



<https://doi.org/10.25115/riem.v13i2.9124>

ISSN: 2173-1950

## **Vulnerable refugee groups in Istanbul's textile industry: Syrian women and minors<sup>1</sup>**

Basem Mahmud<sup>2</sup>, Rashin Lamouchi<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** This research investigates the experience of vulnerable refugee workers in the clothing industry in Istanbul. We conducted qualitative research based on 28 interviews with Syrian women, minors, and youth adults who began working in this industry as minors. The result demonstrates that they work in the lowest position in the organizational structures, usually as errand-boys (especially minors), and finishers (especially women) in the final stage of production. We also found that, Women prefer working in small workshops near home, because it offers them more flexibility and allows them to combine work with home caring duties. However, the owners of these workshops often exploit their insecurity and need for more flexibility by drastically reducing their salaries under the guise of a compromise. This research also demonstrates the significance of spaces of encounters between employer-employee outside of the power relationships to better understand the experience of these workers. Furthermore, it appeared that physical health seems to occupy a central position in the discourses of women refugees about their well-being. However, our research also demonstrates the need to consider minors' claims of belonging as an urgent issue for their subjective wellbeing and integration. These minors are aware of their parents' reliance on their income, but also of their parents' feelings of guilt for allowing them to work

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on research funded by the European Union's Horizon, 2020 research and innovation program, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, under Grant 841144 (Project FMGESI).

<sup>2</sup> Ph.D. Sociology. A Marie Skłodowska Curie fellow, University of Granada, Spain. [ma7basem@gmail.com](mailto:ma7basem@gmail.com).

<sup>3</sup> M.A. Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, BC, Canada. [rashinlamouchi@gmail.com](mailto:rashinlamouchi@gmail.com).

in such conditions. Therefore, they avoid expressing or revealing their daily suffering at work to their families and ultimately remain alone while facing dismal working conditions.

**Keywords:** emotions, subjective well-being, industrial relocation, temporary protection, child labour.

## **Grupos Vulnerables de Refugiados en la Industria Textil de Estambul: Mujeres y Menores Sirios**

**Resumen:** Esta investigación estudia la experiencia de los trabajadores refugiados vulnerables en la industria textil de Estambul. Realizamos una investigación cualitativa basada en 28 entrevistas con mujeres, menores y adultos jóvenes sirios (estos últimos comenzaron a trabajar en esta industria cuando eran menores). Los resultados demuestran que trabajan en los puestos más bajos de las estructuras organizativas, normalmente como recaderos (sobre todo los menores) y acabadores (sobre todo mujeres) en la etapa final de producción. También encontramos que las mujeres prefieren trabajar en pequeños talleres cerca de casa, porque les ofrece más flexibilidad y les permite combinar el trabajo con las tareas del hogar. Sin embargo, los propietarios de estos talleres a menudo explotan su inseguridad y necesidad de mayor flexibilidad, reduciendo drásticamente sus salarios bajo la apariencia de un compromiso. Esta investigación también recalca la importancia de los espacios de encuentro (entre jefe y empleado) fuera de las relaciones de poder, para comprender mejor la experiencia de estos trabajadores. Además, la salud física parece ocupar una posición central en los discursos de las mujeres refugiadas sobre su bienestar subjetivo. Sin embargo, nuestra investigación también manifiesta la necesidad de considerar las reivindicaciones de pertenencia de los menores como un tema urgente para su bienestar subjetivo e integración. Estos menores son conscientes de la dependencia de sus padres, de sus ingresos. Pero también del sentimiento de culpa de sus padres por permitirles trabajar en tales condiciones. Por lo tanto, evitan expresar su sufrimiento diario en el trabajo a sus familias y, en última instancia, se quedan solos frente a las pésimas condiciones laborales.

**Palabras clave:** emociones, bienestar subjetivo, deslocalización industrial, protección temporal, trabajo infantil.

## **1. Introduction**

In 2022, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced the forced displacement of more than 100 million people worldwide. According to UNHCR's data, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees, of which 3,7 million are Syrians with temporary protection (HRW, 2022). Although Turkey is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, it does not grant official refugee status. It grants three other statuses: conditional, subsidiary, and temporary protection. Syrians are granted temporary status, described as “a precarious status that makes them increasingly vulnerable to insecurity, destitution, and exploitation (...) (which) places Syrian refugees in unsafe situations, especially in terms of limited access to legal employment, and unstable living conditions given their inability to access full citizenship and long-term residency.” (Rygiel et al., 2016, p. 318).

This Turkish migration regime works in parallel with the interest of international companies in search of more favorable conditions of production, (i.e. increased and accelerated production at lower costs) (cf. Nimer & Rottmann, 2022, p. 124). Since the 1980's, many Western companies have relocated to developing countries. In addition to advances in technology and the reduced cost of transportation, inequality and disparities in levels of development among the countries have enabled these companies to operate on a transnational level. Industrial relocation has of course had an effect on migration movements; workers who are searching for better opportunities move to the new locations of industry with the expectation of finding better jobs. Istanbul is the primary destination for those refugees in Turkey seeking new opportunities to improve the conditions of their lives; in April 2016, the number of registered Syrians in Istanbul was 394,556; in April 2017, this number rose to 479,555, and in April 2022, it reached 542,045 (Refugees Association, 2022). On the other hand, Turkey is among the countries which compete to attract more foreign investment and to situate their national economy globally, providing “legal security to investment, guaranteeing profits without social-labor conflicts” (Soriano Miras, 2019, p. 234). This situation has turned Syrian refugees into informal workers who are not only a cheap and flexible workforce lacking any kind of legal protection. This is especially true in the case of women and minors who make up almost 70 % of all Syrian refugees (Refugees Association, 2022).

The impact of this process of industrial relocation on workers' lives has been analyzed by many researchers (Benería & Santiago, 2001; See Chand, 2012). Some have analyzed this impact by focusing on the lives of migrant workers who found themselves in a precarious situation when "frustrated expectations re-emerge, and therefore external migration appears as a way out" (Soriano Miras, 2019, p. 235). But what about those refugees who find themselves in such a situation where returning home is not an option (as it would put them in grave and immediate danger) and their capacity to move inside or outside of the country is greatly restricted? How does this situation influence their everyday lives, expectations, and plans? Here, I am referring to what Kunz calls the *midway-to-nowhere* scenario (Kunz, 1973, p. 133), in which the asylum seeker has found temporary shelter but becomes the subject of various demoralizing effects which grow worse over time. Therefore, asylum seekers face three crucial possible decisions; return home, stay in the first asylum country, or seek out new land. Staying means finding a job and becoming a refugee worker in the labour market, usually informal (Hammad, 2017), or living out their lives in a camp: More than 98 percent of Syrian refugees in Turkey live in urban and rural areas, and the rest are in Temporary Accommodation Centres (Refugees Association, 2022). Therefore, most of them end up in Turkey's informal economy under very difficult living conditions.

