekbilgili, 2021; Kaypak & Bimay, 2016; Duman & Özdemirci, 2020).

Expectations in meeting basic needs when they first arrive are exceeded over time. Afterward, it causes the immigrants to have some skills or to use these skills in the country they come from, depending on the improvement of their living conditions and the length of their stay in the country of origin. One of the best examples of these skills in the medium term for refugees is entrepreneurship. For those who own capital in their own country and have the opportunity to transfer it, this step can also show itself in the short term. Many factors such as the establishment of trust, legal regulations, social cohesion, price-cost harmonization, management of the new supply network, and determination of localization choices play a decisive role in this process (Baki & Akyiğit, 2021).

This is the case with Syrian (GKAS) asylum seekers who immigrated to Turkey and were placed under temporary protection. The situation of job search and working in different jobs, which starts with the first comers and continues with some improvement, inevitably emerges. Although there is an orientation related to the professional field, it is important to find the equivalent of the profession in the relevant labor market. In fact, an internal migration mobility of Syrians is experienced as a result of this because the thought/effort of having a job through the professions of those who have a certain qualification in labor-intensive jobs in their own country emerges (Mülteciler Derneği, 2021; ILO, 2020).

The number of immigrants from Syria continues, albeit by decreasing. As of the latest situation, the number of registered Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey increased by 13,177 as of October 21, 2021, compared to the previous month and reached a total of 3,723,674 persons. About 1,764,863 (47.4%) of these people are children between the ages of 0 and 18. The sum of children and women aged 0–18 is 2,637,531 (Mülteciler Derneği, 2021). According to the “Syrian Refugees in the Turkish Labor Market” study published by the International Labor

Organization (ILO) Turkey Office in February 2020, approximately 950,000 Syrians work in Turkey. However, the rate of informal workers among working Syrians is at a very high level of 91.6%. According to the ILO research, the sectors in which Syrians are most employed are listed as trade, construction, and manufacturing. However, one out of every three Syrian workers works in the textile, clothing, leather, and footwear sectors. While 71% of Syrian men are working, only 11.2% of women between the ages of 15 and 65 are working. On the other hand, the number of working Syrian children between the ages of 5 and 14 is 130,000. According to the ILO research, Syrian workers are also at a disadvantage in terms of working hours. While the average weekly working time in Turkey is 48 hours, 53.7% of Syrian workers work more than 50 hours a week and 34.7% work 60 hours or more per week.

However, there is a situation that should not be forgotten Syrians under protection have been given the right to work (Erdoğan, 2019). According to this regulation, Syrians who have been registered in Turkey for at least six months can have the right to work in a workplace at the request of their employers, provided that they work at a minimum wage of 1/2 or 2/3. However, this step, which is extremely important in terms of the economic activities and integration of Syrians in Turkey and allows Syrians to work officially, did not show the expected effect in terms of unregistered Syrians becoming registered. According to the statement made by the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services on March 31, 2019, the number of Syrian Arab Republic citizens who have been granted work permits in Turkey is 31,185.22. However, research shows that the number of Syrians working in Turkey is more than 30% of the total population. This means that at least 1.2 million Syrians are working. Considering the Syrians actually working in Turkey, these numbers clearly show that the right to work is not functional enough for the Syrians under temporary protection and that more than 95% of the Syrians who are working are still working informally. However, undeclared work is unfortunately an undesirable reality of the Turkish economy. According to TUIK's 2019 data, currently active T.R. among its citizens, the rate of workers "without being affiliated to any social security institution," that is, "informal," is 34.4%. In other words, more than 10 million Turkish citizens are employed in Turkey's "workforce" over the

age of 15, which is 32.3 million in total. Its citizens are still working “unregistered” ([www.siviltoplum.gov.tr](http://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr); [www.kosgeb.gov.tr](http://www.kosgeb.gov.tr); [www.bthaber.com](http://www.bthaber.com); ICMPD, 2020; [www.avrupa.info.tr](http://www.avrupa.info.tr); Abd Hamid, 2020; Güven et al., 2018; Özkul & Dengiz, 2018; [www.indyturk.com](http://www.indyturk.com); Göncü, 2019; Duman & Özdemirci, 2020; Koyuncu, 2020).

