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MIGRANT SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES IN EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIA: EXAMINING THE SECURITY ASPECT, SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF SMUGGLING ACCORDING TO ITS PROJECTIONS IN HUMANITARIAN AREA



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October 2020

**GKGSP PROJECT: MIGRANT SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES IN THE EAST AND
SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA**

**EXAMINING THE SECURITY, SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS
OF SMUGGLING AND ITS IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HUMAN FIELD**



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This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Union. The content is completely under the responsibility of Integration of Vulnerable Groups Association and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

FOREWORD

Due to its geographical location and history, political and cultural characteristics, Turkey has maintained its position as both a destination and a bridge for transitions in terms of immigration movements for centuries to this day. Large immigrant groups have formed due to the recent Arab Spring riots, the Syrian Civil War, the political turmoil and internal conflicts in Afghanistan, the increasing climatic changes and endless violence in Africa due to poverty, diseases, drought and wars. These groups go on a immigration journey to reach Europe or settle in Turkey, passing through Turkey.

These journeys, which cross borders and will change their existing life styles from top to bottom, are shaped according to the opportunities and competencies of the people in the legal sense, as is known. The vast majority of immigrants go on a forced migration journey just to save their lives and unfortunately such opportunities cannot be found. For this reason, they come face to face with multinational criminal organizations and smugglers who have no legal or humanitarian concerns and are at their mercy.

In this sense, while the study follows all the difficult journey processes through their eyes starting with the reasons for the departure of irregular migrants, in the background it also reveals how the transboundary crime groups and smuggling organizations carry out their migrant smuggling activities and their relations with other illegal organizations and terrorist organizations in which they work hand in glove with. When all this illegal combination comes together, it is seen how the phenomenon of migrant smuggling is intertwined with other crimes such as human trafficking, black money traffic, creating resources for terrorist organizations.

Due to the dynamics of migrant smuggling activities, it is known that these movements differ not only on the basis of regions and provinces, but also on the level of districts and even villages from place to place. In this context, the study was carried out in different border provinces of the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions, thus it was planned to shed light on all dimensions and implicit relations of organized and transboundary migrant smuggling. In this sense, perhaps the most important point to consider when evaluating the study is the fact that irregular migrants are necessarily going on this journey in order to save their lives, and in accordance with Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and perhaps more than that, in the name of humanity and sense of civilization, these people's rights to asylum is fully reserved until the end. Again, the factor that should not be overlooked when reading and evaluating the crime of migrant smuggling is the fact that irregular migrants become victims of transboundary criminal networks at all stages of their forced migration journeys.

In this context and within the framework of human migration management, the study examined the Turkey-European Union partnership on integrated border security, and Turkey's considerable progress in this sense was also tried to be demonstrated without overlooking the fact that Turkey, a candidate country for membership in the European Union, is likely to form the eastern borders of the European Union in the future and will be a front in the fight against all these transboundary organized crime networks and terrorist organizations.

As an education and research association, the Integration of Vulnerable Groups Association (IVA-HAGED) continues its work on migrant and human trafficking, which is not much studied in terms of humanitarian research; it will continue to work primarily on victims of irregular migration. It will also

maintain its goal of supporting international institutions, decision-makers and service providers working in this field, with its activities that include innovative solutions within the framework of civil society and academic research in terms of evaluating the existing situation and improving services.

APPRECIATION

On behalf of our association, we would like to express our gratitude to all parties who contributed and supported the preparation of this report. Many individuals and institutions have devotedly helped and guided us in accessing the details of migrant smuggling activities, which are under a dark and thick cover due to the inherent privacy of the crime. In order for us to reach the victims of migrant smuggling, we thank especially the former head of GAP RDA, Mr. Sadrettin Karahocagil who opened their centers and provided translation support when necessary and in the presence of GAP Multi-Purpose Community Centers (ÇATOM) Coordinator, Mrs. Adalet Budak Akbaş, to all the employees of the GAP ÇATOM and GAP Child Development Centre (ÇGM) who carried out good and useful works in their regions. Again, we express our gratitude to our expert Police Managers and employees at the Anti-Smuggling and Border Crossings, who have contributed greatly to us with their valuable guidance and evaluations at all stages of the planning and step by step, and we sincerely wish them success in their tough fight against this multi-faceted crime.

The institutions that we will emphasize with appreciation in terms of financial support will be the Civil Society Development Center and the European Union. We are grateful to the non-governmental organizations for their financial and moral support and we owe our gratitude to all the employees who supported us during the process.

We are grateful to Mrs. Arzu Tıraşoğlu Kütükçüoğlu and Mr. Ufuk Saraçoğlu Melas for their support to our team with their morale, motivation and valuable guidance.

In terms of the team, first of all, we are grateful to Dr. Mustafa Arslan, Head of Management Sciences Department/Public Administration/Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, for his support and guidance, for joining our team by accepting our academic partnership in this research. We would like to thank the valuable members of our association, Sociologist Zeynep Hazal Tuzluca, Psychologist Veysel Göregen, Technology and Financial Support Specialist Deniz Kumral, Field Research Assistants D. Fatma Dağtekin and İ. Özgür Ünal and our dear friends Mustafa Kıyak and Mehmet Murat Uçkan, who contributed with their guidance during the field process, for their contribution to this hard work and bring the research into the literature.

Finally, by accepting to meet with us, we are grateful to all the anonymous migrants and asylum seekers who convey their struggle for life and various events during their difficult journey, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying. We hope that our work will be a useful resource in raising awareness of the persecution of refugee migrants until they reach our borders, improving the services provided and expanding the related projects.

Integration of Vulnerable Groups Association

Ankara, Turkey

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ABBREVIATIONS

EU: European Union

EGM: General Directorate of Security

ESGS: Integrated Border Security System

ETIAS: Travel Information and Authorization System

EURODAC: European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database

FRONTEX: Operational Cooperation Agency for the Management of the External Borders of the European Union Member States

DGMM: Directorate General of Migration Management

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Damascus

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

RAND: Research and Development Organization

CSRS: Coastal Surveillance Radar System

SIS: Schengen Information System

UKORAM: Joint Risk Analysis Center

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

VIS: Visa Information System

YPG: People's Protection Units

YPJ: People's Protection Units Women's Branch

YUKK: Foreigners and International Protection Law

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PROLOGUE

The dominant security concept of the Cold War era has been built on state-centered threats and references. According to the realistic school understanding that was active during this period, the perspective of “the reference object of security is the state” dominated the world under the threat of nuclear war and the individual security pursuit of people remained under the shadow of this threat (Ovalı, 2006).

The chaotic environment created by the multi-polar system that emerged after the end of the Cold War and the reduction of the threat of nuclear war, and the international and transboundary characteristics of emerging threats, broke the classical understanding of national security and exceeded the power of states in ensuring the security of the country in general. In particular, it is worth noting the birth of the phenomenon of globalization in the 2000s and the fact that this rapidly developing phenomenon has triggered unpredictable socio-economic transformations in world politics. Because of all this, cases such as unequal development, migration and forced migration, ethnic problems, global poverty and the fact that these poor become marginalized and turn to radical movements have started to create proxy wars or regional conflicts all over the world (Ovalı, 2006).

Within the framework of these dynamics, the peoples of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria took to the streets as part of democratization, human rights and equal economic sharing, due to the "Arab Spring"¹, which broke out with popular movements that developed against authoritarian power structures in the Arab geography, starting in Tunisia especially in November 2010. Protest actions against the one-man and party regimes of the Cold War period also created global effects (Topal, 2015).

While these protests were initially peaceful in Syria, as a result of the regime's armed response to these demonstrations, the country has been plunged into a multi-equation Civil War, which even today is unclear where it is going or how it will end. During the resulting instability, millions of Syrians have been forcibly displaced within the country or became refugees and had to leave their lands (Ağır and Aksu 2017).

The humanitarian crisis has reached unexpected levels in a very short time and the issue became an international problem due to the migration of millions of refugees to different countries. In this context, as one of Syria's neighbors with the largest land border, Turkey has had to deal with an increasing raid of Syrian refugees every year since the beginning of the war. As of 2018, Turkey is home to 3,558,779 Syrian refugees under the temporary protection regime (DGMM, 2020). The temporary protection regime refers to the protection provided to foreigners who are forced to leave their country, cannot return to their country of origin, arrive or cross the Turkish borders in masses to find urgent and temporary protection and cannot be individually determined for international protection status (DGMM, 2003).

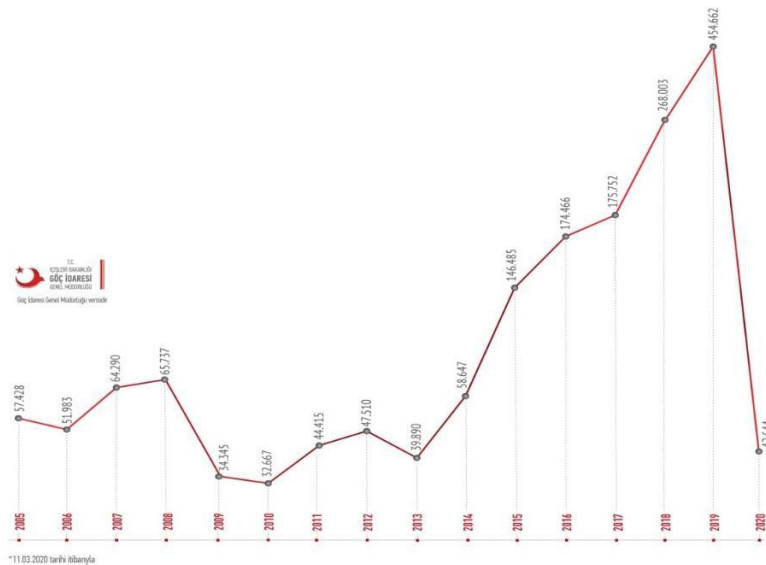
Apart from Syria, there are also reasons for generating immigrants on a personal level, together with problems such as civil wars, diseases, climate changes, economic crises, endless conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, especially in Afghanistan. People living in these regions cannot predict their future and there are many possibilities about what daily life will bring. Turkey is

¹ The name given to the riots that started when a peddler set himself on fire to protest unemployment and the cost of living in the Tunisian town of Sidi Bou Said and spread to neighboring Arab countries. See: Gözen. R. (2011). Türkiye ve Arap Baharı: Değişimi Açıklamak ve Anlamak, Adam Akademi, 2011/2: 1-25.

becoming both a bridge and a destination country for asylum seekers and refugees to achieve better living conditions, who perhaps set off with most fundamentally reasons such as fear of death.

As a result of all this mobility on its borders and geographical location, Turkey also constitutes another traffic route for transboundary criminal organizations on the east-west axis in the context of a wide range of illegal activities and illegal crossings. One of the most important of these illegal movements is the migrant smuggling. According to official figures, the number of irregular migrants captured within Turkey borders only in 2019 is 454,662 people (DGMM, 2019a).

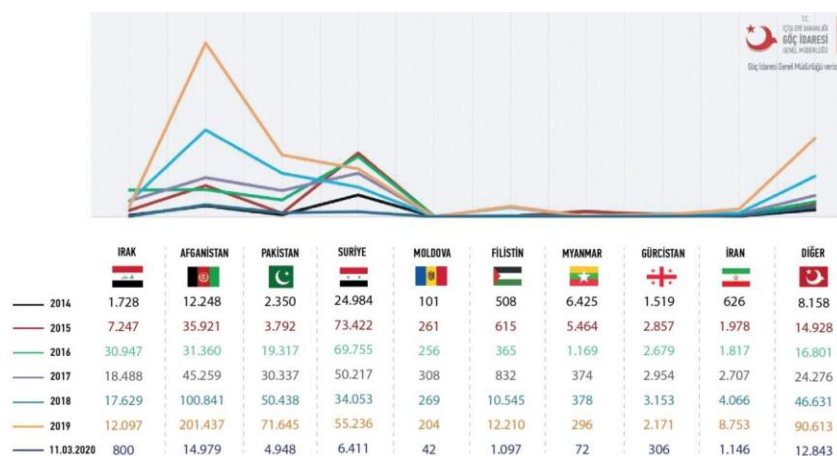
Graphic 1 Number of Irregular Migrants Apprehended by Years



Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-istatistikler>

Looking at the first three months of 2020, it is seen that the figure is 42,644. Even this data alone reveals the seriousness of the issue. Likewise, the diversity in the geographical distribution of captured irregular migrants and asylum seekers indicates that Turkey has become both a bridge and a destination country in recent years (DGMM, 2019a).

Graphic 2 Nationalities of Irregular Migrants Apprehended by Years

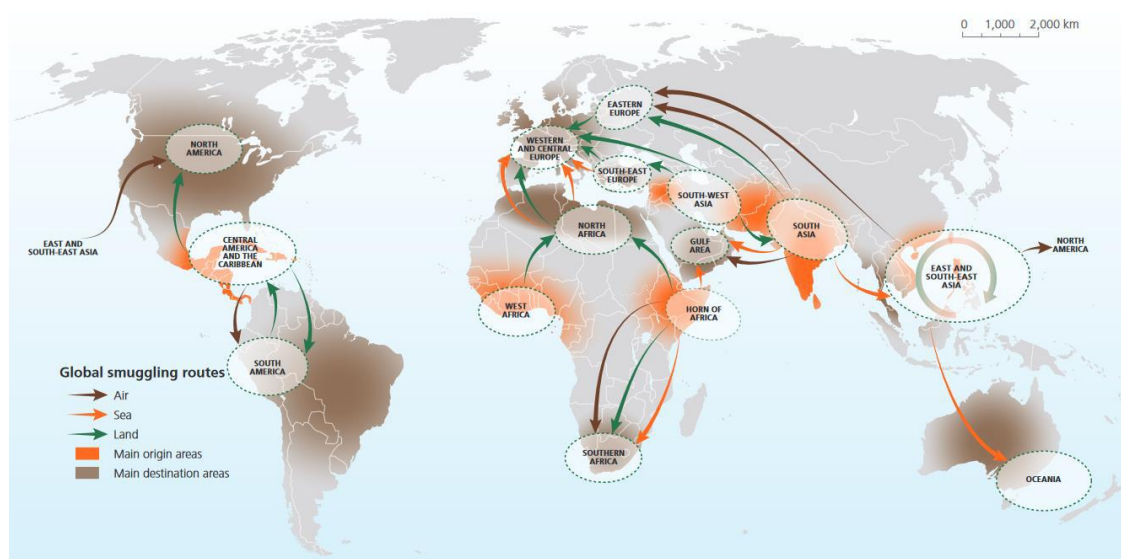


Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-istatistikler>

Because such an intensity creates a great source of income for transboundary crime and terrorist organizations, the crime of migrant smuggling has become very popular not only in our geography, but also on a global scale. Worldwide, according to 2019 figures, 70.9 million people have been forced out of their home ranges, of which 25.9 million have become refugees² and 3.5 million have become asylum seekers³ (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, 2019).

