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Research on the Commercial Activities of Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay Provinces in Türkiye

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1 Introduction

People have migrated throughout history for reasons such as living in better conditions, being safe, or escaping from natural disasters. Today, many people are still on the move in this sense. Especially developed countries are the center of attraction. Migrants are engaged in economic activities in the target country because they must continue their lives. In this context, migration and entrepreneurship are considered an important issue in both the national and international arenas (Naudé et al., 2017). While research projects are carried out on immigrants working in the target country, there are also studies on their entrepreneurial start-up and participation in the labor market (Head & Ries, 1998; Wong & Primec, 2011). Especially, in the migration movement that takes place between the neighboring countries, the immigrants settle in the border cities of

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the target country and play an important role in the development of the region by trading between their own country and the target country. For this reason, it is important to examine the concept of entrepreneurship (Johnson, 2001), which includes capturing ideas, transforming them into products and/or services, and then establishing a venture to put the product on the market in terms of both immigrants and the target country. According to the definition of entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship can be defined as the entrepreneurial activity of immigrants in the target country. On the one hand, immigrants are people living in difficult conditions in their own country, fleeing from political instability or natural disasters in their country, and on the other hand, they are initially perceived as cheap and unqualified labor in the target country. However, these people have different knowledge, different experiences, and are engaged in entrepreneurial activities in a different cultural environment. This is an issue that needs to be examined. In addition, when immigrants become entrepreneurs, they offer job opportunities to other people who migrate to the target country and to the citizens of the target country. This, in turn, prevents immigrants from being perceived as a serious problem by the target country.

Immigrant entrepreneurship is of particular interest to the countries receiving immigration because immigrant entrepreneurship enables immigrants to participate in social life, facilitates their adaptation to society in cultural and social terms, and affects their psychology positively (Rath & Swagerman, 2011). This also includes the implementation of an effective spatial and social strategy for migrants. Türkiye has been hosting the largest number of refugees globally since 2014 (UNDP, 2019). According to the update of the General Directorate of Migration Management dated 31 December 2021, Syrians under temporary protection in Türkiye constitute 4.54% of the general population of Türkiye. Considering these data, it can be stated that this approach is extremely normal. In the research conducted by UNDP (2019), it has been stated that the “refugee” perception about Syrians has come out of the status of being temporarily in Türkiye and shifted to integration with society and the local economy. Also, in this research it has been revealed that Turkish enterprises are also aware of the opportunities arising from the presence of a large Syrian workforce, such as access to Arabic-speaking countries.

In this context, Türkiye supports immigrants to become entrepreneurs and provides training and support to immigrants to entrepreneurship. As a matter of fact, 94% of SMEs that received business support before starting a business stated that they found the training very useful (İNGEV et al., 2017). It has also been observed that there is a significant increase in the entrepreneurial activities of immigrants in Türkiye (Deniz & Reyhanoğlu, 2018).

This study was conducted to provide information and make suggestions about the entrepreneurship of immigrants who had settled in Hatay and Gaziantep provinces in Türkiye and the economic, social, and cultural effects of these entrepreneurial activities.

2 Cross-border Activities Related to Immigrant Entrepreneurship

It has long been accepted as a practical practice to support micro-enterprises to exploit the potential of immigrants, to involve them in economic activities, so that they can make a living and improve their socio-economic situation. Micro-enterprises have an important function of taking advantage of the capabilities of immigrants, to providing them with income, thereby reducing their dependence on aid. In addition, supporting micro-enterprises significantly helps overcome the sources of tension with the citizens of the target country (Kachkar, 2019).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the IKEA Foundation have developed a cooperative model for immigrants in areas such as agriculture, livestock, and retail trade on the Ethiopian and Somali border (Betts et al., 2021). It has been seen that this model provides employment to immigrants and Ethiopian citizens and makes a significant difference in improving income levels and social cohesion. It has been determined that entrepreneurs who are successful in this model develop strategies for cross-border activities.