Refugees are usually studied as a subcategory of migrants, which does not allow the researcher to consider their unique situation. When a distinction is made between refugees and economic migrants, the former are treated as traumatized or damaged people and therefore as people in need of help (Mahmud, 2021). This approach enhances the negative perception of them as exploiters of the social security system who negatively affect the economy of the host country. Furthermore, little research has explored the situation of vulnerable groups of refugees such as those with disabilities, women, and minors (see Rohwerder, 2018). The present study focuses on the experience of Syrian refugee women and minor workers in the clothing industry in Istanbul. Refugee workers with a disability were not included in this research due to the difficulty of accessing them in the textile industry. We chose the textile industry because it is one of the most competitive terrains in the global economy. Turkey ranks eighth in the world in textile/garment manufacturing and export, and third among suppliers to Europe (Alkaya & Demirer, 2014), and Istanbul is an attractive place for international clothing firms (Tokatli et al., 2011).

## 2. Background and state of the art

The textile sector in Turkey depends largely on informal work, which is estimated to be around 50% of the total employment in this sector (Savasan & Schneider, 2006, p. 5). This type of employment is characterized by a lack of formal contracts and any kind of social protection. Workers lack representation due to their inability to organize and their voices remain hidden. All of this leads to their exclusion or limits their access to public infrastructures and benefits (Anti-Slavery International, 2006, p. 3). However, the differences between locals and refugee workers in the informal economy can be explained by what Suzan Ilcan, Kim Rygiel, and Feyzi Baban (2018) call the *ambiguous architecture of precarity*: precarity of status, the precarity of space or access to services, and the precarity of movement (since refugees are deprived of their rights to mobility). Under these circumstances, refugees end up receiving lower wages than locals who perform the same task, and take jobs that local workers would neither seek nor accept. Furthermore, they lack the opportunity to improve their situation; a contract with a refugee has many restrictions and requires paperwork that many employers either do not want or do not know how to complete (see Kayaoglu, 2020). Without protections, they become a cheap, reserve “army” without hope in the place where they live and work.

Many researchers (Fehr & Rijken, 2022, p. 9; Yalçın, 2016, p. 93) found that among Istanbul’s labor sectors, the textile industry has the highest concentration of refugee child labor. Child labor is defined as “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development” (International labour organization [ILO], n.d.b). As such, not all work done by a child is classified as child labour. Despite the Turkish government's effort to fight child labor — a long-standing problem in Turkey — its prevalence remains alarming, especially with the arrival of Syrian refugees. The official number of children engaged in economic activities is 720,000 children (5-18 years old): 70.6% of them are male and 29.4% are female (ILO, n.d.a). However, even this number does not include refugee children who are intensively engaged in the informal Turkish market.

More than 1,8 million Syrian children arrived in this country after 2011, and more than half of the Syrian refugees currently in Turkey are under the age of 18. There is no clear information about how many of these are engaged in economic activity, however, Fehr and Rijken (2022) suggest very high numbers; “41 percent of the Syrian respondents have

indicated knowledge of child labor in Turkey, either within their own household (26 percent) or outside their household (15 percent)". The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2022, p. 3) estimates that over 400,000 school-aged refugee children do not receive education and describe them as one of the most vulnerable groups in Turkey. Although Turkey prohibits child labour under the age of 15, there are no structured mechanisms for the implementation of the law (Yalçın, 2016).<sup>4</sup> There are three main reasons for child labour in general; family poverty, poor employment conditions and opportunity for adults, and a problem with school attendance (Yalçın, 2016). These reasons become more critical in the situation of forced migrants, since they face greater challenges in establishing their new life in the new county. Although Turkish legislation guarantees the right to "basic education" for those with foreign nationality, Syrian refugees have difficulties enrolling their children in schools. This is not only due to the economic situation, but also to language barriers, and their lack of information about formal procedures (Keskin, 2021, p. 12; Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2019, p. 59). Once children refugees are in a workplace, they perform the same tasks as adults under similarly difficult employment conditions (Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2019, p. 56). The main difference is that they are subjected to worse treatment, including verbal or sometimes physical violence. Furthermore, they are paid less than adults and in some cases, they are not paid at all (cf. Lordoğlu & Aslan, 2019, p. 61; Yalçın, 2016).

The participation of Syrian women in the labour workforce as well as in the textile industry, in general, is low (Kayaoglu, 2019, p. 4).<sup>5</sup> However, research indicates that

"while female Turkish workers, on average, earn less than their male colleagues, they are better off compared to Syrian men, followed by Syrian women, which are at the bottom of the wage scale" (Clean Clothes Campaign Turkey, 2019, p. 2). Another study on Syrian refugee workers in Turkey found that "precarious organizational practices translate national particularities into individual feelings of exclusion and exploitation of refugees, especially female refugees." (Knappert et al., 2018, p. 76).

---

<sup>4</sup> The Labor Code has two exceptions: the first is the case of those who have turned 14 and completed their primary education. The second applies to those who have not yet turned 14. The first group can engage in work that does not harm their physical, mental, social, and moral development and does not negatively affect those who want to continue their education. The second group can engage in art, culture, and advertising work which does not hamper their development (Ozgun & Gungordu, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Even in their home country (Syria), women's participation in the labour market is low: only 11.2 per cent of Syrian women aged 15-65 work, for men the percentage is 71.0 per cent (Pinedo Caro, 2020, p. 6).

Furthermore, they suffer from more challenges related to gender-based violence and stereotypes that negatively influence their participation in the labour market (Dogutas, 2019, p. 117; Pelé, 2021; Wringe et al., 2019, p. 149). Research (International Youth Foundation [IYF], 2018) on Syrian youth in Istanbul found that Syrian women are 14,4% less likely to be employed (even after considering other variables such as age, education, and Turkish language skills), and concludes that “one cannot rule out the possibility that the labor market discrimination may be more severe for women than it is for men” (IYF, 2018, p. 27). This violence and discrimination is not restricted to outside of the workplace, but permeates it. In her research on woman garment workers in Istanbul, Basak Can (2017) found that they are referred to in highly sexualized terms and kinship idioms, instead of terms appropriate for impersonal working relationships, while addressing their roles at the workplace. Can explains that “bosses or foremen create moments and encounters in which they say to women workers that they expect them to be loyal to the workshop, as to a family. These encounters turn out to be an effective way of keeping wages low and workers loyal and obedient.” (Can, 2017, p. 50). Moreover, most of them are alone with no social network or with the responsibility of family care, making their participation in economic activities more difficult and requiring additional efforts and burdens. In other words women refugee workers face the same challenges as all women workers, but as women refugees their employment conditions are more comparable to those of minors than to adult male refugees.