In addition, the very different routes that irregular migrants and asylum seekers use to reach Turkey and therefore the European Union (EU) create a wide range of resources for such formations and organizations. Irregular migrants subject to forced migration, become completely vulnerable to exploitation in the uncontrolled regions they cross during their journey of hope. Asylum seekers are at the mercy of crime and terrorist organizations in geographies where there is no official authority, state structure or any legal basis or where they do not function properly. Irregular migrants are persuaded or coerced into other illegal activities such as drug trafficking, organ trafficking, enforced recruitment, arms and human trafficking on routes around the world. For these reasons, migrant smuggling is becoming a chain of illegal activities that involves multiple dynamics. Although the return of such mixed illegal activities to criminal and terrorist organizations is very difficult and complicated to calculate, the EU (European Union, Migration and Home Affairs, 2020) and the United States (RAND, 2019) note that these numbers reach billions of Dollars and Euros on the routes that access them.

Figure 1 Illegal Migration Movement Routes



Source: <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/tip-and-som/module-5/key-issues/Migration-and-migrant-smuggling.html>

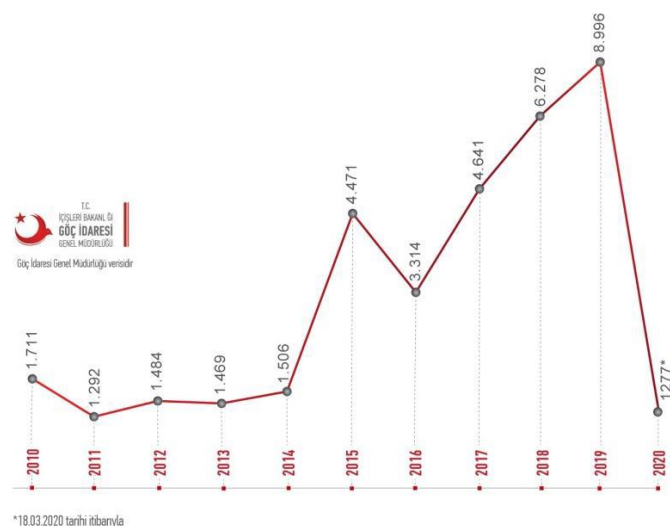
In Turkey, especially the eastern and southeastern Anatolian border regions contain geographical conditions that are difficult to control, these regions are preferred as the main transit route for migrant smuggling routes upon entering Turkey. In addition to the tough landforms and harsh climate in this geography, the activities of separatist terrorist centers in the region, are one of the factors that make

² As a result of the events that took place before January 1, 1951, a legal situation has been created for those who are outside the country of their citizenship and cannot benefit from the protection of that country because they fear that they will be persecuted due to their race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political ideas. (UNHCR, 2020)

³ An asylum seeker is a person who has left his country due to the reasons given above and whose request for asylum is under investigation by the authorities of the country from which he fled. (UNHCR, 2001)

the fight against migrant smuggling quite difficult (Kaya, 2013). Also, the weaknesses of neighboring countries in their own border security and their own internal turmoil constitute other important factors to take into consideration in the context of border security (Deniz, 2014). Turkey's western borders of green and blue are becoming a more concentrated route every year by irregular migrants and asylum seekers who continue to reach the EU. This increase in irregular migration makes migrant smuggling very tempting for those engaged in illegal activities in Turkey, as well as at the global level.

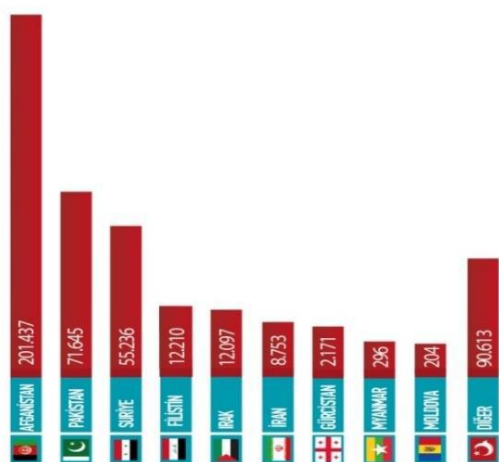
Graphic 3 Migrant Smugglers Apprehended by Years



Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-istatistikler>

Irregular migration movements and migrant smuggling activities in Turkey are still a growing trend, although humanitarian mobility in Syria is relatively stagnant on Turkey's southeastern borders as of 2020. As both a destination and transit, Turkey ranks first among the most preferred migrant smuggling routes in the world. This situation becomes clearer when we look at the origins of the irregular migrants caught in 2019.

Graphic 4 Number of Irregular Migrants Apprehended in 2019



Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-istatistikler>

While dealing with issues such as migrant smuggling and irregular immigration, various terms such as refugee, asylum seeker, guest, immigrant, irregular immigrant, foreigner are used for people who are subjected to forced migration in the public and the media, and this creates confusion. In this sense, it is necessary to look closely at concepts such as refugee, asylum seeker, Temporary Protection, international protection within the framework of international law and Turkish law.

Concepts of Asylum Seeker and Refugee in Turkish Law

Established in 1945, the United Nations ratified the Geneva Refugee Convention, which was signed by Turkey in 1951⁴, in order to solve the problem of refugees, one of the biggest problems left behind by the war (United Nations, 2016). According to the convention, refugees are defined as persons who are outside the country of their citizenship and cannot benefit from the protection of that country because they fear that they will be persecuted due to their race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political ideas, as a result of events before 1 January 1951 (United Nations, 2016). The convention was updated in 1967 for persons forcibly displaced around the world due to the fact that it includes refugees from the European continent, where the war mainly took place, and was again submitted for signature for Member States (United Nations, 2015). Turkey, which signed the first convention, also signed the 1967 New York refugee protocol, but also put a geographical reservation in the protocol.

According to the reservation, Turkey has committed only to admit irregular migrants from European borders to its territory as “refugees”, as defined in contract law. After this date, as a result of the ever-changing dynamics of world politics, duality has been formed in the point of refugee law in Turkey, which has become both a bridge and a destination country for refugee movements.

Today, the United Nations (UN) is acting that all asylum seekers can become refugees after certain procedures, Turkey, on the other hand, acts in accordance with international protection and temporary protection regimes in its law for people who enter its territory and are justified for asylum. Turkey considers these people to be “conditional refugees” within this framework, without including them in international refugee law, and allows them to remain in Turkey until they are resettled in a third country (DGMM, 2014). Asylum seekers, whose individual asylum assessments made by Directorate General of Migration Management after entering to Turkey, are placed in satellite cities that are previously determined and have a residence requirement. In addition, in cases listed in Article 54 of the Foreigners and International Protection Law (YUKK), deportation procedures are also carried out by the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM, 2019a).

In accordance with all this legislation, depending on war, conflict and similar events, people who have taken refuge in Turkey with fear of being persecuted can only be defined as refugees or asylum seekers from a sociological point of view. This study was prepared by focusing on people who have experienced irregular migration journey in the context of forced migration. Therefore, participants who are taken to the center throughout the study will be referred to within the framework of irregular migrants / asylum seekers.

⁴ Law on the Approval of the Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees, signed in Geneva on 28 July 1951, <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/10898.pdf>

Scope and Purpose of the Research

In this study, the phenomenon of migrant smuggling in the main border provinces of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia and the journey to hope will be monitored through the eyes of immigrants and the dynamics of migrant smuggling will be examined in the light of individual experiences experienced on different migration routes to Turkey.

The study was carried out in Hatay, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Mardin, Van, where the most migrant smuggling activities were observed during the 10-year period, and was carried out with irregular migrants who entered Turkey through irregular migration and stayed in border areas. The research aims to examine the psycho-social reasons that cause the refugees to make decisions, starting from the reasons for their departure, and the situation they are in, the desired goals to be reached, the chosen route, the experiences in the road process, the organizers, the smugglers and the dynamics of smuggling; it aims to shed light on the arrival, transition and post-period at the Turkish border.

The main objective of the report is to contribute to the work of public institutions and organizations and non-governmental organizations working in the humanitarian field in the light of the experiences of immigrants. In addition to improving the services provided by these institutions in terms of humanitarian aid and developing new programs, it is to be able to make suggestions for lawmakers and practitioners to combat migrant smuggling and to help these institutions determine current border management policies by ensuring international cooperation. It is also aimed by us to contribute to the literature with the research conducted in the areas where there is very little academic research.

Research Sector

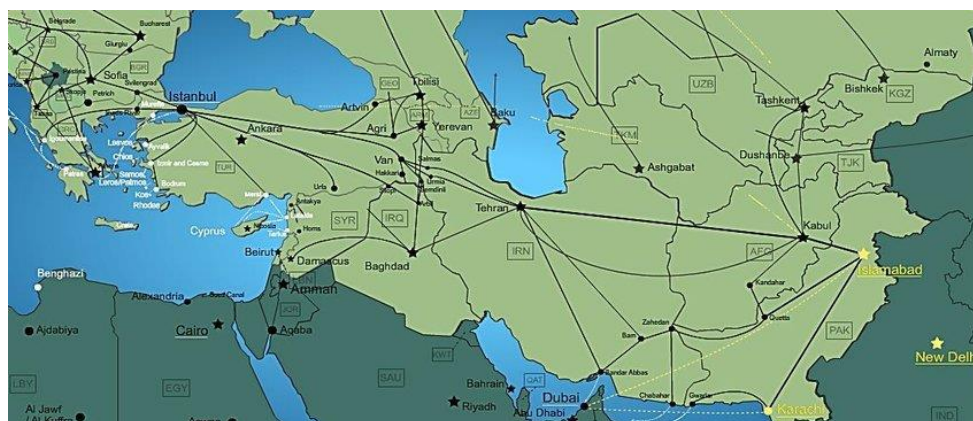
The fact that the border provinces of Turkey in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia region have a high altitude, mountainous and difficult-to-control geography has led to these areas being the scene of various smuggling activities for a long time. However, reasons such as settlements and villages located mutually at the zero points of both the Southeast and the East borders, the existence of caves and caves-like structures suitable for smuggling, and the kinship relations existing on both sides of the border allow illegal structures to settle and move easily in these regions.

Another major problem in these border regions is the activities of the separatist terrorist organization of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)⁵, which has been going on for many years. Operating on both sides of the border with Syria, Iraq and Iran, the organization provides funding for terrorism, which it creates by participating in and supporting profit-oriented organized activities. The relationship between terrorist organizations and smuggling structures can be seen in many different geographies of the world, as well as between the separatist organization (PKK) and smuggling structures. While smuggling organizations benefit from the armed forces of the organization, its military capabilities, the areas they control, and the supporters and sympathizers; the organization, on the other hand, creates resources for itself by extorting and taxing all smuggled food, drugs, animals, weapons, people, etc, in addition to the financial capabilities of criminal structures such as money laundering (Sevgel, 2019). It has been revealed that the organization has earned about 13 million Euros in 2018 alone by lay a hand

⁵ PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party): An organization founded in Diyarbakir in 1974 that aims to establish a state in the region covering the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions of Turkey, northern Iraq, northeastern Syria and northwestern Iran. For this purpose, it continues to operate illegally as an illegal separatist armed formation that conducts attacks against military targets and civilians in order to have the remaining part of the territory mentioned on the borders of Turkey.

on the field of migrant smuggling (Sevgel, 2019) and the taxes and tributes received by the PKK from migrant smuggling have also been included in the EU reports in the size of case studies (European Union, European Commission, DG Migration & Home Affairs - Study on smuggling of migrants, 2015).

Figure 2 Silk Road Migrant Smuggling Route



Source: <https://www.budapestprocess.org/about/news/85-silk-route-migration-country-reports>

Within the framework of these unique dynamics of the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia Region, one of the most interesting data found in the study conducted in the areas of Hatay, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Van and the surrounding provinces is that all provinces and even districts have their own unique and multivariate dynamics, which can be studied in the dimension of migrant smuggling. Due to the socio-economic and cultural dimensions created by these dynamics, ethnic and demographic variables and security factors, transboundary kinship relations, the activities of the existing terrorist and criminal organizations, each field of study has been handled carefully and these variable dynamics have been tried to be reflected in the research outputs.

Hatay was chosen as the first city as a research sector. Although the city has come to the fore with the refugees with the start of the Syrian crisis, all kinds of smuggling activities have been going on in Hatay for many years due to mutual kinship relations and settlements close to each other on both sides of the border, as well as the disappearance of natural borders with the drying of rivers and river beds such as Asi in summer (Republic of Turkey, Governorship of Hatay, 2017). In the districts and villages of Hassa, Kırkhan, Reyhanlı, Kumlu and Antakya, especially since the withdrawal of the first barbed wire in the 1960s, despite the fact that a large number of people have died or been maimed in martial law practices, including “shoot orders”, smuggling activities have continued without losing momentum until today due to its high illegal income (Atasoy, Korkmaz, & Geçen, 2015). Even only in the February 2020 annual report of the Hatay Police Department, it was reported that 744 irregular immigrants were processed; 14,498 packages of smuggled cigarettes, 8,600 liters of smuggled fuel oil, 86,812 grams of marijuana, 272,944 Captagon pills were seized. This report shows the intensity of illegal smuggling activities and the struggle of the police forces against it (Hatay Police Department, 2020).