Informal cross-border trading (ICBT) activities between Zimbabwe and South Africa began after the economic crisis of 2000 (Chikanda & Tawodzera, 2017). In this crisis, many sectors have been closed. About

70% of people have started cross-border trade because they have no other source of income. Subsequently, it has been seen that this trade has made a great economic contribution to both countries. In this context, it has been concluded that ICBT is critical for the Zimbabwean economy as it reduces unemployment and creates employment, and these activities should be supported.

Chatelard (2010) stated that Iraqi immigrants make a living or diversify their livelihoods thanks to the cross-border mobility. These people also have the opportunity to see family members consisting of women, children, and the elderly, whom they left in their own countries, and control their possessions and properties in their own country during their cross-border activities. In addition, these people maintain their social ties in their own countries. However, these people have also considered the possibility of returning to their home countries.

In a study on cross-border commercial activities between Thailand and Burma (Brees, 2010), it has been determined that Burmese immigrants send money to their families if they have a regular income, but this is informal because it is not under the control of the Thai government. This is because money is sent not through the official banking system but through people who know each other. It is estimated that these transfers from Thailand to Burma vary between 155.3 million dollars and 300 million dollars. In addition, in this study, it was stated that people who conduct business activities across borders are almost changed agents, create changes in terms of thought and practice, and transfer new values and beliefs to their own countries. It was also emphasized that these people could create certain development projects in their communities and support local initiatives financially by sending money collectively.

In a study conducted among Hispanics in the USA (Waldinger, 2008), it was stated that it is quite normal for cross-border activities and affiliations to vary according to nationalities due to social, political, and historical differences. It was observed that two-thirds of the participants had traveled to their homeland at least once after coming to the USA, and 47% of them regularly sent money to their home. Cross-border exchanges were found to occur mostly among Dominicans and least among Cubans. It has been determined that the vast majority of Mexicans have gone

home at least once, yet less than half of them send money to their families and nearly 80% of them plan to stay in the USA permanently.

It can be easily stated that the cross-border activities of immigrants pursue the same goals, even in different geographies, and contribute to both countries in terms of economic and employment opportunities.

3 Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Türkiye

Considering that the concept of immigrant also includes the decisions taken by the individual for his/her personal prosperity, those who were forced to leave Syria in 2011 can be considered refugees. As a matter of fact, due to the seriousness of the situation in Syria and the lack of conditions allowing the safe return of the refugees to their countries, Türkiye provided these refugees with temporary protection without seeking any prerequisites.

According to 2020 data, there are 3,576,800 immigrants with temporary protection records in Türkiye, including 3,574,800 Syrians, 1000 Iraqis and 980 Iranians, and 330,000 asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2021). According to the data of the General Directorate of Migration Management, there are 26 state camps in 10 provinces on the Türkiye-Syria border. Immigrants living in the camps have the freedom to go to different cities in Türkiye and live in any city. According to April 2020 data, 98.2% of Syrians live in urban areas (Karan et al., 2020). Therefore, refugees in Türkiye have turned into “urban refugees” (Erdoğan, 2019). It can be said that Syrian immigrants are clustered in Istanbul and in the southern provinces of Türkiye close to the Syrian border, considering that 16% of Syrian immigrants in Türkiye live in Istanbul and 52% live in border provinces such as Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, and Kilis (Building Markets, 2021).

A study was conducted with 434 Syrian refugees in six refugee camps in Türkiye to determine the current status of their micro-enterprises (Kachkar, 2019); it has been determined that approximately 25% of the participants started their entrepreneurial activities in these camps and 80% wanted to become entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs mostly met the necessary financing source from their savings or from their relatives.

It has also been determined that more than half of those engaged in entrepreneurial activities have entrepreneurial experience.