As a whole, researchers agree on the uniquely difficult employment conditions of minor and refugee women in the textile industry. With some exceptions, research tends to treat them as part of bigger groups: migrants, refugees, or workers. Furthermore, little qualitative research has been done to understand their experience specifically as a vulnerable refugee group in the informal labor market in Turkey (cf. Dogutas, 2019, p. 116). The Clean Clothes Campaign report argues (2019, p. 19) “Our fieldwork finds strong evidence that positive change for Syrian garment workers will depend on a variety of targeted interventions at various scales. In order to be successful, interventions should be tailored to the needs of different groups of refugee workers, taking into account the unique challenges they face regarding their age, gender, legal status, level of education and future aspirations.” On this basis, we argue that the present qualitative study exploring the experiences of Syrian refugee female and minor workers in the textile industry in Turkey will help to better understand their situation, expectations, and needs. These issues are essential considerations for any future programs for the integration of refugees into Turkish society.



### **3. Methodology**

How do vulnerable refugees (women and minors) experience working in the clothing industry in Istanbul? To answer this question, interpretative research was developed within the framework of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions program integrated into the CON&PRO research line at the University of Granada and the research group Social Problems in Andalucía and the Migration Research Center at Koç University in Istanbul. The in-depth interview was chosen as an instrument for data production because it allows for in-depth exploration of the particular issues that concern this study. These interviews were conducted in Arabic (the mother language of most of the interviewees). However, in some cases, it was necessary to receive help with translation. In the cases of two deaf and speech-impaired women workers, relatives served as translators. Our sample included Syrian women and minor refugee workers who live in Istanbul and work in a clothing-factory. We interviewed 28 persons: 14 adult women, 6 minors (less than 18),<sup>6</sup> and 8 youth adults between 18-22 who began working in this industry in Istanbul as a minor. Responses were documented by recording the interview. The face-to-face interview allowed for the collection of rich information based on the participants' perspectives toward their everyday lives, their working conditions, their relationships inside and outside of the workplace...etc. Questions were pre-formulated and the answers were open-ended, and questions were modified as the research progressed. The duration of each interview also varied. Initial interviews lasted about 2 hours, however, using the constant comparative method and theoretical sampling (Strategies proper to the articulation of the grounded theory) (see Charmaz, 2006), both the duration and the questions asked were changed depending on the need for saturating the theoretical categories that were constructed from the data analysis (carried out simultaneously with the data collection). This process resulted in the construction of four main categories: (1) the structure of the clothing industry in Istanbul, (2) the specific employment conditions of the vulnerable groups studied, (3) the spaces of encounters, outside of employer-employee power relationship, (4) Consequences for their subjective well-being, emotions, and emotional management.

To guarantee quality; (1) all interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed carefully using the constant comparative method. (2) Data analysis was realized simultaneously with

---

<sup>6</sup> When we asked the parents to sign the consent form for interviewing their minor, we told them that they can choose to be present during the interview or not. In total, in half (3) of the interviews with minors one family members was present.

data collection, as required by the theoretical sampling. (3) Memos were written after each interview and during data analysis. Once the main categories were formed, we studied the literature more carefully, allowing the data to indicate how and where to read intensively by continually comparing the data with the literature.

#### **4. Istanbul clothing industry and the employment conditions of women and minors: similarities and differences**

Most clothing factories in Istanbul are small and medium in size. This structure helps companies resolve the tension between cheap production of a quality satisfying to customers on the one hand and improving their image as companies that respects workers' rights on the other. Usually, companies contract a large factory to fulfill an order to be delivered within a certain period. This factory in turn subcontracts medium or small factories inside or outside Istanbul. It is not difficult for large companies to estimate the time required to fulfill a particular demand. It is a simple calculation of the number of available workers and machines. Making no further considerations, these companies avoid accountability since large factories tend to follow the basic legal guidelines; contracts for workers and shifts of 9-10 hours per day. ). That is, they are minimally "law-abiding" because what happens in the subcontracted factories or workshops is something different entirely. In these small and medium-sized workshops, they work 11-12 hours or more every day of the standard workweek; 7-8 hours on Saturday; Sunday is a holiday except when additional work is needed (i.e there are no contracts, and long working hours a day).<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, as a general rule, workers are prohibited from talking to each other during work, listening to music with headphones, or using a mobile phone. They have a 15-minute break for breakfast, one hour for lunch, and another 15 minutes around 4 p.m. In most cases, they bring their lunch with them or they buy it. There is also continuous monitoring, for which large factories use cameras. Disobedience of any of these rules results in reprimand, as Reem explains:

“Nothing is allowed. Movement. Talking to someone who works next to you should not happen. Like a student’s exam at the university, there is no difference between them... If the boss calls you, you have to listen to him. If you did not hear him, he will reprimand

---

<sup>7</sup> For this reason, Clean Clothes, a global network of over 235 organisations operating in over 45 countries, who work to ensure the fundamental rights of workers states that “Brands and retailers must publicly disclose all the factories used to produce their goods, from the textile production to the finishing shops, and ensure that they are not promoting the exploitation of vulnerable workers through their buying practices” (Clean Clothes Campaign, 2016).

you and ask you to leave! You become a mop (a Syrian expression of humiliation). Oh, sometimes someone gets tired, his mind stops for 5 seconds, and they say: 'why did you stop?' So the workers start to work faster and faster, this is what happens to us!" (Female, 28 years old, in the final stage of production).

These rules are apply to all workers, but women and minor refugees earn 0.60-0.70 euros per hour (140-170 euros per month) — much less than male refugee workers. In the case of some minors, monthly wages do not exceed 50 euros due to monetary penalties imposed by employers for trivial reasons. In the case of women, workshop owners force them to accept lower wages in exchange for working fewer hours or from home in order to combine work with home-caring duties.