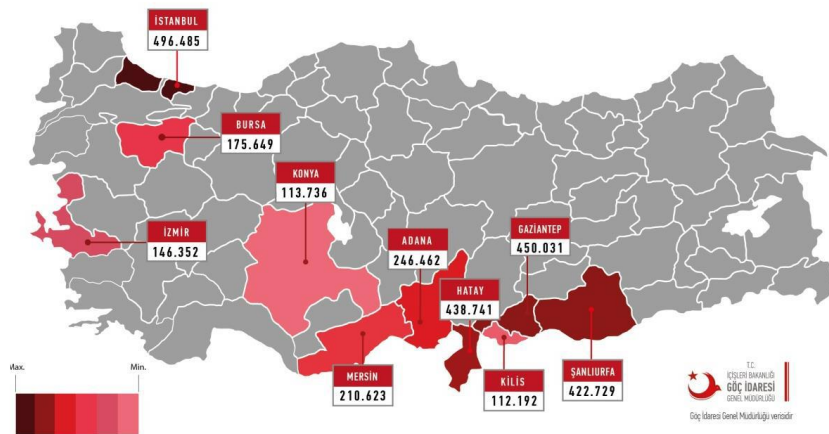
Figure 3 Irregular Migrants Apprehended by Province as of the End of 2019.



Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-istatistikler>

Gaziantep, the second city of the study, has intensive mobility due to its border with Syria, as well as the opportunities it provides for refugees and its much more advanced industrial and commercial opportunities than other border provinces. As the city hosting the most refugees in Turkey after İstanbul, Gaziantep is seen as very intensive in both migrant smuggling and other smuggling activities due to the size of its facilities and the density of its border crossings. Gaziantep ranks first in Turkey in smuggling with 114,974 liters of smuggled fuel oil, 1,468,471 smuggled cigarettes, 636,085 contraband drugs and medical devices per year, according to the reports of the Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime Department of the General Directorate of Security (EGM, 2019).

Figure 4 Distribution of Syrians Under Temporary Protection by Top 10



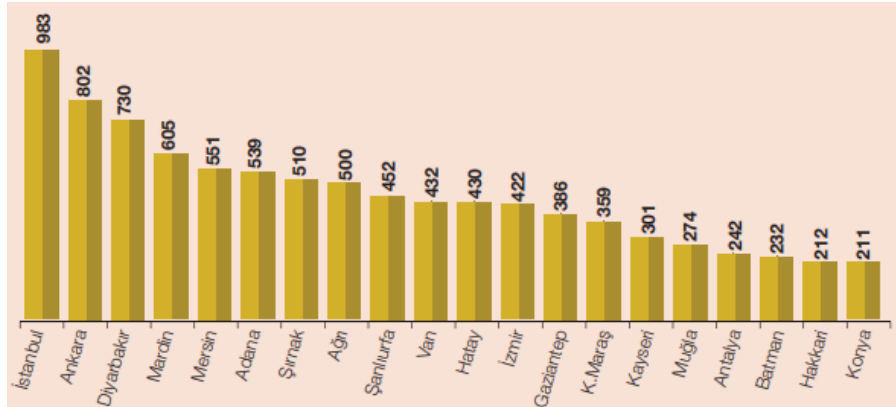
Source: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638>

Immediately after Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, which is a very dense province, was chosen as the field of work for reasons such as border crossings and cultural proximity. Similar to Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa offers seasonal or regular employment opportunities for irregular migrants; in terms of finding a job, it constitutes the manifestation of the principle of "short-distance moves create immigration waves" in the migration laws of Ravenstein. Facilities such as easily accessible seasonal labor also provide refugees with the opportunity to move toward west. As can be seen from the examples of Gaziantep and Hatay, the existence of border crossings in Şanlıurfa and two-way trips to Syria provide other opportunities and also the possibility of movement. In this context, migrant and other smuggling

activities increasingly continue in Şanlıurfa. The number of immigrants captured in Urfa in 2019 alone was reflected in the statements as 1300 (Hürriyet, 2019).

Another selected province, Mardin and especially Nusaybin and Kızıltepe districts of Mardin, are the research sector where the connection of migrant smuggling and terrorism stand out, unlike other provinces. Mardin ranks in the top four in Turkey's smuggling activities in 2018.

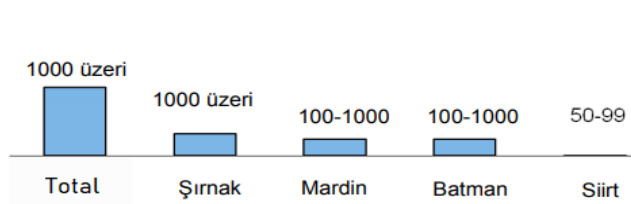
Graphic 5 2018 Smuggling Incident Ranking (Top 20 Cities)



Source: <https://www.egm.gov.tr/kom/raporlarimiz>

Despite the wall, which was completed in 2017 and completely separates the Mardin and Syrian settlements such as Kamışlı and Al-Darbasiyah, reports that irregular migrants and members of terrorist organizations often cross over are often found in the media (Anadolu Agency, 2020). As supported by the interviews conducted in our study, the transitions are performed by jumping over the wall, through water crossings and stream beds, which are places where the wall not existed, and through tunnels dug (Hürriyet, 2017). In Mardin, the number of illegal immigrants caught in 2018 alone is approximately 1000 people (DGMM, 2019b).

Graphic 6 Number of Irregular Migrants Arrested in the Dicle (TRC3) Region (2018)



Source: https://www.mardintso.org.tr/cnt-data19811/uploads/2019/06/Mardin_iktisadi_gorunum_2019-sikisturildi-1.pdf

The last province chosen for the research is Van. Due to its direct border with Iran, smuggling activities in Van and in surrounding provinces have become a profession and have been carried out for many years. Similar to Mardin, smuggling activities have long been in a spiral network of relations with the terrorist organization in Van. In the operations carried out in 2019, “58 long-barreled rifles, 2 machine guns, 6 guns, 2 rocket launchers, 219 hand grenades, 28 hand-made explosives, 156 rocket launcher ammunition, 240 rocket launcher propulsion cartridges, 22 radios, 3,800 kilograms of explosives, 311 tubes, 7 night vision binoculars and a large amount of various materials were seized. In addition, 5 tons of 231 kilograms of marijuana and 343 organizers and smugglers” were caught was reflected in the press releases (News, 2019).

Another important aspect of the Van border is the emergence of examples of state authority gaps in Syria and Iraq as border security weaknesses in Iran (Deniz, 2014). Most often cited by the authorities of the Iranian state due to the economic recession “it is pointless to look after the Afghans when 7 million unemployed young Iranians wandering around jobless” statements and the statement of "they were mistreated in Iran" from the Afghan refugees interviewed during our study, support the claims that Afghan refugees are directed to Turkey by Iran (Anadolu Agency, 2018). Another bitter example of Iran's bad practices is as follows: result of the torture of Afghan asylum seekers on the Afghanistan-Iran border by the Iranian security forces and thrown them into the Hari river was under investigation (AAWSAT, 2020).

Figure 5 Routes of entry from Eastern Anatolia Region to Turkey



Source:

https://www.yyu.edu.tr/images/files/Ortadogu_ve_Asyas_Kokenli_Gocmenlerin_Goc_Guzergahinda_Turkiye_Opsiyonu.pdf

In this context, the fact that 1535 irregular migrants were caught in a single operation between August 10-18 of 2019 in Van province (Governorship of Van, 2020), where 40,180 irregular migrants were arrested and 426 smugglers were arrested in 597 smuggling cases during 2019 is an example of the seriousness of the situation (Van Police Department, 2019).

Research Methodology

Although the research design was determined within the framework of a qualitative approach, it was progressed with a mixed methodology by using quantitative approaches at the data analysis stage. In research designs, where a variety of common themes are extracted in qualitative approaches, it is progressed with preconfigured questionnaires and themes (Punch, 2014). The participants of this research, based on the problems of the study, consist of immigrants who entered Turkey by irregular methods. Since the study does not have limitations such as nation, nationality, country of origin, age, gender, it is aimed to obtain results corresponding to a wider spectrum by considering the progression of various common themes. For this reason, the semi-structured in-depth interview technique was used.

For the sample, the snowball sampling technique was used. The snowball sampling technique is a sample determination method used in research where networks and groups that are related to each

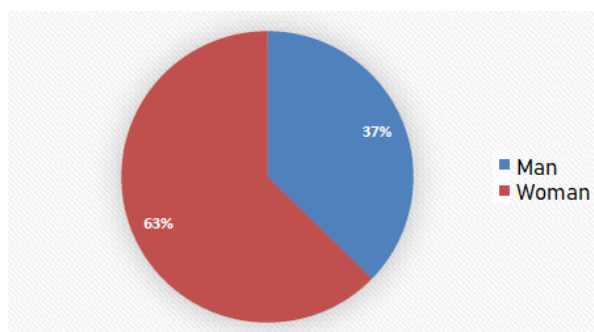
other are centered (Neuman, 2016). The sample was selected from the provinces where irregular migrants are most often caught and from the provinces where irregular migrants mostly live on the eastern border. The neighborhoods where groups of refugees/migrants live in the visited cities were determined by referring to the neighborhoods where non-governmental organizations working in the relevant area and taking into account the opinion of the people living in the area. Opinion leaders of the immigrant community were reached in the neighborhoods and people who met the interview requirements were reached within the scope of the research. According to the main problem of the study, participants were selected from people who entered the borders irregularly.

The data obtained as a result of interviews conducted in the provinces of Hatay, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Van were subjected to qualitative analysis with an open-ended aspect that allows the person to respond to their own story. On the other hand, quantitative analyses were also used for numerical and categorizable data such as demographic characteristics, city of destination and money paid. At the same time, researchers recorded their observations of the area by keeping a field diary during their time on the site. In addition to the observations, focus group interviews were conducted with people who have a full knowledge of the area, have witnessed to the social and cultural processes of refugees and belong to the local population. The data obtained in the research through these interviews were supported by the information obtained from the participants. These observations were also used to better understand the situation and to support the analysis.

Demographic Structure of the Asylum Seekers that Interviewed

As a result of fieldwork conducted in 5 provinces, 75 participants were interviewed. Looking at the family composition of these participants, it seems that the questions answered represent approximately 380 people⁶. Based on the gender distribution of the participants interviewed, 47 female participants (63%) and 28 male participants (37%) were interviewed.

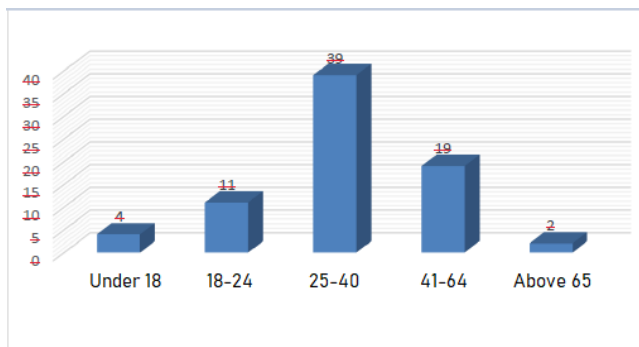
Graphic 7 Distribution by Gender



The average age of the participants was calculated as 35,11. Age distributions are gathered under 5 categories. Participants between the ages of 25-40 (39 people) have the highest age distribution of the participants who contributed to the study. While 41-64 years old (19 people) and 18-24 years old (11 people) constitute the other age ranges with density, the least distribution of participants was observed in the groups under 18 (4 people) and above 65 years old (2 people).

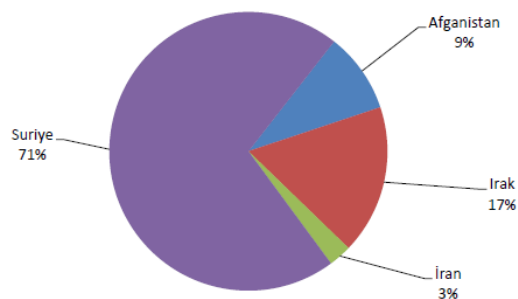
⁶ Some participants left the question about family compositions unanswered. For this reason, it is estimated that the people who make up the sample of the research are more than 380.

Graphic 8 Distribution by Age



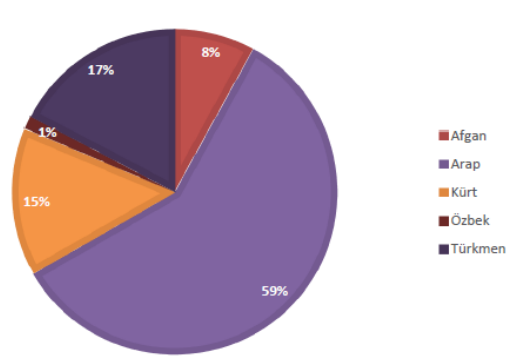
The country in which participants came from and the country in which they were born differ. According to the route, the country they come from is generally Turkey's border neighbor countries, while the countries of origin varies. 71% of the participants were born in Syria, 17% in Iraq, 9% in Afghanistan and 3% in Iran.

Graphic 9 Distribution by Country of Birth



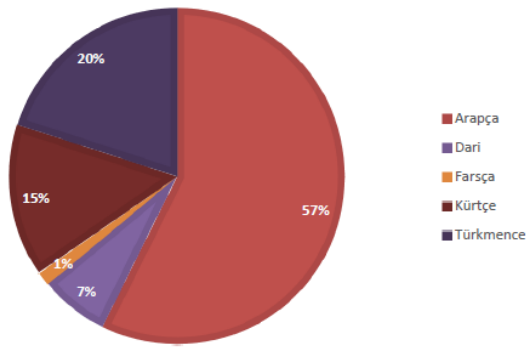
The ethnic distribution of participants and families is more diverse than their place of birth. In this case, it is possible to say that the refugee-producing countries have a rich structure in terms of ethnic diversity. The majority of the participants were of Arab origin (59%). The origins of the participants were 17% Turkmen, 15% Kurdish, 8% Afghan and 1% Uzbek, respectively.