The fact that immigrants prefer Istanbul, the mega-city of Türkiye, attracts entrepreneurs in terms of the economic vitality of this city and the opportunities it offers. However, choosing cities close to the border is an approach preferred by people fleeing violence in terms of security. Immigrants establish businesses and engage in economic activities where they live. While the Syrian origin capital company increased by 1–2 per month in 2011, Syria became the foreign country with the highest number of ventures in Türkiye as of February 2018, and this number has reached 100 companies per month (Deniz & Reyhanoğlu, 2018). Since 2011, Syrians have invested 334 million dollars in Türkiye (Building Markets, 2022). About 74% of Syrian-founded companies are micro-scale companies with 10 or less employees, 24% are small-scale companies with 10–50 employees and the remaining 2% are medium-sized companies with 50–250 employees, and the average income of these companies is 463,201 dollars (İNGEV et al., 2017). The distribution of Syrian immigrants in the provinces where they live in Türkiye and the population density and the visual of the businesses they have established are shown in Fig. 12.1 (Güven et al., 2018).

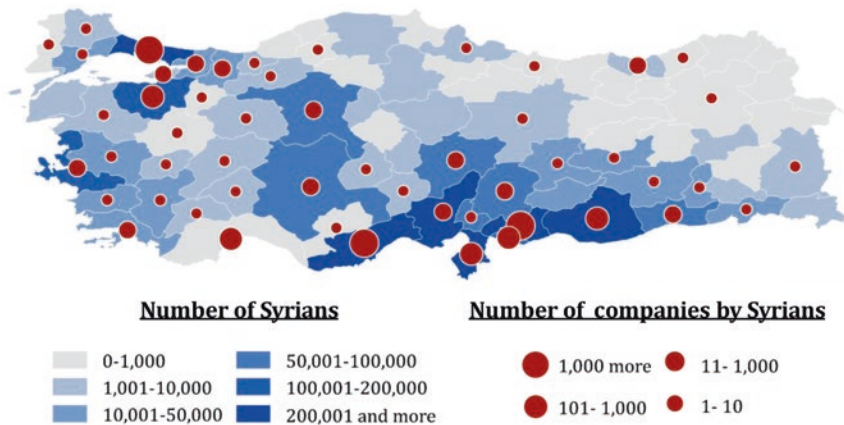


Fig. 12.1 Distribution of the Syrian population and the number of companies by Syrians. *Syrian companies here are companies that are owned by Syrians and/or companies that have a Syrian partner. (Source: Güven et al., 2018)

In addition, all projections for Syrians show that around 1–1.2 million Syrians in Türkiye have managed to stand on their own feet by working informally, reducing the need for financial support from the state, and contributing to the Turkish economy (Erdoğan, 2019). Syrian entrepreneurs employ an average of 9.4 people; most of these workers stated that they have worked informally in the past, and 55% of SMEs stated that they will provide additional employment (8.2 on average) opportunities in the next year (İNGEV et al., 2017).

The governorships can grant an indefinite residence permit to foreigners who have stayed in Türkiye for at least eight years without interruption or who meet the conditions determined by the Migration Policy Board, provided that the Ministry of Interior approves. According to the International Labor Law No. 6735, foreigners with an indefinite work permit benefit from the rights granted to Turkish citizens. The number of foreigners in Türkiye with a residence permit is 1,311,633 (PMM, 2021).

According to the research conducted by the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Türkiye (TEPAV) on 416 enterprises, 207 of which were Turks established and 209 of which were immigrants established, in eight provinces where immigrants live heavily (Güven et al., 2018); since 2011, Syrian entrepreneurs have established more than 10,000 companies across Türkiye. It has been stated that these companies employ an average of 7 immigrants, and these companies employ nearly 250,000 immigrants. According to the results of the research, 72% of Syrian entrepreneurs stated that they do not want to return to Syria after the war is over. It has been stated that this is due to the existence of a healthy business environment in Türkiye and the success of immigrant entrepreneurs in their commercial activities. In addition, it has been found that Syrian entrepreneurs are more export oriented than Turkish entrepreneurs. It has also been determined that since Syrian entrepreneurs do not dominate the market and bureaucratic procedures in Türkiye, they enter a partnership with Turks, and both parties benefit from each other's expertise. However, it has been observed that 75% of Syrian entrepreneurs owned company, and 11% of them had companies in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE before they came to Türkiye. Also, they benefited from the information on foreign market trends, legal and bureaucratic processes offered by the Chambers of Commerce in Türkiye and received