On the other hand, refugees who have reached a certain level in work experience or have reached a certain level in recognizing the region act more courageously in entrepreneurship. Especially when the settlements are taken into consideration, every small entrepreneurial tradesman has the opportunity to communicate more easily with their own consumer/customer in the neighborhood where they are settled. Although various institutions and organizations at national and international levels support and encourage the entrepreneurship-related process with training and funds, despite the increasing good examples, some problems regarding business establishment continue. It would not be wrong to say that all of the difficulties that migrant entrepreneurs experience in the host country, as determined by Abd Hamid (2020), are experienced by Syrian refugee entrepreneurs. Access to banking systems, in particular, remains one of the biggest obstacles Syrian companies face. In addition to the language/communication problem, many factors such as inadequacy in the legal field, high establishment costs, less recognition of the region, technology difference, working conditions, differences in the economic levels of countries, currency differences and movements, and access to financial resources take its place as elements that should be known. In addition, the problems that the entrepreneur must overcome regarding the supply of labor and some complex processes that he will encounter in the taxation process draw attention ([www.indyturk.com.tr](http://www.indyturk.com.tr)).

On the other hand, while commercial activities related to recognition emerged more effectively and rapidly in regions such as Gaziantep, Kilis, and Hatay, which are border regions and have a trade history, recognition took time in cities such as Konya, İzmir, and Bursa, where the Syrian population is concentrated. In Gaziantep, where approximately 500,000 Syrians live, 2668 Syrian companies are registered with the Chamber of Commerce, 101 with the Chamber of Industry, and 1445 with the Southeast Exporters’ Association.

According to the report prepared by TEPAV (2018), it shows that Syrian entrepreneurs provide livelihood to 7% of 3.5 million Syrians in Turkey. For eight years, Syrians in Turkey founded more than 10,000 companies employing an average of 7 people, 60% of whom are Syrians, and this number is now 20,000. Accordingly, the average Syrian household size consists of six people. Therefore, the findings, although not conclusive, show that around 250,000 Syrians enjoy the benefits of employment provided by these companies.

As a result, the entrepreneurship of Syrian refugees reveals many macro factors such as leading a better life, adapting to society, creating assurance for the future of their children, developing good relations with locals, and ultimately their preferences for being permanent. With the study, besides why refugees choose Konya, it will be investigated whether the profession is a reference for Konya, and how they view the integration process will be tried to be learned as one of the information obtained from these interviews.

### **3 A Qualitative Research on Entrepreneurship of Syrian Refugees in the Konya Shoe Industry**

Konya Shoe Industry has a significant production power in Turkey. It is one of the most important centers of the country in the production of men's shoes. Shoe production, which started with the traditional production technique since the 1900s, continued its life with a more formal relationship form from the 1930s and turned into an organized structure as of 1955. Firms operating in shoemaking have gathered in Aykent Shoemakers Industrial Site as of 2003. While they have a total production capacity of 80 million Pairs/Year, they operate with 45% capacity (36 million Pairs/Year). With these data, it meets 20% of men's shoe production in Turkey.

Shoemakers in Konya mainly carry out their activities in Aykent Shoes Private Industry Site. While there are 980 manufacturing sites in Aykent Industrial Site, there are 621 active manufacturers. Of these, 160 are



counters, 480 of them are shoe manufacturing companies, and the rest are sub-industry and material vendors. The number of large enterprises consists of 2, the number of medium-sized enterprises is 100, the number of small enterprises is 200, and the rest consists of micro enterprises. About 15 million pairs of shoes are produced annually in the sector. In the domestic market, production is made especially for chain stores and big brands. Of 15 million pairs, 20% of the shoes produced go to the foreign market and 80% to the domestic market. The industry has been growing in the last ten years. Although there is a decrease in the number of companies, the production potential and capacity are increasing. In addition to companies producing under their own brands, contract manufacturing for national brands is very intense. While the production is made for at least 30 brands in the country, production is made for 6 brands abroad. The industry is a labor-intensive industry. The products produced in the sector are quality products in terms of competitiveness level. Total employment in the sector is between 12,000 and 15,000. About 3000 of them are Syrians. Most of the Syrian workers, who are working informally, are male, and there are hardly any female employees. The age range is between 15 and 50. Syrians, who are employed in almost every workplace, constitute a significant labor force in the sector. It is possible to say that Syrian refugees who are employed primarily close the employment gap in all processes in the sector. This situation is reinforced by the increasing number of Syrian employees. In order to understand the weight of Syrians in the sector, the example of their return to Syria for visits during Ramadan and Eid al-Adha causes stagnation in the sector is remarkable. Although there are a small number of Armenian workers among the Syrian refugees working in areas that require competence, especially in counters, the majority of them are Turkmens and Arabs. The most important reason for Syrian refugees in the sector to have competencies is that they are doing the same job in Syria. As a matter of fact, it is known that the immigrants are Syrians who make a living by shoemaking in and around Aleppo. This situation contributed to the rapid elimination of the adaptation problem, at least in the professional sense, when they first arrived. In remuneration, while they were employed at a lower cost than domestic workers at the first stage, they now have the same wage range. Especially in masters, this situation sometimes exceeds the

wages of domestic workers. As a matter of fact, it is seen that very qualified Syrian refugees work not only in upper production but also in sole and shoe production (Arıcıoğlu & Koraş, 2018).