Graphic 10 Distribution by Ethnicity



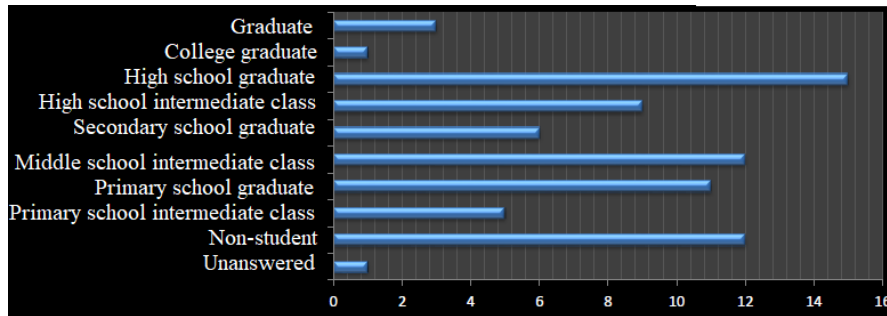
The native languages of the individuals also differ depending on the ethnic background. Again, the native language differences, which are predicted to be due to ethnic diversity, vary from the official languages of the countries. It was noted that the native languages of the interviewees were 57% Arabic, 20% Turkmen, 15% Kurdish, 7% Dari and 1% Persian.

Graphic 11 Distribution by Native Language



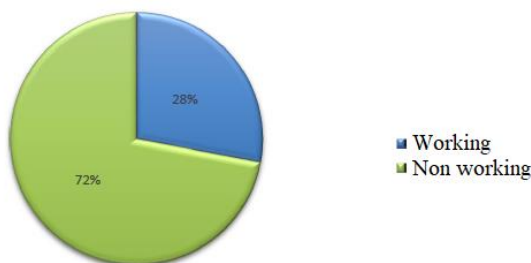
The educational level of people varies according to their gender, the status of their country of origin and their age. The education level of 15 of the 75 participants interviewed is high school graduate. The highest rates that followed are 12 people who never attended school and 12 people who dropped out of secondary school. The lowest education status rate is 1 person with a college graduate, while the number of university graduate participants is 3. Education levels were used comparatively in research findings. The relationship between people's preferences and education levels will be evaluated.

Graphic 12 Distribution by Education Status



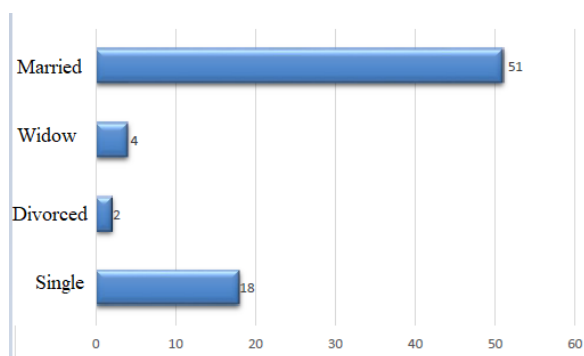
Just like the education level, variables such as gender and age appear as important variables that affect responses in people's employment situations. Details affecting the working status will be mentioned in the following sections. Based on the basic working and non-working status of people, 72% of the participants interviewed were not working and 28% were working.

Graphic 13 Distribution by Employment Status



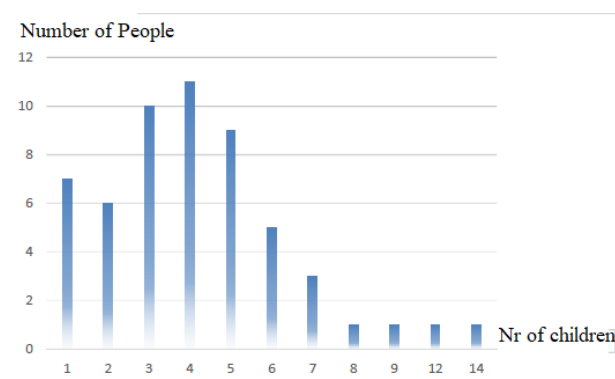
As for the family information of individuals, marital status and number of children are the last titles that we will mention in this section. While married people had the highest rate with 51 people, 18 participants were found to be single. 2 participants are divorced from their spouses. And 4 people's spouses are not alive.

Graphic 14 Distribution by Marital Status



Looking at the number of children of participants, except for 7 people who are single or do not have children, it is observed that they mostly have 3 to 5 children. Participants who rarely had more than 5 children were also encountered. It has been observed that the person with the highest number of children has 14 children.

Graphic 15 Distribution by Number of Children



2. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 Taking the Decision to Set Off and the Situation Triggering the Migration in the Country of Origin

Although the interviews conducted in the study found very different reasons for starting the journey, it was observed that irregular migrants decided to set off mainly because they live in conflict zones or threatened settlements.

There are two different points that stand out in interviews with people who come from different countries by irregular methods. People from Central Asia, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, have stated that they started the journey because in unstable regions where conflicts and unrest have continued for many years, at some point “becoming no longer bearable”. On the other hand, the factor that determines the departure of refugees from Syria who did not participate in the “mass influx”⁷ migration movement and have arrived through irregular illegal routes in the last 2-3 years due to the closure of the border is the constant threat of the regime and the activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and Damascus (ISIS), especially in settlements such as Idlib. ISIS's terrorist activities have taken their place in the study results as the most effective dynamic in making migration decisions for refugees coming from Iraq to Turkey, as for those coming from Syria.

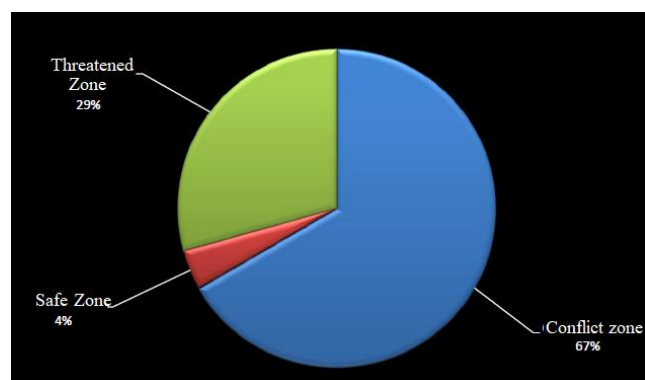
⁷ Mass Influx: Sudden flow of large numbers of displaced people into another geography or country. The fact that Turkey has opened its borders and accepted a large number of Syrian refugees is an example of this phenomenon.

The Syrians interviewed mainly mentioned three reasons in their journey stories:

Although the airstrikes carried out by the Syrian regime are the main reason, Syrian refugees have also mentioned that the pressure carried out by the regime is a major factor in their departure. Especially as a result of increasing pressure on older boys to be conscripted by the regime and even in places where there is no conflict, a decision was made on forced migration to Turkey. What is told about forced recruitment is not limited to the regime forces only. Similarly, an important reason for forced migration transmitted by families to the research team is that their children are forcibly taken under arms in different regions controlled by a large number of organizations. During the interviews, those who stayed in the regions where the PKK/YPG⁸ has roots in Syria or who made the transition stated that they were under intense pressure by the YPJ⁹, the women's branch of the organization, to recruit young girls as well as young boys. A family of the interviewees conveyed to our interviewers that their daughters have already been forcibly recruited by People's Protection Units Women's Branch (YPJ) in Syria and they still have not heard from their children and are very worried.

"When death was certain in the back, we said at least we would die on the road, and we set out on the road. All that stuff on the road, all the trouble, thank god it's over. Look, Thank God, we're finally here." A Syrian participant

Graphic 16 The Situation of the Area of Residence Before The Departure



Finally, the threat of ISIS has been frequently voiced by both Syrian and Iraqi refugees. In both countries, the fact that the areas dominated by the ISIS regime are either under armed conflict or under constant threat creates a major reason for forced migration. However, being recruited by force, looting of controlled or occupied places, basic human rights violations and fear that such events may occur in the future are other main reasons. In addition to all these, the attitude of the ISIS regime is also effective in a personal context. An Iraqi asylum seeker interviewee showed his wounds to the research team and told that he was sentenced to 80 lashes for a single cigarette he had smoked and the execution was carried out in the village square. The punishment was not only flogged, but the participant was fined 24 thousand Dinars and forced to attend 3-month faith school¹⁰.

⁸ YPG: People's Protection Units, An organization that appears to be affiliated with the Supreme Kurdish Committee and actually operates as the Syrian branch of the PKK.

⁹ YPJ: It is the women's branch of the YPG (People's Protection Units). It was established in 2012 as the YPG's women's brigade.

¹⁰ Faith schools: A system of criminal schools that ISIS has shaped within the framework of its own religious view and world perception, and again, in which people are forced to attend classes where propaganda of the organization is carried out in accordance with this point of view.

As is known, the Afghan geography continues to produce asylum seekers and refugees due to endless conflicts over half a century. Civil war initiated by local warlords¹¹ who dominated different provinces in Afghanistan after the Soviet occupation, the Taliban regime¹² and the renewed conflicts, ethnic strife, smuggling activities of transnational criminal networks and drug trade, the structuring of international terrorist organizations, social inequalities, Economic hardships and endless violence, temporary governments and, most importantly, unceasing foreign intervention make it impossible for people to live a normal life in Afghanistan.

"ISIS confronted us on the road, they made a lot of speeches, propaganda, saying Turkey is not a Muslim country, they are unbelievers, infidels, so do not go there. So what? Raki in one hand, Koran in the other. The lady later said to me, "Can a place with so many mosques be an unbeliever country?". I thought, she's right, so we came." A Syrian participant

Along with the Soviet occupation, people who began to be displaced and forced to emigrate flocked to Pakistan and Iran and began to create a large number of refugee camps. However, the ethnic problems that exist in Afghanistan also have an impact in camps in these countries. The Taliban is a structure made up of people of Pashtun¹³ ethnicity and who belong to the Deobandi¹⁴ movement in a religious sense. The presence of the Pashtun majority and members of the Deobandi faith on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border makes the Taliban dominance more intense in these regions, so it becomes very difficult for other ethnic groups such as Uzbek, Turkmen or Hazara¹⁵ to accommodate in these camps. Those who can accommodate face practices such as forced recruitment or ransom or extortion by the Taliban or other organizations. An Afghan of Turkmen origin from Sheberghan, one of the young refugees interviewed, stated that he started to work as a gendarme in the Afghan army, but that the Taliban was present almost everywhere secretly or openly, and that he was asked to pay a monthly tribute of 150 USD during his duty, and therefore he was forced to leave Afghanistan. When he was asked about the ongoing peace process, he commented that according to him it was "nothing but theatre".

During the research, similar problems were expressed in interviews with the Afghans who have settled in Iran and the Afghans who have recently transferred. The main issues in the narratives of asylum seekers from Iran are that Afghan asylum seekers are not identified in Iran in any way, are deprived of the most basic services and social rights, as well as subjected to racism. An Afghan asylum seeker who stated that they were treated as second-class human beings during the years they stayed in Iran and that they were "invisible men" in his own words, tried to resist when his wife was sexually abused in the village where he worked last time, he was stabbed and lost one of his kidneys during this fight; however, he stated that he could not find support from the local people or the security forces. And he conveyed that when he tried to seek his right by legal means, he was implied/implicitly told by the authorities that he "should not try in vain, that he and his wife have no importance because they are Afghans." In contrast to the ease of access to services in Turkey, he said that as long as they have money in Iran, they can receive services and are considered human, so they go on an immigration journey.

¹¹ Afghan warlords: Ex-mujahideen commanders and tribal, religious or ethnic leaders who exhibited autonomous administration in the provinces of Afghanistan, such as the feudal system, after the Soviet invasion.

¹² Taliban: The organization, which adopts the name Taliban (students), which is the plural of the Arabic word talib (student), was founded in 1994 with approximately 50 madrasah students under the leadership of Molla Ömer Ahund. Originally from Kandahar, Molla Ömer studied madrasah in Pakistan for a while and then in Meyvend district in the north of Kandahar. The formation took part in the civil war against and after the Soviet occupation.

¹³ The Pashtuns are the majority ethnic group in Afghanistan.

¹⁴ Deobandi movement: is an Islamic Movement affiliated with the Hanafi sect that originated in the Darul Ulum Diobend school in Diobend, India. Most Taliban members belong to this movement

¹⁵ Hazaras: The third largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. It differs from other ethnic groups not only in an ethnic sense, but also in a sect. The majority have Shia Islamic faith.

As a result, life safety is the first priority in the decision to set off, but due to the ongoing unstable situation in the place of living, the impossibility of a normal daily life in the countries of origin, lack of education, poverty and dominance of backwardness, political impotence, lack of services, economic and financial status that pushing the hunger limits, along with ethnic structures, clan and tribal orders, the ongoing concern and perturbations and other phenomena such as social inequalities also plays an important role; all these dynamics trigger these people to set out with the hope of new life and opportunities.

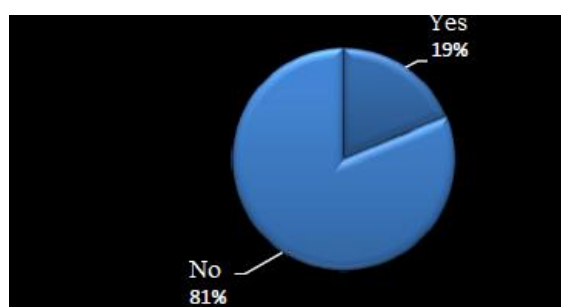
2.2 The Process of Selecting Destination and Transit Countries by Migrants

The process of Turkey becoming a destination country by ceasing to be a transit country for migration flows becomes even more evident with the study findings. Almost all of the refugees interviewed (71 people) said they intended to come to Turkey as the ultimate goal. Three people answered Europe (2 people) and Canada (1 person), while one person stated that they did not set out with the idea of any destination country. When we asked, "Did you investigate Turkey before you arrived?", the answer to the question was mainly "no". When asked about the reason, refugees from Iran, Iraq and Syria stated that they did not need to investigate because they have very close cultures; they knew in advance that they were being treated humanely in Turkey when they talked with relatives, neighbors or friends who had previously come to Turkey. Another important aspect in this sense is the network structure between refugees. In this sense, especially from applications found on mobile phones, they often communicate with each other and inform each other about the status of their location. For example, The Telegram app is very popular among Afghans, and it has been found that they constantly forming groups to communicate.

In addition, because of the kinship relations on both sides of the border, they did not find themselves in a very foreign culture; they stated that they felt a relief after entering Turkish territory despite their irregular entry, and that they thought they were now saved.