consultancy services on marketing and logistics. In other words, most of the immigrants engaged in entrepreneurial activities in Türkiye are experienced in entrepreneurship and have received information and consultancy services on the Turkish market. About 24% of the participants were engaged in entrepreneurial activity for the first time. Of these, 84% with fewer than 10 employees and 16% with 10–49 employees have established businesses. It has been observed that 57% of the entrepreneurs are university graduates. İNGEV, Human ACT, IPC, and SEF obtained similar results in joint research (2017). The report also stated that 39% of Syrian entrepreneurs plan to establish another business in Türkiye, and 76% plan to expand into Syria by keeping their businesses in Türkiye even after the war is over.

In a study conducted on 1123 SMEs established by Syrian entrepreneurs in Adana, Mersin, Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis, and Şanlıurfa in 2021 in Türkiye, it has been determined that 39% of SMEs established by immigrant entrepreneurs exported their goods. Of these exports 22.5% were made to Iraq, 21.4% to Syria, and 8.6% to Saudi Arabia. In this report, it has been stated that immigrant entrepreneurs operating in the provinces of the south of Türkiye are also looking for opportunities in the Middle East and Africa by using their social networks and taking advantage of the language, and the following information is given regarding their export capabilities and practices (Building Markets, 2021):

- Most of the exporting companies operate in the wholesale/retail and manufacturing sectors.
- The target markets are Iraq, Syria, and other Middle Eastern countries. These companies also exported to Kuwait, France, Canada, the Netherlands, Morocco, Austria, Bahrain, Denmark, Belgium, England, and Australia.
- Gaziantep, Hatay, Mersin, and Adana are important export centers. About 46% of SMEs in Gaziantep export.

Within the scope of the information given above, it is interpreted as immigrant entrepreneurs are active economic actors both in the domestic market and in exports and contribute to the welfare of the region. However, in the research conducted by the Center for Middle Eastern

Studies (ORSAM) in the border provinces of Türkiye (Orhan & Gündoğar, 2015), it was determined that Turks who lost their jobs believed that the reason for losing their job was “Syrians” at rates varying between 40% and 100%. It can be expected that this thought may lead to racist behavior. As a matter of fact, in some districts of Hatay, immigrant entrepreneurs stated that they were exposed to such behavior (Karan et al., 2020).

A study conducted by the Durable Solutions Platform (DSP) and the Asylum and Migration Research Center (IGAM) (2019) revealed that immigrants are hesitant to expand their businesses due to the lack of any assurance about their future stay in Türkiye. Most respondents openly expressed their doubts about expanding or registering their businesses and investing time and money, due to the uncertainty about whether it would be possible for them to stay in Türkiye legally in the long term (DSP and IGAM, 2019).

4 Commercial Activities of Migrant Entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay

According to the data of the Gaziantep and Hatay Chambers of Commerce, as of 2021, there are foreign entrepreneurs from 48 different countries in Gaziantep and 32 different countries in Hatay. There are 2972 foreign entrepreneurs operating, including 1936 in Gaziantep and 1036 in Hatay. In these cities, ten or more foreign entrepreneurs from Syria, Iraq, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Afghanistan, and Iran operate, respectively. The fact is that Gaziantep and Hatay are on the Syrian border and very close to Iraq, and their historical, cultural, and economic ties increase the number of entrepreneurs from these countries and their cross-border activities. However, the size, industry, and trade of these cities and their capacity to create more opportunities than other cities attract Syrians. These features of Gaziantep and Hatay make it easier for Syrians to adapt to the cities. As a matter of fact, in the records of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, a significant increase is observed in the number of businesses opened by immigrants in these