Reem's words depict a challenging and restrictive work environment in the textile industry in Istanbul, particularly for female workers. She describes a highly controlled atmosphere where any form of movement or communication among workers is restricted, highlighting a lack of autonomy and personal freedom. The mention of the boss's authority underscores a hierarchical structure, emphasizing the need for obedience. The use of the term "mop" implies a sense of humiliation and dehumanization among workers. The pressure intensifies as workers are expected to maintain a constant and rapid pace, potentially leading to physical and mental strain, particularly for women in the final stage of production. In summary, these words portray a demanding work environment that negatively impacts the well-being and dignity of workers, especially women. Indeed, In the discourse of these vulnerable groups (women, minors, and young adults who began working as minor), many incidents indicate that women and minors are treated as weak, unable to defend themselves and therefore vulnerable to various attacks. For example, stories of non-payment of what is owed are common (as Meriam explains).

"I got to the point that the amount (of money owed me) had grown and I wanted to pay my rent. My husband started screaming at me, saying 'you work, where is the money?' I asked my manager to give me my money and again he said that he does not have the money. He yelled at me in an ugly way, and he kicked me out. He said obscene words to me. After a while, I sent people to him to claim my right, he threatened me, he told me 'I don't have anything, and if you go away and send someone to me, I don't have money for you.'" (Female, 39 years old, in the final stage of production).

This poignant quote captures the struggling with delayed wages, Meriam faced financial pressure, leading to conflict within her family. When she sought her rightful payment from the manager, her plea was met with aggression, obscene language, and an expulsion from the workplace. The manager's refusal to provide the owed money and subsequent threats when approached through intermediaries expose a troubling power dynamic and a hostile environment for workers attempting to assert their rights. This narrative underscores the economic vulnerability and mistreatment faced by female employees in the textile industry, shedding light on the broader challenges within the workplace.

Added to this is the ease with which minors are reprimanded (and sometimes with physical violence) whether by their managers at work or even from other workers (cf. Artan et al., 2018, p. 56). Minors mainly function as *Ortaci* (errands boy). They are usually not allowed to learn other tasks, and therefore cannot improve their situations inside the factory or workplace, nor can they seek better conditions in another workplace as Razan Explains.

“So not all workshops allow you to learn. They let me do the same job they do but they gave me the defective pieces and those they were going to throw away. That's how I learned with the help of a tailor ... So in this workshop, they let me learn but in the previous workplace I could not. They told me; ‘you're going to break the machine, get out of here!’” (Female, 19 years old, tailor).

In her current workshop, Razan describes a positive atmosphere where she's allowed to engage in tasks similar to her colleagues, albeit working on defective pieces earmarked for disposal. The support and guidance from a mentor tailor contribute to her skill development. In contrast, her previous workplace is characterized by a lack of encouragement and denial of learning opportunities, with discouraging remarks about potentially damaging equipment. This disparity underscores the critical role of a supportive learning environment and mentorship in shaping the experiences of workers, particularly for young females within the textile industry.

Low income and the inability of parents to cover the costs of attending school are the main reasons that drive children into the (informal) labour market. However, since 2018, Turkish authorities have begun to prevent the registration of Syrian asylum seekers or refugees in many areas of Istanbul and nine other provinces near the Syrian border (HRW,

2018). The suspension of registration raises several problems that have not been sufficiently studied so far, including the loss of many Syrian minors' right to enroll in schools which results in their entry into the labor market. The discrepancy between Aya place of residence and the registered location created an obstacle to accessing education. She describes a period of waiting for permission to register in Istanbul to enable her school enrollment. However, in the interim, she found an alternative by participating in Turkish language classes provided by a non-governmental organization on weekends before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The quote highlights the complexities and bureaucratic hurdles young individuals with temporary protection status may face in pursuing education and the resilience demonstrated through alternative learning opportunities during challenging times.

“I wanted to go to school, but when we arrived, they started to say that schools can only be entered with *kimilik* (a temporary protection card) from Istanbul, that is, registered in Istanbul, but mine is from Konya. Our life is here (in Istanbul) and our residence is here and everything is here. So I haven't been able to get into school. I was waiting for them to allow us to register in Istanbul in order to enter the school. But this year I am learning Turkish with an NGO. They taught us the Turkish language on Saturdays and Sundays before Corona, of course, and after that, they gave us classes again.” (Female, 14 years old, *Ortaci*).

Due to cultural and religious beliefs that do not encourage women to work, almost none of them chose to work in the textile industry. Rather, they found themselves obligated to do so because of either their social status (often widowed or divorced) or a husband's illness or injury hindering him from working, generally from war injuries or work accidents (the latter being more common as a result of unsafe working conditions). This not only complicates the job search but also determines the kind of tasks performed once a job is found. Female refugees suffer from exclusion and exploitation more than male refugees (cf. Knappert et al., 2018) and are also exposed to sexual harassment in the workplace (cf. Rohwerder, 2018; UN Women, 2018). Another hindrance to refugee women seeking work is the lower wage they receive in comparison with local men/women (Kayaoglu, 2020) male Syrian refugees (see Diana's words):

“My husband used to say, ‘Stay at home. Make delicious food for us, and I’ll give you 25 lira. It does not make sense for you to go from morning to evening from eight until nine o’clock and consider it work (for so little money).’” (Female, 54 years old, in the final stage of production).

Furthermore, Diana recounts a facetious exchange with her husband, wherein he humorously suggests that she remain at home, dedicating her time to culinary pursuits, and in return, he would offer a jestingly modest sum of 25 lira. This playful banter, far from a genuine dismissal of her professional endeavors, introduces a layer of humor to the dynamics of their relationship. It offers a subtle glimpse into the intricate negotiation of traditional gender roles, underscoring the acknowledgment of domestic contributions, albeit through the lens of jest. This whimsical anecdote contributes a nuanced perspective to the broader discourse, enriching our understanding of the complex interplay between work and familial relationships, where humor becomes an integral element woven into the fabric of daily interactions between spouses.