"Pre-war transits were easy as changing cities. Sometimes I was passing by, when we need diesel, cigarette, perfume. I even enjoyed going to Syria for my friends. You see already here, it's so close..." A Turkish citizen living in Yayladağ

Graphic 17 Making Research about Turkey Before Coming To Turkey



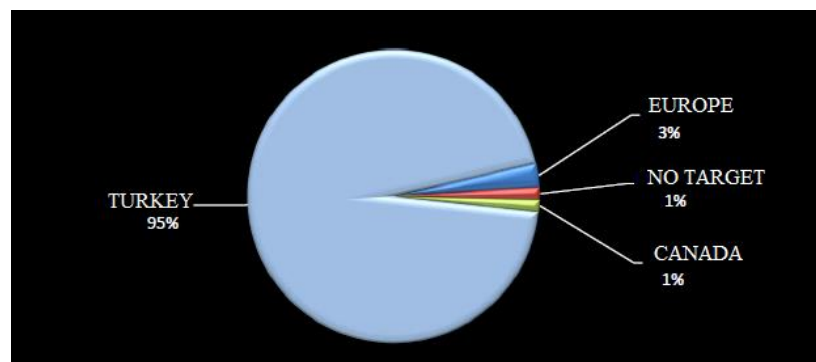
Refugees from Afghanistan have stated that they heard from their connections and from their relatives/acquaintances who reached Europe that it was very difficult to cross into Europe, there are no former opportunities in Europe and xenophobia was increasing. Accordingly, they stated that they do not face any discrimination in the sense of racism in Turkey, that they can find job through previous relatives or acquaintances, especially in the sense of agricultural labor and seasonal labor, and that they feel safe when they have access to basic services. Some of the Afghans interviewed reported to the research team in Central Asian Turkish that they were already of Turkmen descent and that they came from the precinct of Shibirgan, that they were generally considered Uzbek, but that they were of

Turkish descent. The asylum seekers, who indicated they could not speak Persian or Dari¹⁶, said they felt they had come to their homes when they arrived in Turkey. The issue these participants are suffering from is that "they are considered to be of Pashtun origin or Taliban". However, they asked the researchers to "convey that there are many Turkmen or Uzbek people in the Afghans, and that this distinction should be paid attention to by the authorities." The three young Afghan refugees stated that they conveyed their final goals as Europe and Canada because of the presence of relatives there, and if they do not reach there, they plan a life in Turkey.

"I was thinking of going to Europe with my family, but I listened to very bad stories from those who went. The situation there was very bad, they were treated very hard, they were harassed. We're muddle along in Turkey, the children got used to this place. We said why bother, we are comfortable. " A Syrian participant

Another important point that should be emphasized is that the team that carried out the study and has been in the migration field for a long time witnessed in this study that over the years, the desire of refugees to go to Europe has been replaced by the desire to come and settle in Turkey. It was observed during the study by the research team that formed their careers in this area, between the years 2013-2017, most of the refugees interviewed especially after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, stated Europe as their final destination, while in recent years Turkey was more stated as their final destination. Almost all of the participants who stayed in Turkey for a while reported that they were happy in Turkey, that their children started to go to school, and they started working. The answers given in the study provide a support to this discourse, revealing the situation in which Turkey is no longer chosen as the bridge, but as the ultimate destination country. Although the practice of not stopping asylum seekers at Turkey's borders to Europe began at the time of this study, almost all of the participants interviewed said that they would not go to the border. They conveyed to the research team that there is no point in putting themselves in danger, that they are now thoroughly used to Turkey and that it would be wiser to wait in Turkey for the appropriate time for passage at worst, and their refugee relatives, etc. thinks the same way.

Graphic 18 Target Country



In general, connections such as relatives, acquaintances and friends in the target country play the most important role in the selection of refugees, while issues such as economic concerns and access to social services are other important factors affecting decision-making mechanisms.

2.3 Smuggling Phenomenon and Players

The fact that the geography and living conditions have changed in social, economic, political and environmental terms and become bad and unbearable, or the current dynamics are in a bad situation,

¹⁶ Dari: One of the common languages used extensively in Afghanistan, it has dialects from geographical region names such as Kaboli, Mazari, Herati

pushes people to seek a better life and more appropriate opportunities. As a result of these searches, the illegal entry of these people who do not have the opportunity to enter other geographies and countries legally due to the immigration movements, creates the phenomenon of migrant smuggling. As these forcibly displaced people multiply their numbers and embark on a journey of hope, the problem of migrant smuggling grows apace at the right rate; it becomes an organized, transboundary and complex phenomenon that cannot be resolved by international agreements or military, economic and political measures; and the illegal profit generated from it is also increasing from year to year. Even in 2018 Europol reports alone, 17,459 suspected migrant smuggling is involved, while as the number of irregular migrants increases, the annual illegal income of 7 billion Euros may increase by double or triple in the years to come.

Migrant smuggling, by the definition of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), is “helping a person illegally enter a state where they are not a citizen or permanent resident, in any way whatsoever, for financial gain” (UNODC, 2000).

Migrant smuggling, is defined in Article 79 of the Turkish Criminal Law as “to bring a foreigner into the country or allow a foreigner to stay in the country or provide an opportunity to the Turkish citizen or a foreigner to go abroad by illegal methods in order to obtain material benefit directly or indirectly”. The sanctions for migrant trafficking are defined in the same article as follows: “He is punished with imprisonment from three to eight years and a judicial fine of up to ten thousand days. The punishment to be imposed is increased from half to two-thirds in case of a life-threatening or degrading treatment. If the crime of migrant smuggling is committed within the framework of the activity of the organization established as part of the crime of establishing an organization with the purpose of committing a crime, the penalties will be increased by half. If this crime is committed within the framework of the activity of a legal entity, security measures specific to them are imposed on the legal entity.” In addition, “attempting to commit the crime of migrant smuggling” is also punished as if the crime had been completed.

The people involved in these illegal activities are migrant smugglers, organizers, cashiers and custodians, local smugglers, drivers, false document forger, brokers, accommodation providers (villagers living in border areas, hotel and rental house owners) and guides come out as actors of the complex dynamics of smuggling. In the study, the participants stated that they never met with organizers and those who provided forged documents, and that they were handed over to the migrant smugglers and put on the vehicles with the initiation of intermediaries at the first stage of their departure, and that they passed the intercity roads through the drivers in the panel vans and midibuses and the guides in the same vehicle. Guides and local smugglers know people who are at key points in areas under the control of illegal entities or who have prior knowledge of police stops that may be on the way, and ensure that crossings are made by operating the bribery wheel in these areas.

Border crossings are also carried out by local guides and smugglers; because these people know the geography very well, as well as the location of mines at the border, when to cross, security weaknesses or the working hours of corrupt security guards who can take bribes. Depositories, on the other hand, operate like an insurance system used by organizations. After the asylum seeker entrusts the road fee to a person such as a reliable person, mutual friend, acquaintance, relative identified by his intermediary, these people, that is, the “depositories”, who provide the delivery of the fee to the smuggler or intermediary when the asylum seeker arrives at the destination safely, take their place in the system. At this point, insurance works in both directions and avoids the danger of usurping refugee money, while organizations make it almost impossible to track the money flow and traffic in this way.

As for accommodation, the participants stated that rest and breaks are usually made in daylight. Since a crowded team of refugees would draw attention, they said that they waited for the darkness to come down by taking breaks in hotels, hostels, farmhouses or sometimes trees and forests where they were brought in during the day. They also told to the research team that the places where they stay are places that are far from comfort and in filth, packed, mostly without toilets and drinking water. Although there were discussions with hotel owners, hostel renters or owners of abandoned farmhouses or huts in villages that provided accommodation here, accommodation was compulsory because they

had no other choice. Especially Afghan and Iraqi participants told that they were repeatedly asked for money for accommodation in places such as hotels, hostels, except for the fee that was initially agreed, and if they did not give more money, they were “battered” by smugglers and venue owners as a mild punishment method.

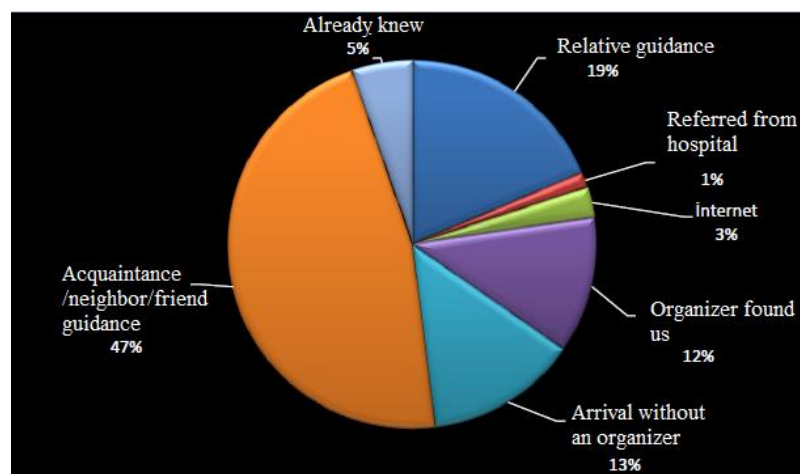
As can be seen, the roles in the phenomenon of migrant smuggling are extremely complex: A smuggler can come across as both a guide and a driver, as well as a farm owner who provides accommodation in an area close to the border. As an Afghan participant quoted, the fact that 17 smugglers of different nature appear in different roles in the phenomenon of migrant smuggling along the way, and that these people are just the visible faces of organizations reveal how large, transboundary and organized the illegal activity is.

2.4 Access to Intermediaries and Smugglers

Due to the fact that the geographies from which the interviewees in the study came are mainly regions under conflict or intense threat, migrant smuggling activities continue as a whole of the dynamics that have existed in these geographies for a long time. In these regions, migrant smuggling has become an extension of natural life, and as can be seen in the study results, smugglers are in the immediate vicinity of refugees and where they can very easily accessible.

In this context, 47% of the participants responded to the question “How did you reach smugglers and organizers” as through acquaintances/neighbors/friends who forming their close circle. 5% of the participants, on the other hand, used the phrase “I already knew the smugglers or intermediaries”, while telling their stories and laughing as if they were not denying the situation. While 19% of the participants stated that they were directed by their relatives to intermediaries and smugglers, it is an important information revealed during the interviews that 16% of these relatives have already migrated and directed these refugees from their destination.

Graphic 19 Method of Accessing the Intermediary Smugglers



The ease of access to smugglers becomes even more evident in the statements of the 12% tranche. Participants in this tranche stated that smugglers and intermediaries reached out to them and convinced them for an illegal immigration journey. An Afghan participant reported that the people who were threatened by the Taliban were somehow known by smugglers and intermediaries, and that they came to them with an offer. Again, participants from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran describe this situation with an example, if they walk around Tehran's Azadi Square for only 10 minutes, a large number of vehicles come right next to them and ask where they want to go.

Although internet access is seen as a 3% slice, the information provided by the participants provides a very interesting subject for another research area: Smuggling ads on Instagram, Facebook and similar virtual media are carried out without the need to hide, especially for crossings from Iran to Turkey and residence permits. Although they do not use this method, the social media accounts known by other participants and shown to the team on their phones personally, photos of fake IDs, passports and documents or stories of people who have crossed the border, resided, etc. are published as advertisements and these events are reflected in the press (Euronews, 2020). In this sense, the gap in security and law enforcement in Iran and how this gap is filled by illegal entities are revealed in all aspects.

"In Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, various defrauders trick and cheat people with the suggestion of taking them to Europe. This business has now turned into a very large industry, there is a lot of money. Young people have to get involved in these things." Afghan Participant

13% of respondents are usually of Syrian origin and their acquaintances are border villagers who live close to the border in Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep, who illegally cross by their own means, or who have a guide who knows the geography well.

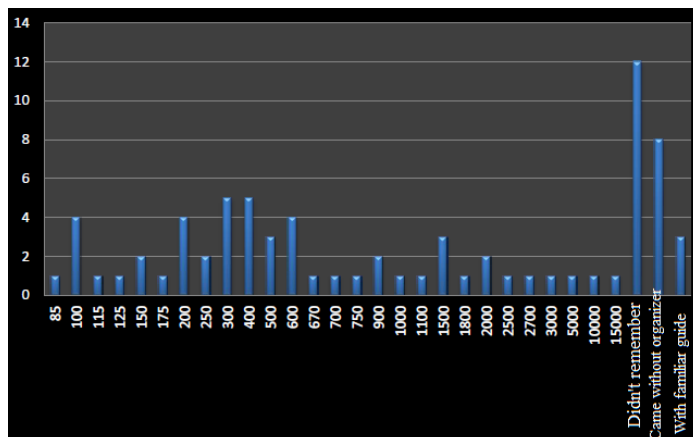
As a final and interesting example, when a participant who answered “by hospital referral” was asked how he had made the transition, he stated that he had received a report from a hospital in Syria that he should be treated in Turkey, and he had made the border crossing by loading his entire family into the ambulance. He said that many people, like himself, have made the necessary adjustments in hospitals in Syria and made illegal transition through ambulances with these reports. Even this information alone shows where the dimensions of the phenomenon of migrant smuggling can extend.

"I have 8 children, but 7 of them are with me. When my oldest son lived in Aleppo, he used to work in the market. He died in the bombing. After that, we could not be the same as before. We were afraid, I could not stop there in case something happened to my other children. May god be pleased we have acquaintances, they took a lot of money but also ensure us pass to Turkey. My children were saved. " Syrian participant

Another notable finding in the “Access to Intermediaries and Smugglers” section of the study is that all participants perceive the smuggling organizations as an extremely normal, easily accessible and ordinary structure. In this sense, the situation of normalisation of crime becomes extremely dangerous and makes the fight against smuggling very difficult. Participants from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Syria see all the violence, cruelty, rape and fraud that occur in the process, including the loss of life, throughout their storytelling about smugglers, as “smuggling activities.” In addition, the fact that they can leave their entire lives in the hands of smugglers is a parallel finding that should be conveyed as the psychological dimension of normalizing crime. In this direction, it is seen that the behavior of normalizing the crime is a functional phenomenon used to cope with the traumas experienced under the influence of situations such as the loss of social support, the sense of loss, the state of mourning that comes with a split from home and the culture they connect to.