Table 12.1 Number of Syrian and Iraqi migrant entrepreneurs operating in Gaziantep and Hatay

Nationality	Gaziantep	Hatay	Total
Iraq	88	15	103
Syria	1742	930	2672
Total	1830	945	2775

cities after 2016. Considering that the first migration movement from Syria occurred in 2011, the process can be considered the learning and adaptation phase until 2016, and the phase of taking advantage of opportunities and engaging in entrepreneurial activities in 2016 and beyond. After these explanations, the number of immigrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay is presented in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1 shows that there are more immigrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep, and the number of Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs is higher than Iraqi immigrant entrepreneurs. There are expressions (import, export, domestic and foreign trade, etc.) that they conduct foreign trade in the names of 952 companies, there are expressions (production, manufacturing, etc.) that they make production in the names of 68 companies, and there are expressions (logistics, transportation, cargo, etc.) that they conduct logistics activities in the names of 65 companies in Gaziantep. In Hatay, there are expressions that they conduct activities related to foreign trade in 644 company names, logistics in 57 company names, and production in 25 company names.

NACE codes gather all economic activities under 21 main headings. More detailed groupings are available under each heading. More detailed information and explanations about the NACE codes can be obtained from the "<https://nacev2.com>" address. Table 12.2 shows the fields of activity of Syrian and Iraqi immigrant entrepreneurs operating in Gaziantep and Hatay according to the main headings of NACE codes.

Table 12.2 shows that at least two or more immigrant entrepreneurs operate under 17 main headings. No entrepreneurs operate under four main headings. Most immigrant entrepreneurs, such as 53.62%, operate in the "G (Wholesale and Retail Trade)" group. One-fourth of immigrant entrepreneurs (25.90%) are in the "C-Manufacturing" group. About 4.90% of the immigrant entrepreneurs operate in the

Table 12.2 Activities of migrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay according to NACE codes

	Gaziantep		Hatay		Total
	Syria	Iraq	Syria	Iraq	
A- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	6	0	26	0	32
B- Mining and Quarrying	2	0	0	0	2
C- Manufacturing	595	25	97	2	719
D- Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	0	1	1	0	2
E- Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	9	0	1	0	10
F- Construction	49	3	83	1	136
G- Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	825	52	603	8	1488
H- Transportation and Storage	18	3	20	2	43
I- Accommodation and Food Service Activities	29	1	20	0	50
J- Information and Communication	24	0	8	0	32
K- Financial and Insurance Activities	16	0	1	0	17
L- Real Estate Activities	6	0	17	0	23
M- Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	112	0	9	0	121
N- Administrative and Support Service Activities	13	3	25	1	42
O- Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	0	0	0	0	0
P- Education	24	0	13	0	37
Q- Human Health and Social Work Activities	4	0	1	0	5
R- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	10	0	5	1	16
S- Other Service Activities	0	0	0	0	0
T- Activities of Households as Employers; Undifferentiated Goods- and Services-Producing Activities of Households for Own Use	0	0	0	0	0
U- Activities of Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies	0	0	0	0	0

“F-Construction” group and 4.36% in the “M-Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities” group. Other prominent NACE groups are “I-Accommodation and Food Service Activities” and “H-Transportation and Storage” groups.

The percentages of immigrant entrepreneurs according to the first breakdown codes of NACE, in which they mostly operate, are shown in Table 12.3.

Table 12.3 Ratios of migrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay to NACE code sub-breakthrough

NACE code	Group name	Percentage (%)
C-Manufacturing		
10	Manufacture of food products	4.54
13	Manufacture of textiles	2.38
14	Manufacture of wearing apparel	3.46
15	Manufacture of leather and related products	5.08
20	Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products	1.26
22	Manufacture of rubber and plastic products	2.23
25	Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	1.19
28	Manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c.	1.55
F-Construction		
41	Construction of buildings	3.90
43	Specialized construction activities	1.01
G-Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles		
45	Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	2.49
46	Wholesale trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	39.93
47	Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.21
H- Transportation and Storage		
49	Land transport and transport via pipelines	1.15
I- Accommodation and Food Service Activities		
56	Food and beverage service activities	1.77
M- Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities		
70	Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities	2.81
P- Education		
85	Education	1.33

Immigrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep and Hatay are engaged in wholesale and retail trade at a rate of 50%. Therefore, immigrant entrepreneurs mostly operate in marketing-based businesses rather than manufacturing and similar fields of expertise. The manufacturing activities of immigrant entrepreneurs in Gaziantep mostly concentrate on leather, food, textiles, and wearing apparel. Especially, Gaziantep is already an important industrial city in leather, textile, and wear apparel manufacturing. It is thought that immigrant entrepreneurs work in these sectors and

gain experience and then establish their own ventures. In Hatay, manufacturing activities focus on food. It is thought that the food activities of immigrant entrepreneurs in both Gaziantep and Hatay focus on the production of food belonging to their own cultures. Immigrant entrepreneurs see opportunities in education in these two cities, which host a significant number of immigrants and conduct entrepreneurial activities. Only Syrian immigrant entrepreneurs operate in the field of education. Another important area is transportation and storage. The location of the cities on the border increases the trade and logistics needs between the two countries. In the field of transportation, there are mostly entrepreneurs related to road transport, and the number of entrepreneurs in Hatay is higher than that in Gaziantep.

Syrians choose Gaziantep because Gaziantep's historical ties with Syria and Aleppo are an important factor (Soyudođan, 2020). In addition, the economic, human, and social capital of the immigrants have also been decisive in the selection of the destination to migrate. These types of capital have facilitated them in terms of getting a place in the sector. There are many Syrians who have activated this capital. A migrant entrepreneur in Gaziantep explained the reason for choosing Gaziantep as follows (İncetahtacı, 2020):

We were producing plastic in our factory, and we were exporting them to Türkiye. We had customers in Bursa and Gaziantep. We were exported to other parts of the world, especially to Saudi Arabia. I have a brother. He studied electrical engineering and graduated. He also works with me. My brother is in charge of electricity, and I am in charge of machinery in technical areas. My father also works with us. All family members work in the same field. My uncle also works in the same sector in Saudi Arabia. When we decided to leave Syria in 2013, Gaziantep was the right choice for us. Our situation in Syria was excellent. We were earning well. We lost our factory in Syria in the war, and we lost a lot financially. But we still brought good capital from Syria. When we left Syria, we needed to start a business. At first, I wanted to start commercial business. I chose Türkiye because we have commercial connections and relations for 13 years. In addition, I came to Gaziantep because Gaziantep is an important industrial city and there is a good potential for the sector in which we operate.

In another study conducted in Gaziantep, it was determined that local businesses prefer to cooperate with businesses established by immigrants instead of employing immigrants, and there is a Syria Desk in Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce (UNDP, 2019). In addition, there is the “Syrian Businesspersons and Entrepreneurs Association” (SIAD) founded by Syrian businesspersons in Gaziantep, and this is the only association established by Syrian businesspersons in Türkiye. The purpose of the association is stated on the official LinkedIn page of SIAD as follows (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/siadsyrianentrepreneurs/about/>):

SIAD is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works in unity and solidarity, consists of Syrian businesspersons and entrepreneurs, and engages in trade, industry, information, and professional activities. SIAD is an association that is away from politics, has a legal personality and works independently financially and administratively and established to support and help Syrian businesspersons. SIAD is an international association operating in different countries, both in Türkiye and abroad. In recent days, the number of members has reached 220 companies and institutions. The mission of the association is to provide a family atmosphere and serve its members with a pioneering management approach. Simultaneously, it is to provide sustainable competitive power to Syrian businesspersons.