When these women do search for work, they prefer small workshops close to home. To them, big factories seem to be strange, unfamiliar, and unsafe places. In smaller workshops, they can avoid the strict rules of large companies where they are not even allowed to answer phone calls from family members during work time. Being near the home in a small workshop makes the Syrian worker feel safer, more secure, and gives her a feeling of proximity to family. If she manages to reach an understanding with the owners of the workshop (which is more difficult in large factories), she will be able to leave for a short time to check on the children or prepare lunch and return to work. These agreements often have consequences for the woman’s working conditions, particularly regarding income, since the owner’s concessions are not granted for free. In other words, the greater the “flexibility,” the lower the salary. Despite this, many of them even choose to work from home to stay with the family full time. In this case, they do not receive a monthly, weekly, or even daily wage, but rather are paid by the piece (see Mais’s words). In general, the women work in the final stages of production such as packaging and cleaning (e.g. cutting excess thread or adding details to decorate the piece). Working in this way means that the monthly income is drastically reduced such that it may not exceed 50 euros per month, even while working 7 hours or more per day. Such a low wage is seldom found, even among minors, and it is almost non-existent among men.

“I came out of the house and started asking for work. I did not know what to do. I had never worked before. I found a good woman. I asked her what are you doing here? She said: ‘I am ‘cleaning’ clothes’. How much do they pay you? She said: ‘5 liras for 100 pieces!’ I calculated how much I can get! I asked her: please, can you teach me? She said: yes, of course. And in this way, I started working...It is 5 minutes from my house, my son and daughter were at home, so I had to come in the afternoon to prepare the food and complete the work of the house and go out, and I brought pieces home, so I work while doing these things.” (Female, 34 years old, in the final stage of production).

This narrative is not just a testament to the woman's adaptability and resourcefulness but also sheds light on the nuanced and often overlooked experiences of female workers in the textile industry as they navigate the demanding dynamics of both work and household responsibilities.

## **5. Spaces of encounters between employers and employees outside power relationships**

Small factories or workshops are usually founded by former workers, family members, and friends. They are generally more flexible in dealing with their workers which helps to create a better working atmosphere; less pressure, a better relationship with managers, less discrimination in treatment and salary, and better relationships between workers themselves. This is where social networks play an important role. One can often find in these workshops many workers from the same city in Syria. This creates a more friendly and familiar working atmosphere, leading many of them to seek out this type of workshop before looking elsewhere.

Beyond the power relationships between employers and workers, there are other spaces that cannot be ignored (Hage, 2013). While preparing the research ethics framework, we committed ourselves to not interviewing workers on the work premises. We did so to avoid causing any problems for them at work and to keep the employers from knowing that workers were telling us about their suffering in the workplace. However, some respondents, usually those who worked in small workshops, came to the interview with their employer. Their interactions were cordial, and they exchanged jokes and laughter like dear friends. In one of the meetings, the worker and the workshop owner told us that they not only work

together but also share housing. This reflects the importance of these spaces outside of power relations to better understand the lives of these workers. Samar happily explains her relationship with her employer, where she earns no more than 50 euros while working up to 7 hours a day:

“Now, I work here in the workshop. I do not feel like a stranger, she does not treat me like a Turk or a Syrian. I mean, she loves me. She calls me in the morning; (asking) ‘when are you coming, I am waiting for you to drink coffee together’. When I get a little tired I sit down on the stairs and drink my coffee, and smoke a cigarette, she brings me lunch as well, we eat together. She treats me as if I am her daughter, she said ‘you are my daughter, where are you?’ She says: ‘I have 4 daughters, you are the fifth. She is 70 years old.’” (Female, 42 years old, in the final stage of production).

However, this revealing narrative unveils a nuanced dynamic between the worker and her employer. While the worker expresses a profound sense of belonging and warmth within the workshop, fostered by the employer's gestures of affection and familial connection, it is imperative to discern the potential underlying power dynamics at play. The employer's actions, such as inviting the worker for morning coffee, sharing meals, and expressing a sense of kinship, present a positive facet of their relationship. However, it is equally essential to scrutinize these gestures within the broader context of labor arrangements. This apparent warmth may be intertwined with the employer's economic interests, potentially serving to foster a loyal and content workforce, which raises questions about fair compensation and workplace conditions. As such, this narrative serves as a poignant illustration of the multifaceted nature of employer-employee relationships, urging a critical examination of the interplay between emotional connections and economic interests within the intricate fabric of the workplace.

## **6. Consequences for subjective well-being: women's physical health and minors' claim of belonging**

In general, most participants complain of physical health problems related to their work activity. However, age and time in the profession seem to play an important role. There are fewer complaints of illness among the young adults we met. However, over time health problems begin to appear according to the nature of work. For example, those who iron often



complain of varicose veins due to long hours of standing and tailors often complain of eye, neck, or back pain. Other related diseases such as asthma and even tuberculosis are often caused by poor working conditions: closed places with poor ventilation lacking the necessary sanitary facilities, as Diana's case demonstrates:

“My health was affected: my eyes and my neck because we used to go from morning to evening, and the whole time we are looking down and lowering our heads. So that caused Cervical Disc Herniation, (and) later I was diagnosed with *Tuberculosis*” (Female, 54 years old, in the final stage of production).

To make matters worse, owners do not offer workers, who have no health insurance, any kind of ‘sick days’. If they stop working for any reason, they lose the little income that they have. Other development-related problems were cited in interviews with young adult workers who began working as minors. Ahmed was 18 years old when the interview was conducted, but he has been working since he was twelve:

“I have a problem growing (developmentally), of working way too much. My life ... I am always slow at work, the number of hours of work per day is more than the number of hours at home or free time at home, so this has had a great effect on my mobility and growth. For example, I have been deprived of sports activities. You know, when someone is working they are very tired, so I am tired all day, only on Saturdays and Sundays I rest. On Saturdays and Sundays, I fall asleep, I hardly meet people.” (Male, 18 years old, tailor).

The perception of subjective well-being is significant for many life domains (Hocking, 2018, p. 1158). With the term ‘subjective well-being,’ we refer to the refugee worker's cognitive and affective evaluations of his/her life (Diener et al., 2002, p. 63). A person is considered to have high subjective well-being if he has a high level of life satisfaction, as well as a low level of negative affect (e.g., sadness) and a high level of positive affect (e.g., joy). However, in the case of refugees, their legal status, empathic emotions and dignity-recognition in a place, as well as material satisfaction are the essential factors (Mahmud, 2022, p. 124). Health problems are also a principal factor for low subjective well-being (Andersen, 2009, p. 17). In the case of women refugee workers, the factor of physical health problems appears to disturb their subjective well-being. Research demonstrates that women tend to use more healthcare services than men (Bertakis et al., 2000), which may help to

explain the central position that physical health occupies in their responses. Even though they have the right to visit these services in Turkey, working conditions do not permit them this “luxury.”<sup>8</sup> Magida's words reflect this situation as she explains the situation of refugee women at work during the menstrual cycle:

"With the menstrual cycle, every month women workers had a psychological complex... (A woman) has to bring an extra jacket with her, tying it on her waist because the boss wouldn't give her permission to leave. If you come home, you need to relax. On the second day, you cannot rest. In Syria, I used to go to my room and sleep, and nobody from my family asked me anything. They know I am tired and need to be alone and that is all, but since I came to Turkey, even if I were dying, I have to walk and go to work. When you arrive if you ask (the boss) for permission, he will answer, why? Ok, you are new here, you are embarrassed to tell such things to a stranger, and you feel that you want to scream in their face! Even if you explain to him, he will say: ‘ah that happens monthly, do you want to leave work every month?’ It affected a lot of girls, and it affected our psyche.”  
(Female, 38 years old, in the final stage of production)

Physical health problems are a significant factor for these women’s subjective well-being. In the case of minors, belonging appears to be the main issue. For them, a lack of a sense of belonging in the host country was identified as “the most stressful factor in the acculturation process” (Hang & Jing Yang, 2022, p. 1). However, here it is not the lack of belonging one commonly thinks of. Rather, their sense of belonging is constantly challenged by various authorities in Istanbul (cf. Demir y Ozgul, 2019). They do in fact see Istanbul as ‘their city,’ as Samar's words show: “This is my city...I grew up here, I lived here, my whole childhood here, I don't remember Syria” (Female, 17 years old, *Ortaci*).

The Syrian regime's war against the Syrian people started in 2011 following the popular demonstrations: that is, almost 9 years before the date of the interviews. Many of the minor workers arrived at a young age and some of them were even born in Turkey. Though they are aware of their own suffering due to marginalization, they see Istanbul as their city. Nonetheless, the Turkish authorities insist on treating them as strangers or guests, and there is a strong discourse in Turkish society that never tires of viewing them as a problem. In

---

<sup>8</sup> That is in addition to other factors that they share with other refugees; language barrier and a lack of knowledge of the Turkish health care system (Torun et al., 2018).

short, these are minors living in what they consider to be their city and country, under a political authority and amid a broad societal current that refuses to see and deal with them except as “foreigners.” Such a situation cannot result in a positive relationship, as has been observed in other contexts, like the case of second- or third-generation Turks in Germany or Arabs in France (Barwick, 2016; Beaman, 2016). That is in part due to what Ghassan Hage (2011) calls oversensitivity of any kind of exclusion directed toward them “It is this everyday petty racism coupled with the exaggerated sense of entitlement that can swell up into a sometimes formidable state of resentment that is very different in intensity from the sentiment felt by first-generation immigrants when faced with racism” (2011).

To summarize, issues of physical health seem to be the main distinguishing factor between female refugees’ subjective well-being in the textile industry in Istanbul and that of males and minors. Women cannot deal with their health effectively, especially as a result of employment conditions. Though men also complain of health problems, particularly those of advanced age, it appears more urgent in the discourse of women. Minors’ feelings of belonging clash with the views of a broad section of Turkish society and the authorities: they claim to belong “here” in Istanbul, while others refuse to recognize this. The following section explores more in-depth the affective dimension of the experience of these minors and their families.

## **7. Emotions and protective emotional management**

As mentioned previously, many of these minors have never known Syria and consider Istanbul their “city.” Nostalgia (for Syria) is usually associated with those who have lived in Syria for some time. They might indicate this in their discourse with the phrase “we were there at school.” In either case, their early entry into the labor market appears to be a problem not only at the personal level (dropping out of school) but also socially, especially affecting the relationship with their parents. As Sara’s words show:

“Sara: I love Istanbul.

Researcher: Well, would you like to stay in it?

Sara: If we do not work, yes.

Researcher: What would you do if you didn't work?

Sara: We would be with our families.” (Female, 13 years old, *Ortaci*).

This brief conversation encapsulates the intersection of economic challenges and the intrinsic value placed on familial connections in the life of minors workers, providing a glimpse into the complex dynamics of their aspirations and the pragmatic realities they face. It is perhaps not surprising that, unlike adults, the period of lockdown due to the coronavirus emerges in their discourse as a source of pleasure and happiness. 'Being with the family' was a common response when we asked them to describe the happy moments of the past few days.

"We like to have breakfast with our family ...

The mother intervenes: It is a dream for them. I mean, when they say that tomorrow is a holiday ... We want to eat with mom and dad, it's their dream!

The girl: I mean, first this and then we'll see if we go out together or stay at home! "  
(Female, 15 years old, *Ortaci*)

The mother's remark underscores the economic constraints that limit such everyday pleasures, transforming them into aspirations rather than routine experiences. The girl's response encapsulates a hopeful outlook, acknowledging the current limitations but expressing a desire to consider going out or staying at home after achieving the dream of having breakfast with her parents. This dialogue poignantly captures the intersection of familial aspirations and the economic realities shaping the lives of minors workers.

Unlike Syrian refugee women in Western countries, women workers in the clothing industry in Turkey lack all of the support and protection that the state is supposed to provide workers (cf. Ünlütürk-Ulutaş y Akbaş, 2020, p. 196; Williams y Coşkun, 2020, p. 242). They are trapped by laws that complicate both their involvement in the labor market and their responsibilities of caring for the family at home. All of this drives them to accept dismal working conditions, including those that are not usually accepted by other Syrian refugees. Though these circumstances are to blame, many of them experience feelings of negligence and guilt towards their children for not being able to provide for their needs or secure good living conditions for them, in some cases leaving them vulnerable to exploitation in the labor market. During the research, we used a hypothetical question: What would you do if you won 7,000 euros from a lottery? This question is useful for comparing priorities and needs between different groups. Almost all respondents shared the same obsessions about emigration and leaving Turkey, but in the case of women, sons and daughters were almost

always mentioned, as in the case of Meriam: “Paying my debts and taking my children to go to the market to buy what they want (crying without stopping) ... I (the researcher) Stop the interview.” (Female, 39 years old, in the final stage of production).

The term *emotion management* was first introduced by Hochschild as “the act of trying to change in degree or quality an emotion or feeling” (1979, p. 561). People manipulate their emotions and expressions to adjust them to rules or expectations (evoking happiness when attending a friend's wedding despite initial concerns), to obtain an advantage in social interaction (to gain empathy or sympathy), or to change a negative mood. Most minors are aware of their parents' need for their income and try to manage their parents' guilt in a way that prevents or mitigates it. This is what we call *protective emotional management*. It aims to influence another's emotions (family members, friends, or beloved ones) in order to avoid harming them. This was demonstrated during the interviews that took place in the presence of one of the parents when respondents avoided mentioning anything that might provoke this negative feeling. For example, they avoided complaining and talking about fatigue, and even about their dreams or desires to continue studying (see Afaf's words). In the case of interviews that took place in the absence of a family member, they talked about these matters without reservations. This dilemma leaves them to face alone the horrors they encounter during work, either for fear of being fired and thus losing the family's much-needed income, or for the sake of not arousing feelings of guilt in their families.