In this study, qualitative research was conducted on Syrian refugee entrepreneurs who are small-scale business owners operating in the Konya Aykent Shoe Industry. The methodology, research questions, and analysis of the research are listed below.

### **3.1 Methodology**

In this research, the prepared questions and the answers were analyzed by interviewing the Syrian refugee entrepreneurs. Interviews with 12 entrepreneurs working in the shoemaking industry were used for the analysis, and Grounded Theory was used.

#### **3.1.1 Research Questions and Participants**

In this study, it has been attempted to understand the entrepreneurship reasons of the Syrian refugee entrepreneurs and the incentives and obstacles in the process. Regarding this, the basic research questions for entrepreneurs working in the shoemaking sector in Konya are as follows:

- The reasons why Syrian refugees prefer Konya
- Working preferences and professional relationships to meet their basic needs
- Adaptation processes to Turkey and Konya
- Refugee Syrians' reasons for turning to entrepreneurship
- Preferences and reasons for making entrepreneurship sustainable or not

For the research, interviews with only refugee entrepreneurs operating in the sector were preferred in the Konya Aykent Shoemakers Site. In other words, there are small-scale businesses such as markets and restaurants on the industrial site. However, the sample was limited only to Syrian refugees in the shoe supply chain in order to analyze the

occupational link related to entrepreneurship and to make sense of the sustainability of entrepreneurship in the industrial zone. While one of the refugees participating in the research works on shoe design, the others work directly on shoe production. While three of those in production work as subcontractors in another enterprise, seven of them have their own businesses. All of the participants were male, were between the ages of 25 and 50, and came from around Aleppo. The refugees came to Turkey between 2011 and 2014. The working group consisted of four Arabs and eight Turkmen, and it was possible to communicate with everyone in Turkish.

### **3.1.2 Collection of Data and Analysis**

Structured interview technique was used with refugees. Snowball sampling method was followed for the interview. In this study, in which the entrepreneurship processes of refugees are examined in depth, the embedded theory approach, one of the qualitative analysis patterns, was used. For this, the constructivist pattern developed by Charmaz (2015) was used. In the context of the embedded theory approach, the coding-analysis process was detailed in line with the principles of the constructivist design, and an effort was made to create a consistent/correct meaning and expression by making sentence-sentence coding in the coding process. In the coding process, the institutional coding results obtained when sentence coding, selective coding, and finally institutional coding are achieved can be listed as follows (Table 10.1).

### **3.1.3 Findings and Comments**

In the study, 12 Syrian refugee entrepreneurs operating in the shoe manufacturing sector were interviewed. All of the refugee entrepreneurs consisted of people operating as entrepreneurs or employees in shoemaking production in Syria.

All of the refugees immigrated to Turkey due to the difficulties that arose in sustaining their lives and meeting their basic needs. Again, all of

Table 10.1 Coding process and results

Code	Sentence	Interview analysis	Examples
K-1	Preferring Konya for settlement and living	In the refugees' choice of Konya, the city's support of NGOs for charity and local government, religious reasons, and the factor of relatives/friends come to the fore. Konya stands out as the second settlement area of all of them, and Gaziantep and Kilis are defined as the first settlements in the migration process. Afterward, it was understood that the refugees chose Konya as the second city. While it is stated that Konya's access to health and education is a facilitating factor, the large number of SME-sized workplaces and the opportunity to work for many people in the family are also emphasized.	<p>"Before coming to Konya, I knew that those who came here would not be left hungry." G 3</p> <p>"My relative came before me and told me that charities do not leave anyone unattended." G 5</p> <p>"When we first came, we settled in an abandoned house, but the headman and those around us took care of us, our needs came quickly." G 11</p> <p>"New arrivals to our neighborhood have decreased, but they still come to our aid." G 9</p> <p>"I know that I will not go hungry even if I am unemployed." G 6</p> <p>"We have been doing this for years already. Not only me but also my son is in this profession." G 4</p> <p>"It was easy for me to find a job in Konya because there is a very big homepage." G 12</p> <p>"I chose this place not only because it is religious, but also because I can do my own profession." G 11</p> <p>"I learned the business of counters from my father, it helped me find a job here too." G 1</p>
K-2	Occupation provides opportunities for work	It was stated that Konya shoemaking has an important place in Turkey in terms of production and distribution. It has been observed that all of the refugees work in the shoe production sector or have small workshops in Syria. As a matter of fact, in the interviews, it is stated that besides the entrepreneurs, the employees also take a significant place in the sector. It is stated that they gain an advantage in finding a job, thanks to their professional knowledge and experience, and the sector demands a great deal of effort in this regard.	