It is understood from this statement that SIAD will support not only Syrian businesspersons and entrepreneurs in Gaziantep, but also Syrian entrepreneurs in different cities in Türkiye. As a matter of fact, in 2018, Şanlıurfa Governorship was announced that ten SIAD member investors would invest 80 million Turkish Liras in seven different sectors (three shoe manufacturing, one construction materials, one bag production, one knitwear production, two plastic packaging, one textile, and one recycling) in Şanlıurfa Organized Industrial Zone and that 1540 people would be employed with this investment (Şanlıurfa Governorship, 2018).

SIAD President Mahmut Osman, who was invited as a special guest to the meeting on the “Economic Policy of Migration” held by the Turkish Social Economic and Political Research Foundation (TÜSES) in 2021, said that Syrian businesspersons mostly operate in the food,

tourism, construction, and textile sectors in Türkiye. He stated that while some of the Syrian businesspersons export their products, many of them mostly operate in the food sector for Syrians in Türkiye (Erdem, 2021). In this meeting, Mahmut Osman stated that, contrary to what is believed, there is no privilege given to any immigrant who set up business. The concepts of businessperson and refugees are confused with each other; as businesspersons, they could not find qualified trained personnel in Türkiye. There is enough work for everyone who wants to work; therefore no one takes another person's job from them. Syrian immigrants no longer want to work in short-term and casual jobs, as they did in the first days of their arrival. They want to work in stable and insured jobs, and they are justified in their demands. In addition to these, Mahmut Osman also stated that Turkish and Syrian businesspersons are seriously integrated, do business with each other, and help each other. Syrians brought not only their own capital to Türkiye, but also a sizeable amount of capital from the people they knew, made investments, and continue to do so.

In an interview with some of the members of SIAD by a regional newspaper, Syrian businesspersons explained their difficulties and plans for the future (Karabıyık, 2019). In this interview, the businesspersons stated that the work permit was given too late and that the banks gave them trouble during money transfers. In addition, SIAD members stated that they want to establish a connection between Arab countries and Türkiye and to produce joint projects with Turkish businesspersons. SIAD expects the following from the Republic of Türkiye (Özipek, 2018):

1. An institution related to Syrian economic entrepreneurs should be established.
2. Bureaucratic barriers should be removed, and economic movement and fluidity should be facilitated.
3. Labor laws should be changed to solve the employment problems of the Syrians.
4. Bank and credit transactions should be facilitated.
5. The relevant legislation should be translated into Arabic.
6. There should be cooperation in the economic field for reconstructing Syria in the future.

7. Industrial and commercial complexes that provide more opportunities and advantages for Syrian investors' projects should be established.
8. Syrian economic communities should be represented in Chambers of Commerce.

These expectations are an expression of the difficulties experienced by Syrian entrepreneurs. However, they consider themselves in a separate category, and they seem to have an understanding that serves themselves rather than cooperating with Turkish businesspersons.

In a study on the experiences of immigrants in the field of entrepreneurship in different districts of Hatay and their relational positions that differ according to the place, it was found that there are different structures even in different neighborhoods of the same district. Therefore, it has been concluded that no generalization can be made about immigrant entrepreneurship and that the place should be considered in immigrant entrepreneurship (Karan et al., 2020). In the research, it was determined that there are no Syrian entrepreneurs in the two districts where Alevis are the majority due to the prejudice of Alevis toward Sunni immigrants. In one district, it has been determined that there are more Syrian immigrants than Turkish citizens since the historical trade and kinship relations with Syria are higher than in other districts. In addition, in the research, immigrants stated that they have never encountered racism in one district of Hatay, whereas immigrants stated that they encountered racist discourse and behavior in another district. In this study, it was determined that immigrant entrepreneurs had difficulties obtaining licenses and travel permits, had high rents, and had some other problems, such as language problems.