“Researcher: Last week, did you feel very depressed?”

Rita: No, not at all.

Researcher: Happiness?

Rita: A lot, most of the time.

Researcher: Enjoying your life?

Afaf: Yes, so much.

Mother: God willing (inshallah), I hope it is true what you are saying, my daughter!”  
(Female, 12 years old, *Ortaci*).

## **8. Conclusion**

The narratives derived from extensive interviews with women and minors in Istanbul's textile industry paint a stark and disheartening picture of their experiences, underscoring the pervasive challenges and vulnerabilities faced by these individuals, particularly as refugees. The female workers contend with the physically taxing nature of their work, exacerbated by societal expectations and entrenched gender norms. Simultaneously, minors navigate a host of difficulties, with their developmental trajectories markedly impacted by extended working hours and the weight of economic responsibilities.

The psychological strains experienced by female workers during menstrual cycles, the tangible repercussions of relentless working hours on the physical well-being of young tailors, and the profound emotional burden borne by workers—exemplified by one participant's tearful recollection of providing for her family—all collectively underscore the intricate interplay of adversities confronting these vulnerable groups.

To address the daunting realities faced by women and minors, particularly as refugees in the textile industry, urgent and substantial interventions are imperative. Tailored policies and workplace practices must be meticulously designed to accommodate the distinctive needs of female workers and minors. This might involve exploring the possibility of implementing provisions for menstrual leave for women, while also examining regulations aimed at ensuring age-appropriate work hours and conditions for minors. The cultivation of a supportive work culture that transcends traditional gender expectations and safeguards the rights and well-being of these vulnerable groups is not just necessary but urgent.

Moreover, initiatives to raise awareness about workers' rights, targeting both employees and employers, must become central to industry practices. Comprehensive training programs focused on occupational health and safety, coupled with accessible mechanisms for addressing grievances, are crucial components in elevating the overall well-being of vulnerable groups in the textile industry.

In essence, confronting and mitigating the harsh realities faced by women and minors, especially as vulnerable groups of refugees in Istanbul's textile industry, demands a candid acknowledgment of the challenges and a steadfast commitment to implementing measures that genuinely prioritize their well-being. The textile industry must undergo substantial

changes, guided by a conscientious and collective effort, to address the grim circumstances faced by these individuals and work towards a more humane and just working environment.

## **Bibliography**

- Alkaya, E., & Demirer, G. N. (2014). Sustainable textile production: A case study from a woven fabric manufacturing mill in Turkey. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 65, 595–603. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.07.008>
- Andersen, S. H. (2009). Unemployment and subjective well-being: A question of class? *Work and Occupations*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888408327131>
- Anti-Slavery International. (2006). *Trafficking in women forced labour and domestic work in the context of the Middle East and Gulf region*. [https://www.antislavery.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/traffic\\_women\\_forced\\_labour\\_domestic\\_2006.pdf](https://www.antislavery.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/traffic_women_forced_labour_domestic_2006.pdf)
- Artan, T., Arici, A., Salduz, Ç., Güzel, M., & Küskün, E. (2018). Syrian child workers working in textile workshops: a field research in Bağcılar, Istanbul.
- Barwick, C. (2016). “My fatherland is Germany, my motherland is Turkey”: The evolution across the life course of transnational ways of being and belonging of second generation Turkish-Germans. *Cahiers Des Ifre*, 3, 90–103.
- Beaman, J. (2016). As French as Anyone Else: Islam and the North African Second Generation in France. *International Migration Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12184>
- Benería, L., & Santiago, L. E. (2001). The impact of industrial relocation on displaced workers: A case study of Cortland, New York. *Economic Development Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124240101500107>
- Bertakis, K. D., Azari, R., Helms, L. J., Callahan, E. J., & Robbins, J. A. (2000). Gender Differences in the Utilization of Health Care Services. *Journal of Family Practice*, 49(2).
- Can, B. (2017). The gendered workplaces of women garment workers in Istanbul. *Reproductive Health Matters*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09688080.2017.1378064>
- Chand, P. (2012). Implications of Industrial Relocation on Workers in Delhi. *Social Change*, 42(1), 49–68.

- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: a practical guide through qualitative analysis* (Vol. 10). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2007.11.003>
- Clean Clothes Campaign Turkey. (2019). *Syrian workers in turkey's garment industry: Looking Back, Moving Forward*.
- Clean Clothes Campaign. (2016). *CCC statement on the use of Syrian workers in high street supply chains*. <https://bit.ly/3XvKcWW>
- Demir, S. B., & Ozgul, V. (2019). Syrian refugees minors in Turkey. Why and how are they discriminated against and ostracized?. *Child Indicators Research*, 12(6), 1989-2011.
- Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2002). Subjective Well-Being: The Science of Happiness and Life Satisfaction. In *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 63–73). Oxford University Press.
- Dogutas, A. (2019). Gender Based Violence against Syrian Refugee Women in Turkey. *Border Crossing*. <https://doi.org/10.33182/bc.v9i2.811>
- International Youth Foundation (IYF). (2018). *Opportunities for Syrian youth in Istanbul*. [https://iyfglobal.org/sites/default/files/SREP\\_LaborMarketAssessment\\_ExecSummary-EN\\_7.pdf](https://iyfglobal.org/sites/default/files/SREP_LaborMarketAssessment_ExecSummary-EN_7.pdf)
- Fehr, I., & Rijken, C. (2022). Child Labor Among Syrian Refugees in Turkey. *Frontiers*, 4.
- Hage, G. (2011). Multiculturalism and the Ungovernable Muslim. In *Essays on Muslims & Multiculturalism*.
- Hage, G. (2013). Towards a Critical Arab Social Science. *Critical Legal Thinking*. <https://bit.ly/3XL7K4>
- Hammad, N. (2017). Refugees in Urban Areas. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 7(3), 123–126.
- Hang, H., & Jing Yang, Z. (2022). Sense of belonging, international migrants' spending, and implications for their subjective well-being. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 00, 1– 14.
- Hochschild, A. R. (1979). Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure. *American Journal of Sociology*, 85(3), 551–575. <https://doi.org/10.1086/227049>
- Hocking, D. C. (2018). Tho' Much is Taken, Much Abides: Asylum Seekers' Subjective Wellbeing. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-017-0664-7>
- HRW. (2018). Turkey Stops Registering Syrian Asylum Seekers. In Human Rights Watch. <https://bit.ly/2uq5FWg>
- HRW. (2022). Turkey: Hundreds of Refugees Deported to Syria. <https://bit.ly/3GHfAel>