K-3	The effect of harmony on settlement	All of the interviewees think that they are satisfied with the city and region they have chosen and that they have adapted to the country. They state that they get along well with the locals in both ethnic groups and that they do not encounter any problems in the industrial zone or in their living areas. A remarkable point is that a significant number of them emphasize that they pay attention to their relations with some Syrians. In the integration process, especially their families' approval of this adaptation, the fact that there are locals among the employees at the workplace and their employment of refugees other than Syrians are also presented as indicators of approval.	<p>"Children are happy here. They go to school, the lady is happy to live in the neighborhood." G 8</p> <p>"We are here now." G 5</p> <p>"Who is around me is important, but Syrians sometimes make a lot of noise, so I moved to a neighborhood with Turks." G 3</p> <p>"The neighborhood with Turks is better, I live there now." G 6</p> <p>"My job, my house and neighbors are fine." G 2</p> <p>"We are getting along with our neighbor Turks." G 4</p>
K-4	Opportunity valuation for startup	It is observed that small-scale companies in the sector have changed hands for economic reasons, which facilitates the process of establishing a business by taking over the existing business and making deferred payments instead of establishing a new company. It is also stated that they manage the process more easily, especially with a small number of employees and low operating costs.	<p>"When my boss wanted to hand over the job at my job, I took care of it together with my friend, and we pay our debt piecemeal." G 10</p> <p>"I was busy, I also had a shop in Aleppo. When we heard that this place was sold, we bargained and bought it on a futures basis. Things are fine." G 11</p> <p>"We made an agreement with the boss in this shop, I do my own business in the same shop and get paid for my own counter." G 12</p> <p>"When my uncle's son said that his neighbor was going to quit the business and was looking for someone to transfer it to, we gave our savings up front and took over the loan." G 9</p>

(continued)

Table 10.1 (continued)

Code	Sentence	Interview analysis	Examples
K-5	Business with acquaintance	The priority of relatives and acquaintances regarding the realization and completion of the work stands out as an important reference. This is also closely related to the important role played by a Turkish reference and guarantor for the business community.	<p>"They want a Turkish guarantor when taking over the shop or renting a house." G 1</p> <p>"It gives you a privilege to have a taste when buying goods and taking orders." G 5</p> <p>"Things are going well if you have a guarantor." G 7</p> <p>"Being a Turkish acquaintance, especially a well-known person, facilitated the business turnover." G 8</p>
K-6	Settled life	The relationship between work and residence reveals that refugees are permanent in Turkey. Their decisions or obligations are closely related to the belief that the situation in their country will not improve. These reasons increase the desire for a permanent entrepreneurship through entrepreneurship.	<p>"The end of the war in Syria does not seem possible. We are here now." G 4</p> <p>"Our job, our vaccine is boiling. I have no intention of returning." G 6</p> <p>"My family and relatives are from here in Turkey now." G 5</p> <p>"How shall I turn, where shall I turn? Everything is destroyed and the war continues. We are also peaceful here." G 8</p>

them worked in different jobs when they migrated and then continued to work in the professional field. In other words, there is no one who comes to Turkey with certain knowledge and makes an attempt.

In addition, it turns out that early immigration and early employment largely solve the language problem. Furthermore, it can also be said that the school education of the children has a positive influence on their and family's language skills.

They are successful because of the cost advantage related to production, the management of the collection risk of their income, and the development of customer/supply network information. In addition, the desire to live in better conditions, sedentary and sustainable life goals, as well as the high turnover of workplaces in the relevant field have been effective in evaluating the entrepreneurship opportunity. In other words, there is no innovative entrepreneurial concern or motivation, which has been mainly discussed in the literature recently. However, it would not be wrong to say that it is a cost-based entrepreneurship evaluation. Especially, the low labor and operating costs provide an advantage in this regard. Although the entrepreneurs mainly employ Syrian workers, it is seen that Turkish workers also work in the workshop. While the success of the enterprise paves the way for other entrepreneurs, it contributes to everyone's learning something new about competition. However, in this process, the difficulty of finding references from the Turks in the region emerges as an important factor in entrepreneurship. Finding customers for the work done and having access to new market areas, thanks to the network, also make the permanence evident.