5 Conclusion

People may immigrate from their countries for reasons such as war, natural disaster, or family reunification. It is quite normal for the citizens of the target countries, both socially, culturally, and economically, to have prejudices and hesitations about immigrants. However, when evaluating immigrants, it is necessary to stay away from prejudices and consider that

they have diversity with different socio-cultural, socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and ideologies. Immigrants also have to work and earn money to survive. This approach should be evaluated as their effort to hold on to the target country and contribute to it. Immigrants who are poor or have a low income in their home country often work in seasonal agricultural work, low-skilled jobs in textiles, manufacturing, and construction in the target country (ILO, 2016). Immigrants who observe the conditions of the target country, see the opportunities, and want to work in better conditions are engaged in entrepreneurial activities. The participation of approximately 37,000 Syrians in the vocational learning training of the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, generally for the lower socio-economic segments, should be considered the efforts of these people to integrate with the city, to be successful, and to hold on (Gültekin, 2020). It is interpreted as immigrant entrepreneurs who are in the middle and upper socio-economic segments of the country, they migrated to try to integrate with the business world and to develop relations with the businesspersons of the target country.

Research shows that immigrant entrepreneurs contribute to the economy of the target country in subjects such as employment, export, and innovation. As a matter in fact, the President of SIAD especially emphasizes this situation in his interviews and states that they bring not only their own capital but also the capital of people they are affiliated with in other countries. Immigrant entrepreneurs are supported by people of their own ethnic origin. SIAD is clearly stated it by the founding purpose. Although SIAD was founded in Gaziantep, it also supports Syrian entrepreneurs in other cities in Türkiye. Immigrant entrepreneurs also establish partnerships with the citizens of the target country who want to export. Migrant entrepreneurs' recognition of their own country's market, their social ties, and their command of the language have a great impact on this. The fact that Syrian immigrants have a command of English besides their own language helped them overcome the Turkish language barrier and even turn this situation into an advantage. Therefore, a win-win relationship was created by combining the strengths of business owners in the target country and immigrant entrepreneurs. It has been observed that these findings are also valid for immigrants in Türkiye. In the interviews with SIAD board members, the desire to cooperate with

Turkish businesspersons was emphasized. In this context, it is important to regulate the laws of the target country, to provide the support of society, and to offer opportunities related to entrepreneurship for immigrants to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the target country and facilitate cooperation.

Immigrant entrepreneurs with low socio-economic status are seen as cheap labor by the employers of the target country and are employed without security until they learn the conditions of the target country and identify market opportunities. This situation causes both the target country's citizens to lose their jobs and display a racist approach toward immigrants, as well as some negativities arising from the informal economy. Immigrants are naturally not satisfied with working under these conditions. They want to work in long-term and stable jobs. Some the immigrants are engaged in entrepreneurial activities because they do not want to work under these conditions. However, immigrants with a medium and high socio-economic level make more cooperative initiatives and benefit from their human and social capital. However, immigrant entrepreneurs generally have difficulty accessing financial resources. This difficulty forces them to seek resources from their own family, friends, and social ties. It will add value to the target country if these problems of immigrants are eliminated and opportunities are offered to them to engage in entrepreneurial activities. The fact that immigrant entrepreneurs provide employment to both immigrants and citizens of the target country will make the citizens of the target country look at immigrants with sympathy, and immigrants will more easily adapt to the society. Mutual trust will increase if immigrants learn the language of the target country, obey the rules of society, and are sensitive to the delicate issues of society.

The fact that Immigrant entrepreneurship offers advantages such as creating value for people who migrate from their country for various reasons and for the target country, being an intermediary between the target country, and the source country, facilitating integration, talent transfer, and innovation.. Therefore, it would be beneficial for NGOs to bring together the relevant units of the state and businesses in the private sector and to play a facilitating role and to exchange ideas about the expectations of the parties. As a matter of fact, the craft and

vocational training courses in Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality have attracted considerable attention. Language courses and other training given in Public Education Centers affiliated to Provincial Directorates of National Education contribute to the effective use of capital. In particular, motivating immigrants to engage in entrepreneurial activities; providing training on topics such as entrepreneurship and the culture of the society and working life; informing and supporting country-specific issues such as law, marketing, finance, and accounting in the process of establishing a business; re-evaluating the factors that hinder entrepreneurship; and eliminating these obstacles would benefit both the immigrants and the destination country.

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