- Ilcan, S., Rygiel, K., & Baban, F. (2018). The ambiguous architecture of precarity: temporary protection, everyday living and migrant journeys of Syrian refugees. *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1504/ijmbs.2018.091226>
- International labour organization (ILO). (n.d.a). *Child Labour*.  
<https://www.ilo.org/ankara/projects/child-labour/lang--en/index.htm>
- International labour organization (ILO). (n.d.b). *What is child labour*.  
<https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>
- Kayaoglu, A. (2020). Labour market impact of syrian refugees in Turkey: The view of employers in informal textile sector in istanbul. *Migration Letters*.  
<https://doi.org/10.33182/ML.V17I5.891>
- Kayaoglu, A. (2019). Labor market activities of Syrian refugees in Turkey (No. 1290).  
<https://erf.org.eg/app/uploads/2019/02/1290.pdf>
- Keskin, H. N. (2021). *The UN Children Rights Convention and its Application to the Integration of Syrian Refugee Children in Turkey*.  
[https://researchcentre.trtworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/UN\\_child\\_rights.pdf](https://researchcentre.trtworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/UN_child_rights.pdf)
- Knappert, L., Kornau, A., & Figengül, M. (2018). Refugees' exclusion at work and the intersection with gender: Insights from the Turkish-Syrian border. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 105, 62–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2017.11.002>
- Kunz, E. . F. (1973). The refugee In Flight: Kinetic Models And Forms Of Displacement. *International Migration Review*, 7(2), 125–146. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3002424>
- Lordoğlu, K., & Aslan, M. (2019). The Invisible Working Force of Minor Immigrants: The Case of Syrian Children in Turkey. In G. Yilmaz, İ. D. Karatepe, & T. Tören (Eds.), *Integration through Exploitation: Syrians in Turkey*. Rainer Hampp Verlag.
- Mahmud, B. (2022). *Emotions and Belonging in Forced Migration*. Routledge.
- Mahmud, B. (2021). Refugees and Asylum Seekers' Emotions in Migration Studies. *Revista Internacional de Estudios Migratorios*.
- Nimer, M., & Rottmann, S. B. (2022). Logistification and hyper-precarity at the intersection of migration and pandemic governance: Refugees in the Turkish labour market. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 35(1).
- Ozgun, A., & Gungordu, A. (2021). *Child labor in Turkey & the need for human rights due diligence for corporations*. <https://www.mondaq.com/turkey/human->

- rights/1028036/child-labor-in-turkey-the-need-for-human-rights-due-diligence-for-corporations
- Pelé, M. (2021). *Syrian refugee women in Turkey: a gendered integration process*.  
<https://igg-geo.org/?p=2766&lang=en>
- Pinedo Caro, Luis. (2020). Syrian Refugees in the Turkish Labour Market: A Socio-Economic Analysis. *Sosyoekonomi*.  
<https://doi.org/10.17233/sosyoekonomi.2020.04.03>
- Refugees Association. (2022). *Number of Syrians in Turkey April 2022*.  
<https://multeciler.org.tr/eng/number-of-syrians-in-turkey/>
- Rohwerder, B. (2018). *Syrian refugee women, girls, and people with disabilities in Turkey*.  
[https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/13950/Syrian refugee women%2C girls%2C and people with disabilities in Turkey.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/13950/Syrian%20refugee%20women%20girls%20and%20people%20with%20disabilities%20in%20Turkey.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Rygiel, K., Baban, F., & Ilcan, S. (2016). The Syrian refugee crisis: The EU-Turkey 'deal' and temporary protection. *Global Social Policy*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/14680181166666153>
- Savasan, F., & Schneider, F. G. (2006). *What determines informal hiring? Evidence from the Turkish textile sector* (No. 0604).
- Soriano Miras, R. M. (2019). A synthesis: The relationship between the global and the local in industrial relocation on the northern borders of Mexico and Morocco. In A. Trinidad Requena, R. Soriano-Miras, M. Solís, & K. Kopinak (Eds.), *Localized Global Economies on the Northern Borderlands of Mexico and Morocco*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96589-5\\_8](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96589-5_8)
- Tokatli, N., Kizilgün, Ö., & Cho, J. E. (2011). The clothing industry in Istanbul in the Era of globalisation and fast fashion. *Urban Studies*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098010370629>
- Torun, P., Mücaz Karaaslan, M., Sandıklı, B., Acar, C., Shurtleff, E., Dhrolia, S., & Herek, B. (2018). Health and health care access for Syrian refugees living in İstanbul. *International Journal of Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-018-1096-4>
- UNHCR. (n.d.). *Refugee statistics*. <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>
- Ünlütürk-Ulutaş, Ç., & Akbaş, S. (2020). The most invisible of the invisibles: Skilled Syrian women in the Turkish labor market. *Women, Migration and Asylum in Turkey*:

*Developing Gender-Sensitivity in Migration Research, Policy and Practice*, 193-212.

UN Women. (2018). *Needs assessment of Syrian women and girls under temporary protection status in Turkey*. <https://bit.ly/3WXuKCL>

UNICEF. (2022). *Syria Crisis: Humanitarian situation report*.  
<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/unicef-syria-crisis-humanitarian-situation-report-january-june-2022>

Williams, L., & Coşkun, E. (2020). A Future Agenda: Policy and Practice in Gender, Migration and Research in Turkey. *Women, Migration and Asylum in Turkey: Developing Gender-Sensitivity in Migration Research, Policy and Practice*, 235-243.

Wringe, A., Yankah, E., Parks, T., Mohamed, O., Saleh, M., Speed, O., Hémono, R., Relyea, B., Ibrahim, M., Sandhu, J. S., & Scott, J. (2019). Altered social trajectories and risks of violence among young Syrian women seeking refuge in Turkey: A qualitative study. *BMC Women's Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-019-0710-9>

Yalçın, S. (2016). Syrian child workers in Turkey. *Turkish Policy Quarterly*.