2.4.1 Fees and Payment Methods

Graphic 20 Fee Paid To Intermediaries (USD Dolar/ Per Person)



The fees paid for the trip have been converted into US Dollars over the daily T.C Central Bank rate of the current year (the year in which the transition was made for each transition) in order to easily understand the answers in many different currencies. Fees vary according to the geographical distance, the number of people and the existing situations in the regions passed.

As an example, a family of 7 people from Iraq paid more than \$ 2000 per person. Although the geography of Iraq remains relatively close, the transition from northern Iraq could not be made due to ethnicity, so large sums were paid through Syria and the transition to Turkey was provided. However, as it turns out from the stories of the participants coming from far parts of Iraq and Syria, civil war or conflict does not prevent smuggling activities much; for as much as everyone gets their share of migrant smuggling. Arrivals from Afghanistan and Pakistan usually range from 1500 Dollars to 2000 Dollars per person, from Iraq to 1000-2000 Dollars and from Iran to 400-1000 Dollars, while arrivals from Syria range from 85 Dollars from areas near the border and 600 Dollars for remote places. Many of the female participants stated that they did not know or remember the fees, as their husbands or male relatives were dealing with intermediaries or smugglers because of cultural codes.

"At that time, we gave 1000 Dollars; but I don't know who made the deal with whom, I don't know what happened, we gave the money and crossed the border. Now that they've built a wall, the transition fee which was 1000 Dollars at that time, now it's 2500 Dollars. Say, they've planted soldiers at every meter, that transition fee will be 5000 Dollars, but they would cross the border again. That's how it is, no matter what you do, they'll cross! I'll ask you, if they say they're going to cut off your head, if they say you're going to die, are you fond of your life or your money?" A Syrian participant

Again, Syrians who are close to the border or who know the geography of the border have stated that they usually cross the border on foot without the need for organizers or smugglers. Likewise, there are those who cross the border through familiar guides or friends/relatives/neighbors who dominate the geography. Either way, all those who make the illegal border crossing without paying are Syrian participants.

The numbers in the table reflect the amounts paid to the intermediary or smuggler for the entire journey; apart from that the participants reported that they were often charged extra fees for sheltering, crossing from the territory of organizations or armed formations, or food while on the road. In this case, it is seen that smugglers who do not comply with the guarantee of safe passage given under the agreement leave the refugees at the mercy of the members of armed formations/organizations. Even more appalling, a person who participated in the research said that when they passed through the PKK/PYD region to come from Iraq to Turkey, they were left without money because they gave all their money to the intermediary, and therefore vulnerable people who were left without money, along with those who did not have money like him, were detained. The participant stated that there was an

agreement between the smugglers and the PKK/PYD, and that people were forcibly detained by selecting vulnerable young individuals when the groups passed. He explained that they were kept in the cells where they were detained for 1,5-2 months, during which blood and tissue samples were taken from them and some of them were taken away from time to time. As he learned later, he told to the research team that the organs of refugees were taken to meet the illegal organ transplant requests from rich Arab countries, and that he was saved by handing them over to relatives in exchange for ransom.

Among those subjected to forced migration, women who begin the journey alone or with their children are subjected to violence, harassment and/or rape from both smugglers and members of armed organizations/formations. Again, an Iraqi woman from the participants, who is not have a husband, stated that on her migration journey to save her life and her family, she was subjected to countless harassment and rape twice throughout Iraq and Syria when her money was usurped by smugglers, and that only allowed to cross in this way. She tearfully told the female research members of the team that she couldn't do anything because her children were so young and had to put up with all this. As it is seen, smuggling organizations and the organizations and armed structures that dominate the geographies along the way, exploit the money and even the bodies of refugees who are defenseless, without fear of legal sanctions and without human concern; violate many fundamental human rights of refugees, including personal liberty and physical integrity.

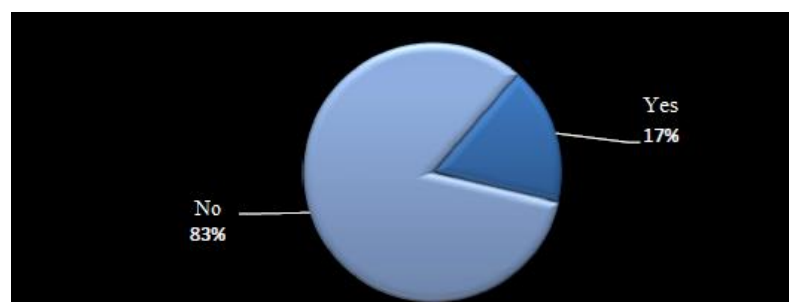
“They bring 20-30-year-old women and marry them with Turkish or Syrian men over the age of 50, the trade of this is going on a lot around here; look, investigate, divorces have increased a lot at this time. The police and soldiers are trying hard to stop, but which one to deal with? And there are prostitution houses for those who can't get married. It's a pity, but there's nothing to do, it's the order of the world.” A Reyhanli native

2.5 Journey Process

The road process is the most important stage for all actors of the phenomenon of migrant smuggling and illegal immigration. Each refugee's road story contains unique events, regardless of distance and geography.

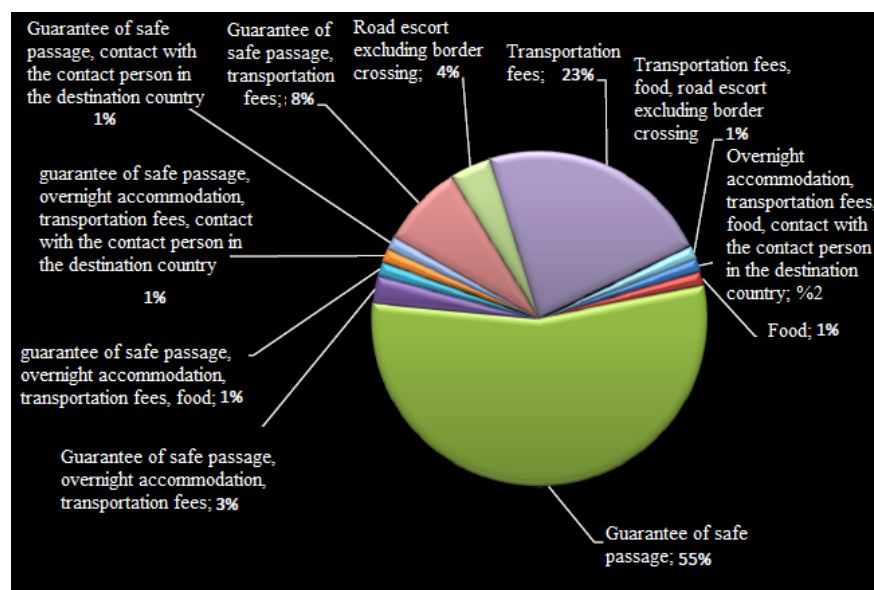
Smugglers and intermediaries often do not provide any preliminary information about events and risks that may occur on the road. Participants whose road process was troubled stated that if they had been informed in advance about the incidents that happened to them on the road, they might have resorted to different methods or would have gone for a change in timing. A small number of participants who were informed about the journey noted that the risks are usually passed on to them, such as that soldiers can open fire at the borders, what to do when the risk of being caught appears and is said to escape, in which areas they should remain silent, what to say when it comes to gangs or armed formations/organizations, if they are stuck in police control or if the risk of being caught occurs, the smuggler will leave them, the end of the road is unclear, and at this point they should trust Allah.

Graphic 21 Pre-Information Status on the Risks of Travel



Another output that should be noted here is the fact that there are also smugglers who say that they can provide the safest journey. In the conversations with the participants after the interviews revealed that there was intense competition between smugglers and smuggling organizations. At this point, participants conveyed in their statements that they were promised some guarantees when negotiating with intermediaries or smugglers before setting off. In the study, the guarantees given to refugees are listed as follows: guarantee of safe passage, accommodation, transport, contact with the contact person in the destination country (transfer to the next smuggler), provide escort and food on the road except for border crossing. Although promises have been made, many road stories show that smugglers leave refugees alone in the face of changing and evolving situations, and in the best possible case, step back and do not interfere with anything.

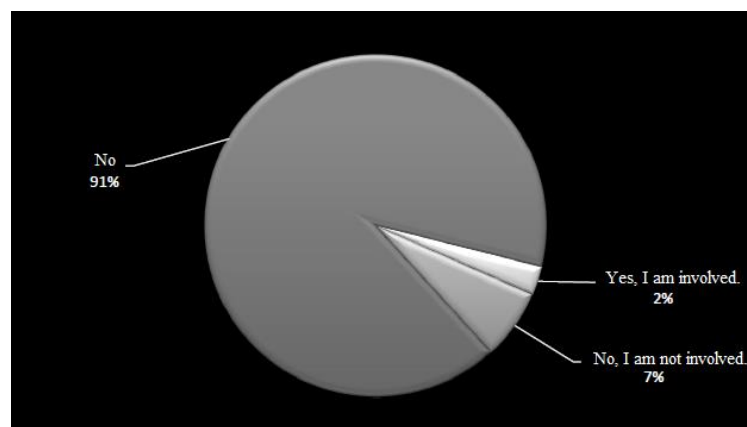
Graphic 22 Services Provided by Smugglers



Especially in the chaotic environments of conflict zones, problems can arise even if smugglers have previously agreed with members of armed formations/organizations, and situations occur that the smugglers cannot prevent, even if they try to intervene in the incidents.

When asked whether refugees in the group were given an appeal, debate or struggle to seek rights against smugglers in cases such as if the promises were not kept or the conditions did not come out as described, the answer was mostly “no”. In cases such as an argument/fight/objection with the smuggler, participants often stated that they chose not to participate in the scene. Only one participant reported that a fight broke out between refugees because of the smuggler's decisions.

Graphic 23 Argument/Fight/Objection etc. with Smuggler on the Road

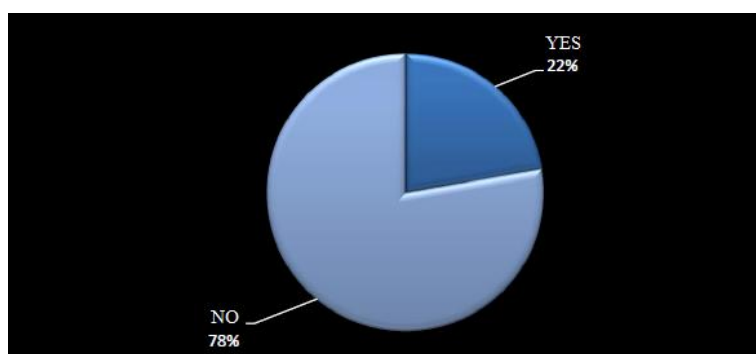


From the answers given by the participants to the question, "Have you been subjected to ill-treatment (violence, harassment, enforced detention, threats, abandonment on the road, etc.) by anyone during the journey?" from his answers to the question, it is understood that such an event occurs in almost every 4-5 trips. Considering the research universe prepared for this study, that is, the phenomenon compared to the number of refugees who have entered Turkey irregularly, it is seen how heavy and foridding the picture is.

According to an Afghan participant, in the ruins of a village house on the Iran-Turkey border for the purpose of spending the day and accommodation, 30 refugees were crammed into a small room and asked to spend the entire night. The participant stated that in an overcrowded environment where it was very difficult to breathe, an asylum seeker who was constantly complaining about the situation was taken out by the smugglers, and after hearing scuffle and shouts, the sound stopped, and when it got dark, they never saw this person again. In a continuation of the questions, when the researcher asked, "Was there a toilet or drinking water available?" the participant stated that even if there was any, nobody dared to ask the smugglers after that incident.

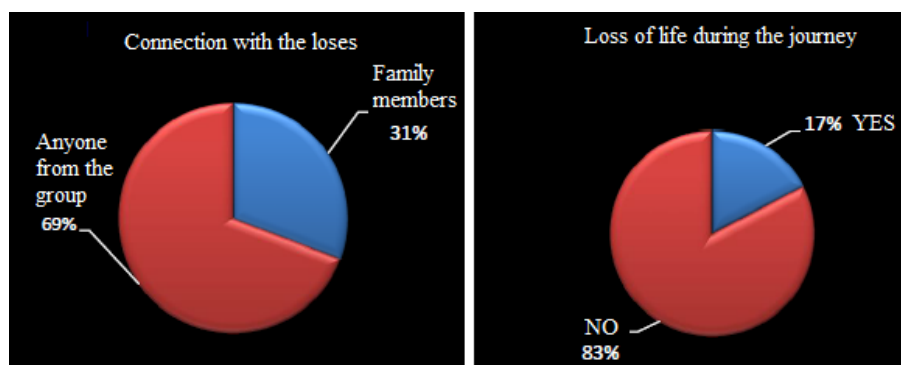
"Smugglers made us leave our belongings on the way. They wanted us to leave some of the stuff on the road so we could go faster, that the load slowed us down and there was the police ahead. Of course, we found out later that this was a robbery. People in these settlements connected to the smuggler were collecting our bags and leave after we left. You have forced to do it, you have no chance to object..." An Afghan participant

Graphic 24 Encountered With Misconduct During Travel



The acts of violence and ill-treatment shown to refugees on the road, in which the smugglers predominantly play the leading role, starting from the slightest insult and slapping of the soldiers; captured for ransom and extortion by gangs, armed groups and formations; being subjected to harassment, rape or torture, and, ultimately, the deaths of relatives on the road, up to an extent is progressing.