Ibn Khaldun's statement "Geography is destiny" is as if it was said for Turkey. The geographical location of the Middle East, Black Sea, and Near Asia as a connection point to Europe and even Africa causes it to be in the middle of many relations, especially immigration.

With the migration that started in the spring of 2011, following the outbreak of civil turmoil and war in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey became the choice of many refugees. Turkey accepted nearly four million people from the region where it has the longest geographical border and where commercial activities and human mobility were present before the war. Refugees, who were first met in the camps, then moved toward the inner regions. Although the public and civil society's efforts to help the

immigrants made a significant contribution in the first stage, the intensity of the migration and their dispersal throughout Turkey caused different difficulties in the management of the process.

Adaptation of refugees or Syrians under temporary protection with their legal name to the living conditions in the country gained importance at the first stage. Afterward, efforts to find a job and start a business emerged. In the study, it was tried to examine especially the situations in the process of starting a business, that is, entrepreneurship. In line with the findings obtained, reasons such as being a livable city and being religious stand out for them to prefer Konya. These findings are also consistent with the study conducted by Koyuncu (Koyuncu, 2020). It is especially important that the environment they live in is moderate for them and they feel safe. The same conditions are sought for the business environment and the importance of networking for trade is emphasized. It is not surprising that the answers given to the second question were the same. It is known that Syrian refugees have made an important contribution to the elimination of the problem of upper master and similar qualified employees in the Konya Shoe Industry in the past years. With the gradual spread of communication between Syrian employees, the demanded personnel in this field began to be found more easily. In addition, the fact that they were willing to pay lower wages in the past caused them to be employed more. The continuation of price-based competition makes employment attractive for company owners. Research conducted by the ILO and similar organizations (ILO, 2020) confirms this situation. Having a good level of professional knowledge and continuing to work in permanent jobs have increased the curiosity and encouragement of having a job after this period. All of the other Syrian entrepreneurs interviewed in the industrial zone, not just the interviewees, come from the sector. The answers given to the questions about the adaptation process are positive. All interviewees (especially those who have stayed in this city and this business area for more than five years) state that they have adapted. On the other hand, the findings mentioned in the literature and in the reports prepared about Turkey seem to be confirmed (Erdoğan, 2019).

This situation actually clarifies the fifth question of the desire to be permanent. About 572 Syrian entrepreneurs do not have a return plan or



desire appears here as well. This situation actually clarifies the fifth question of the desire to be permanent. None of the Syrian entrepreneurs have a return plan or desire ([euronews.com](http://euronews.com), 2019). This situation is supported by both the continuation of entrepreneurial activity and the preference of permanence that supports it. The fact that “being from here” or “the absence of a safe zone for Syria to go to anymore” as stated in the interviews further strengthens this situation. The continuation of the Syrians’ contacts and communication with the region they live in causes them to access information about the security of the region more easily. When the interviews about the fourth question are examined, it is remarkable that the professional interest supports this, beyond the generally accepted reasons such as a better life and the welfare of the children and the family, as indicated by the analyses made in the interviews. However, it is requested to overcome the difficulties or obstacles mentioned in the study. In addition, while being unregistered reveals a competitive advantage, providing labor costs by employing other Syrians can be defined as a learned situation.

It can be said that the information obtained because of the application overlaps with the existing studies, but refugee entrepreneurs in the Konya shoemaking sector draw attention with the following features:

- The basic abilities and skills-based features they have in the shoe industry encourage the entrepreneurial process and provide advantages.
- Depending on the sector characteristics, the high workplace turnover rate of small businesses makes it easier to take over the workplace. This causes the investment cost to become more affordable.
- Syrian business owners have a more advantageous position in terms of informal transactions.

In this context, the following suggestions can be presented to policy makers and entrepreneurs:

- Entrepreneurship activities in other regions can be examined by analyzing the relationship between profession and workplace.
- Resources for measures and solutions can be accessed more easily when joint and regional analyses of the problems are performed.

- The fact that the workplace neighborhood creates an exemplary relationship for living spaces can be used as a reference for social trust.
- Studies on the relationships between being permanent and entrepreneurship can be enriched.
- Regional needs analysis and entrepreneurship trainings can be prepared and disseminated for Syrian refugee entrepreneurs with the participation of regional and national stakeholders.
- Finally, impact analysis studies can be conducted in the regions/sectors where Syrians live and work. In this way, information can be obtained about the contribution of Syrians to the economy of the region and the country.

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