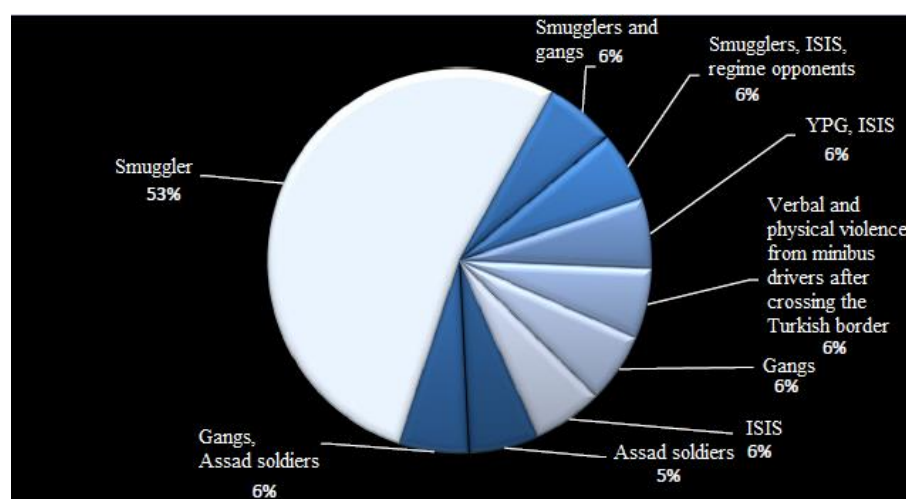
Graphic 25 Loss of Life on the Road and Connection



As a result of the interviews, it was found that one person from the refugee groups lost his/her life in one of every 6-7 irregular migration journeys examined in the study. In the study, participants reported that one third of these losses were from family members.

In the question of who carried out the mistreatment, especially when Syrian participants mentioned some formations that showed violence to them as gangs, the researchers asked what they meant by these gangs. According to participants, the gang consists of units that act independently in the territory of their sovereignty, without belonging to a group or army. For example, they cited as an example that armed people who blocked roads and collected taxes on behalf of ISIS, or groups who had Syrian army uniforms attached to Assad on them and did not look like soldiers, held crossing points, and forcibly took money and valuables from people by calling it a transit duty. In a similar example, three participants, who are Syrian Turkmen, reported that some groups affiliated with the PKK/PYD forcibly received taxes from them under the name of the right of passage and occupation when they came to Turkey. However, their villages are within the PKK/PYD area and although they did not enter the region from outside, they reported that they paid money just because they were Turkmen. These narratives are a situation where important lessons can be drawn in that all the darkness of a civil war affects the most vulnerable groups, the forced migrants.

Graphic 26 The Situation By Whom The Mistreatment Was Carried Out



The vast majority of all these troubles are related to money. In many cases, problems can be solved and transition can be achieved in exchange for payment, ransom or tribute. If the refugees do not have money or valuables on them, the real tragedies begin after that.

One of the Syrian participants told investigators that his son was taken hostage for ransom during their passage through ISIS territory and that he was given a period of 15 days, and after begging and borrowing money from all his relatives and acquaintances after his passage to Turkey with the rest of his family; but when he prepared the money, he learned that his son had already been killed. The participant who stated that the smuggler disappeared during the hostage and only appeared after an hour and said there was nothing he could do and that they should continue on the road, when questioned by investigators about the smuggler's crime, gave an answer as "There was nothing he could do. He was doing the required job and managed to bring the rest of the family to Turkey". As can be seen, the normalization of the crime occurs even in such a situation, and similarly, speeches in terms of normalization of crime were heard from those who answered as no to the question of "Have you been mistreated during the journey?". The danger here is that smuggling is now perceived as a normal profession among refugees. In interviews with those who answered as no, expressions such as "If it wasn't for them, we would be dead now, we captured by ISIS or etc., and God bless them, they saved us." were heard frequently about the smugglers. It is clear how difficult these perspectives make the situation for all international institutions and organizations and states fighting with international migrant smuggling structures.

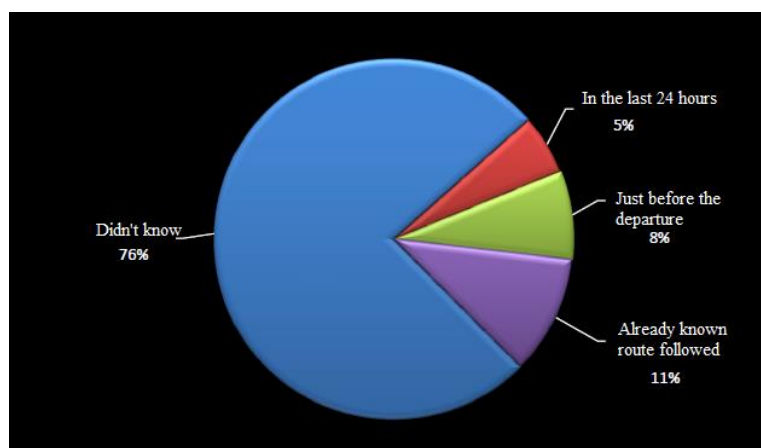
Some of the losses also occur due to difficulties of natural conditions or physical fatigue, separately from all these events. A participant from Pakistan told that they witnessed at least one person from the group of 20 people froze to death due to the extreme cold during their walk in the mountainous region on the Iran-Turkey border. As the reason for using the “at least one” phrase, he stated that he could not be sure about the fate of those who cannot keep up with the group due to fatigue and cold. As the participant explains, the rule is: Those who can't catch up are left behind; the lucky ones are found by villagers or security forces, while the unlucky ones simply lose their lives. When this point of the narrative was examined by the researchers, it was determined that the crime was not attributed to the smuggler again, and that the smuggler was not found responsible in any way, with the statement, “Everyone knows the difficulty of the road”.

“There was a woman, I never forget, who looked at her phone and cried the whole way. Finally my wife went to her, on a break, her face came back white. There were pictures of the severed heads of her husband and brother on the woman's phone. They cut their head off because they were rich, ISIS sent these as a threat to the woman, so she ran away. What else is there like this, since you are writing, pass it on. Let them stop this atrocity in Syria. No matter how they do it, just stop it.” A Syrian participant

“At night, in the area covered with bushes, I don't remember exactly how many times, but maybe 7 or 8 times, we crawled towards the barbed wire and came back with the smuggler's sign. We were lying on the ground when the smuggler gave the signal, and with another signal, crawling back again. At last we were able to dig under the wires in the morning, but the next thing I knew, our clothes were torn, we were bruised.” An Iraqi participant

Narratives show that the refugees are mostly not given route information before their departure, and the smugglers sometimes conveyed to the participants that “they do not know the road themselves and will try and see it”. In this sense, in some stories, it has been determined that smugglers set off entirely by trial and error, and on some routes they moved back and forth with the group 6 or 7 times to check the suitability of the road.

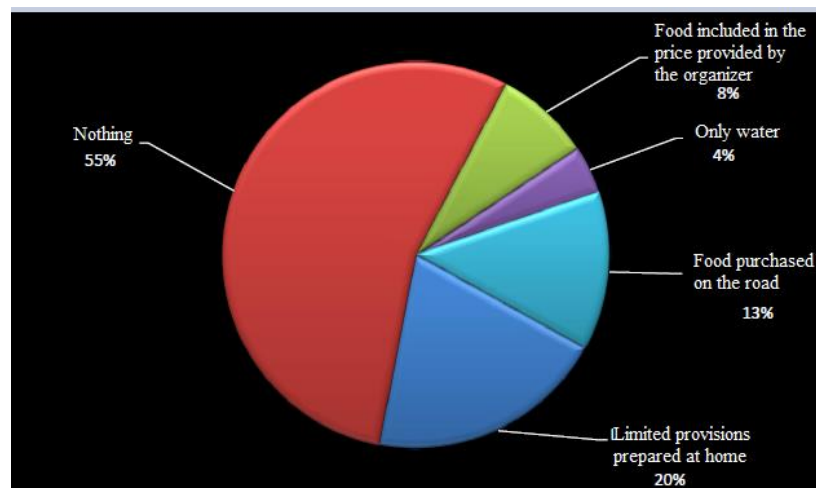
Graphic 27 Time to Learn the Arrival Route



Answers to questions about food access on the road show that the journeys are often unplanned, or that the participants often set off without taking anything with them because it is thought that food will be accessed on the way, and that they have great difficulty on the road. The predominant responses were: Nothing (55%); only water (4%); limited provisions prepared at home (20%); smugglers' food supply

on the road (8%); food purchase on the road (13%). An Afghan participant recounts with a laughter that they constantly bought and consumed biscuits along the way, that they do not take biscuits in their hands or even do not want to see them for 3-4 months after their arrival. Even when journeys are made only on foot from places close to the border, plans sometimes do not proceed as expected, and food supply can become very difficult. A Syrian participant reported that smugglers planned to cross the Turkish border on foot that night, but due to changing conditions, they had to wait for 2 months to settle down in a village near the Turkish border.

Graphic 28 Food Access on the Road



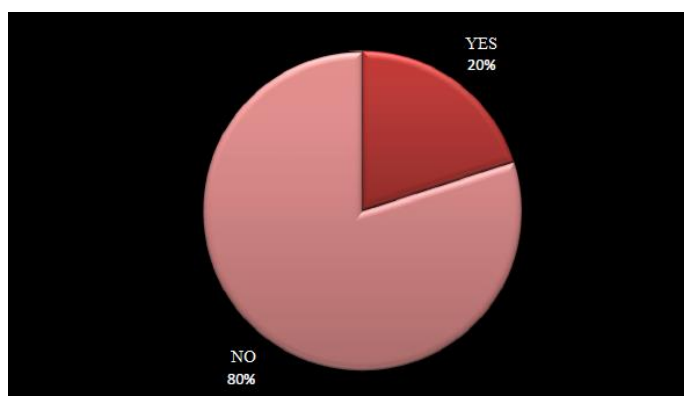
During the journey, there are problems such as food deprivation, as well as problems in terms of health. Physical fatigue, chronic illnesses and lack of medication due to this, physical violence experienced, adverse conditions and extreme environments, adverse conditions caused by extreme hot or cold weather and difficult natural conditions cause problems for many participants or groups. However, this migration journey made in order to reach better living conditions is itself a source of stress, affects the individual psychologically and this effect may show itself as severe headaches and pain during the journey.

Based on the research data, it is understood that almost one out of every 5 participants has health problems along the way and can only see support from 2 people, one of them from the group and one of them from soldiers on the Turkish border. One of the Afghan participants reported that a pack of wolves attacked them as they walked through the mountains, that their children and himself were injured, and showed that deep tooth marks on their daughter's face and a medical report about the decision to operate after arriving in Turkey. Stating that they could not get help until they crossed the border, the participant also emphasized the health risks of the journey by saying, "We set off by saying that instead of dying where we stayed we die on the road, but we did not know that these would happen to us, we could not find even the slightest first aid". In other participants and especially in children, discomforts such as cold, physical fatigue at the level of burnout and various pains, panic attacks and headaches developed due to stress are commonly seen. Another very important issue in terms of health is that children who are too young to reveal their place by crying at border crossings, police checkpoints or dangerous areas are given drugs that participants never knew. It was also learned from the participants with young children that the children had shortness of breath, high fever and coughing attacks after taking these substances, and these effects did

"Because a child was crying too much when he approached the border, the smuggler pulled a drug wrapped in a newspaper out of his pocket and gave it to the child, and when the family did not let the child to drink it, they threatened to send the child back and forced him to drink it. As far as I can see, the boy slept for two days, and at one point they were afraid he was dead. I don't know what happened after I crossed the border, God help you." An Iraqi participant

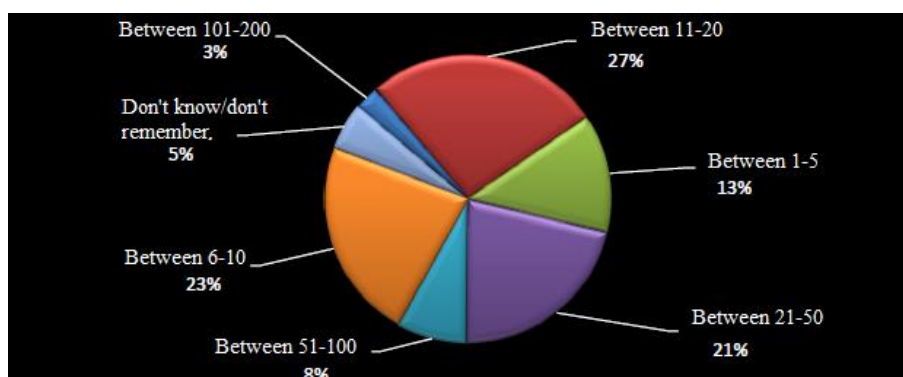
not go away for 1 week. Because it is not known what substances are given to children, it is also impossible to predict what effects they may have on these children in the future.

Graphic 29 Health Problems on the Road



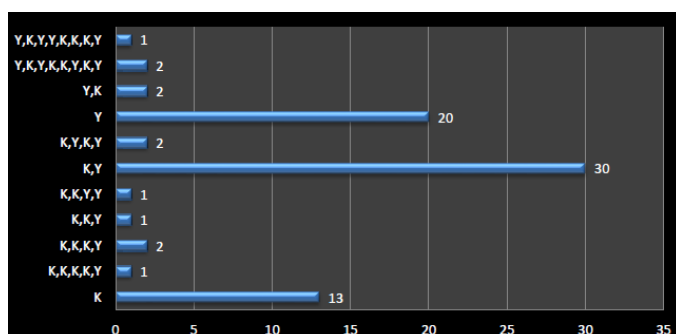
The number of people in the groups that set out varies from 1 person to groups of 200 people. Some participants also stated that they first set out on the road with 5 people, but that there were those who joined their groups later while the regions were crossing. Some participants reported that they set out on the road with 40 people, then some of them left the group for various reasons.

Graphic 30 Number of People in Groups Set on the Road



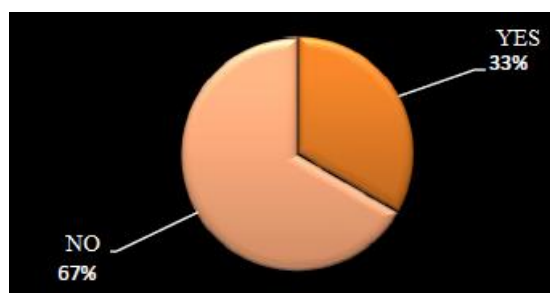
Refugees from different geographies usually cross intercity roads in buses, midibuses, trucks and lorry; especially cross the areas close to the borders or known to be under police control by walking around. In the study, it was seen that those who came from Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iran crossed the road both by vehicle and on foot; those who came from remote areas of Syria and also from Iraq arrived at the border by using only the highway and both by vehicle and on foot; it is understood that those who come from areas close to the border are only crossing the road on foot. It should be noted that the shortest walk mentioned here takes about 7-8 hours.

Graphic 31 Vehicles Used From Departure to Arrival (Highway (K) On Foot (Y))



The number of smugglers or guides accompanying the group along the way varies. While this variability tends to increase when arriving from distant routes, the number of guides increases or decreases depending on the state of the regions passed on the trips from closer geographies.

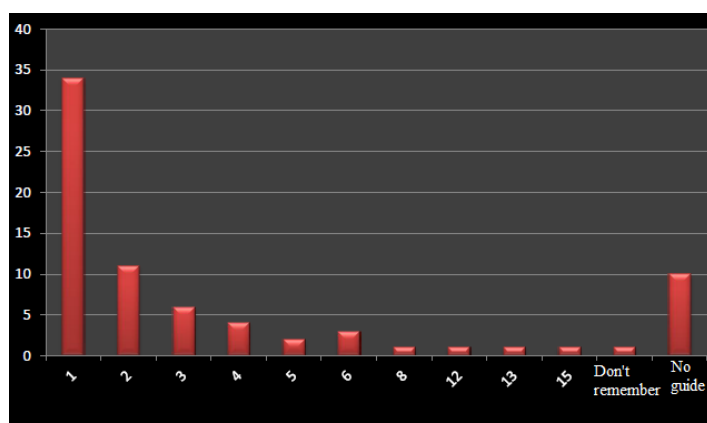
Graphic 32 Change of Guides Along the Road



"They kept saying we're going through the tunnel, my wife was so scared. It's night, they said there's trouble in the tunnel, we'll change the road and walk around. We walked parallel to the wall for about a day, then we walked again for a few days and climbed to a mountainous place. They took money from us again, because the road got longer. Again one night, there's barbed wire, they dug under it so we slipped through it. Then I wondered and looked, we walked from Syria to Iraq on the mountain, on the hill, Allah protected us, nothing happened to us." A Syrian participant

The smugglers or guides who accompany the group alternately from region to region along the way once again show the organized dimension of migrant smuggling. In this sense, there is a wide range of routes ranging from routes where only 2 guides/smugglers accompany groups along the way to routes where 15 Guides/smugglers take over the group by changing. When asked about the ages of the guides accompanying the participants, another painful picture emerged: The knowledge that the guides accompanying the groups usually consist of children aged 15-16 reveals that the organizers are abusing children to avoid sanctions for the crime of migrant smuggling. As it is known, juvenile criminals can escape from the criminal sanctions found in international and state-sized laws by receiving fewer penalties than adults. At the same time, the fact that these children are at the highest level of their physical endurance and can accompany groups on foot for a long time and escape quickly when necessary is another important reason why smugglers prefer children of this age.

Graphic 33 Number of Guides Accompanying Groups along the Way



The routes used by smugglers take place on a route called the Silk Road route for the geography of Afghanistan and Iran. Arrivals are carried out from Afghanistan, usually via Kabul or Kunduz to Iran, after Mashhad and Tehran from Iran, via Qazvin, Zencan, Tabriz, either to Urmia, from here to Van or again by the same route to Maku, from here to Ağrı-Doğubayazıt or Iğdır and then entering to Turkey. On the Iranian side of the Iran-Turkey border, the involvement of the cities that are parallel or settlements located at a reaching point in the route varies according to the situation on the Turkish border. For example, a participant stated that they were first brought to Urmia and that while they will be entering from here, they set off again to Ağrı-Doğubayazıt via Khoy with the change of security

conditions that existed at the border, and that entry to Turkey was provided from this point. At this point, in settlements parallel to the Turkish border on the map such as Urmia, Khoy and Salmas, the development of appropriate time and conditions are expected for entering Turkey. As a backup for these routes, the Hakkari/Esendere route is also used depending on the changing dynamics.

Arrival routes from Iraq are shaped as entrances from Al-Anbar, Syria's Deir ez-Zor, Raqqa, Idlib, al-Bab and Azez to Cilvegözü and directly around Şırnak via the T2 Highway. For the arrival of Syria, while the Mardin route is shaped as Kızıltepe and Nusaybin from Qamishli, Amude and Al-Darbasiyah; from Idlib to Aleppo, from Aleppo to Duden, Al-Bab or Alayrin, from there to Gaziantep or Kilis from points such as Azez and Çobanbey; for the Hatay route, the Yayladağı, Koveççi and Hacıpaşa routes are used. For Şanlıurfa, the routes for illegal entry take place to Suruç and Bozova via Ayn-El Arap.

"The day before the crossing, the PKK sent a flock of sheep in front of us to the border. While we watched from the ruins where we were staying, there was an explosion. Another explosion, and we lay on the ground in fear. The guide next to us said they were clearing mines from the front. It turned out that they were clearing the path, we watched silently at night, the soldiers searched with the dog and left. Not just for our transition, of course. The guide said, not just you, but what else are passing by, a few sheep no big deal." An Afghan participant

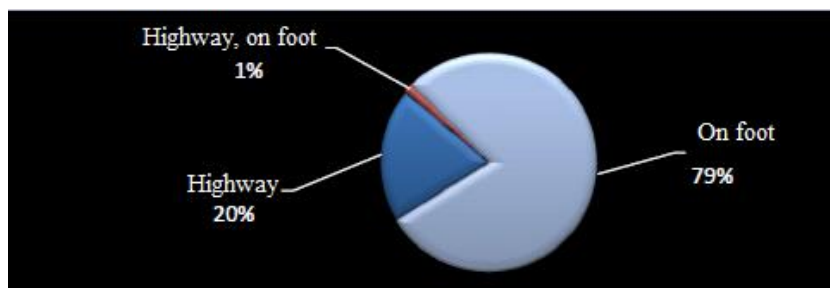
2.6 Entrance from Turkey Border

Border crossings to Turkey are usually made on foot. The impact of the wall on the Syrian border makes the methods of document forgery while entering by vehicle or airline relatively ineffective and detainable due to reasons such as increased security operations at the Iranian border, team and equipment improvement at border gates, intensive training and transition to integrated border management. In addition, due to geographical factors and difficulties of natural conditions in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia region, it is important to ensure the relative safety of pedestrian access through areas where control is difficult. The reasons such as the fact that security forces cannot fully address the issue due to the priority of the threat that terrorist elements in these regions constantly create, make pedestrian access a priority for these border areas. In this context, 4 of every 5 irregular entries to Turkey are made on foot.

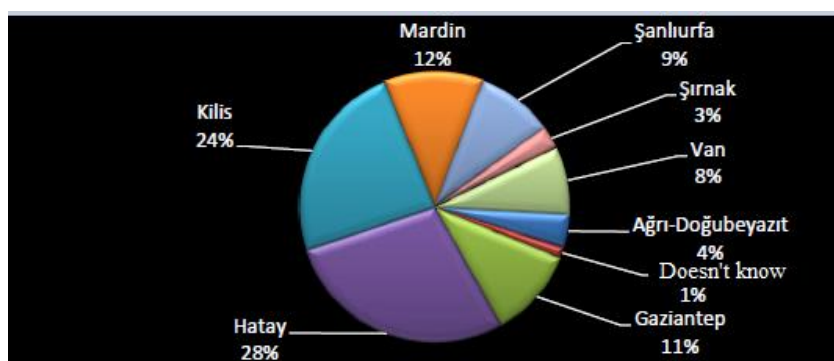
"We were stopped many times along the way, they looked at us and saw we are miserable, no one asked for money. Only the PKK collected all temporary Turkish identities from us, interrogated those who had identities and wrote their names, and asked why they went to Turkey. And they said, if they do not return soon, the Party (PKK) will confiscate their homes, it's up to you." An Iraqi participant

"We started climbing the mountain from Iran. I knew the way, I came before. I was prepared, I was dressed very warmly against the cold. But most of them didn't know, someone wore just a jacket and a shirt. One of them sat down to catch his breath, I called out, but after 5 minutes, there was no sound. He was a young boy, he was left at the top of the mountain. Go and see that there was a lot left there. I told you, I knew the way, they sent me back, but there's nothing to do, I came back. If they catch me again, I'll come back as soon as I save the money, I have no choice. Because there's no life back there." Afghan participant.

Graphic 34 How Border Crossings Are Made



Graphic 35 Cities Entered Into Turkey

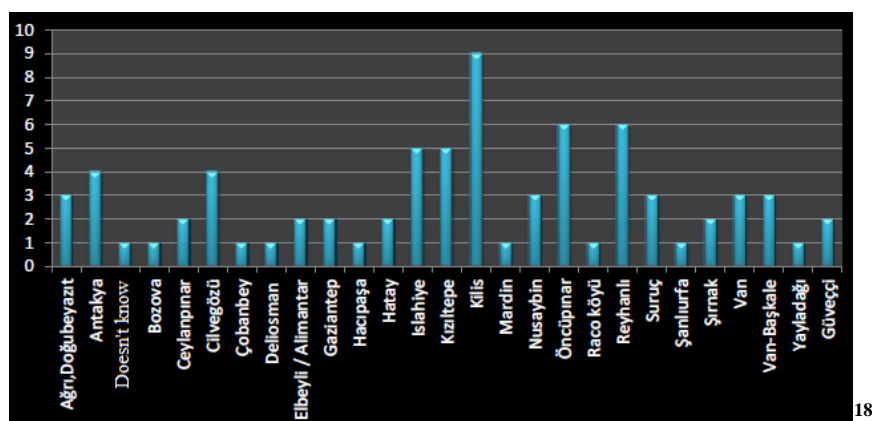


Although the cities and settlements that entered into Turkey vary, the common phenomenon in all of them is that these regions are places where smuggling activities have been going on for a long time. Again, when looking at the crime reports of these regions, it seems that they are places where terrorist structures intertwined with smuggling organizations try to continue their activities. In the last five years, especially due to the Syrian crisis and military and political developments in Afghanistan, refugee mobility and, consequently, migrant smuggling have increased considerably. The regions in question, due to the smuggling penalties are much lower than for drug crimes, for illegal entities that used to be involved in drug trafficking and face very severe penalties if caught migrant smuggling activities are becoming increasingly attractive.

Again, the bilingualist¹⁷ socio-cultural structures and local similarities of these regions eliminate the differences between borders to a certain extent, which makes it easier to conduct transboundary criminal activities. A Syrian participant stated that while preparing to leave with their 16-17-year-old guide, he witnessed phone calls of the organizers from Turkish and Syrian side who would carry out the actual organization related to their journey. In the discussion which the participant listened to, the road planning was tried to be done with Kurdish-Arabic translation first and then obviously not able to communicate like this that the interview was continued in Turkish-Arabic through the son of the interviewee and the meeting was concluded by reaching an agreement.

¹⁷ Bilingual: The name given to the ability to perceive and use both languages as their native language.

Graphic 36 Locations Entered Into Turkey



18

When participants were asked if there had been an incident with the security forces during entry to Turkey, one participant declared that the soldiers had come to them after seeing them, then they had a fight and he had been battered with a slap. Stating that he did not prolong the discussion, thinking that they would be deported because they did not have an identity, the participant stated that the soldiers released them after body search. Another participant stated that the soldiers were aware of their passage while entering from Hatay, that they were not asked for any ID, and that they were allowed to go their own way. When asked whether the soldiers were military or not, the participant said that he was also in the military and was able to separate the military soldiers from the private ones, and stated that these soldiers were private soldiers who were on guard. Similar incidents have occurred before and have been reflected in the press, especially in which lowly enlisted or private personnel are involved in these affairs (Sabah, 2017). Although such events do not recur frequently, it is important that supervisions, trainings and improvements especially in border regions continue without slowing down. Apart from this, almost all participants reported that they did not have any problems with the security forces, some of them drank their first water from the hands of the Turkish security forces after two days on the road. This question was specifically asked to Afghan participants because of some allegations, but none of the Afghan participant gave a negative comment. On the contrary, those captured by the security forces stated that they were transferred to various institutions, such as the Provincial Directorates of Migration Management, and that all their transactions were carried out. At this point, it should not be forgotten that Turkey is currently the country with the most refugees in the world and as it can be seen, it is trying to deal with this crisis selflessly.

"They usually pass through Hacıpaşa and Güveççi. They use the river at the points where the Asi narrows. Over the past month, these places have become very popular. Go at night, it looks very comfortable from the hill over there on the full moon." A ministry employee in Hatay

The issue that we face in the study and should definitely focus on is that none of the refugees who entered Turkey irregularly undergo medical examinations in any way. The main paradoxical problem is that they cannot go to hospitals and health institutions because they do not have any documents, and when they are very sick, they can only be treated underhandedly by paying too much money. This is a very serious threat in these days when both the public health and the whole world are facing severe and fatal consequences with the COVID-19 epidemic. In this sense, the EU and Turkey, affected by

¹⁸ Different uses were encountered when the participants were given information about the provinces, districts or villages entered into Turkey. As an example, a Syrian participant crossing from Elbeyli pronounced the old name of the district "Alimantar" as "Elmandar". In some cases, participants do not know the name of the region they entered and only remember the name of the province. In this sense, the research team has identified and recorded several districts and villages based on geographical features, conspicuous structures, etc.

the influx of asylum seekers, should urgently start doing something about the issue together with the help of all official institutions and organizations and civil societies.

Other important points to take into consideration in the study is the situation of orphaned Syrian women who have become vulnerable to human trafficking and harassment. There are a many cases of child marriage that are considered culturally normal among Syrians, and lastly, there are cases of dual marriage that are usually seen among Syrians, as well as cases where spouses are very often subjected to domestic violence. In this sense, both awareness-raising and legal and psycho-social support activities need to be improved and expanded by further accelerating.

2.7 Turkey Process

2.7.1 Turkey Adventure After Crossing Border

One finding that has emerged throughout the study is that arrivals to Turkey do not occur within the framework of very high hopes or promises. At this point, the participants conveyed during the interviews that they see Turkey as a country that is not very foreign, that there are not many differences with their culture and that they do not have much expectation. In conjunction with this issue, they stated that they express gratitude to Turkey in a general sense, that they were able to save their lives and children because they came to Turkey, and that they felt lucky even to have access to social services. In a personal sense, in addition to frequently expressing problems and complaints on issues such as difficulties in finding a job and improving services a little more, these questions, which are generally asked by the team, were answered with expressions of satisfaction such as *"Thank God"*.

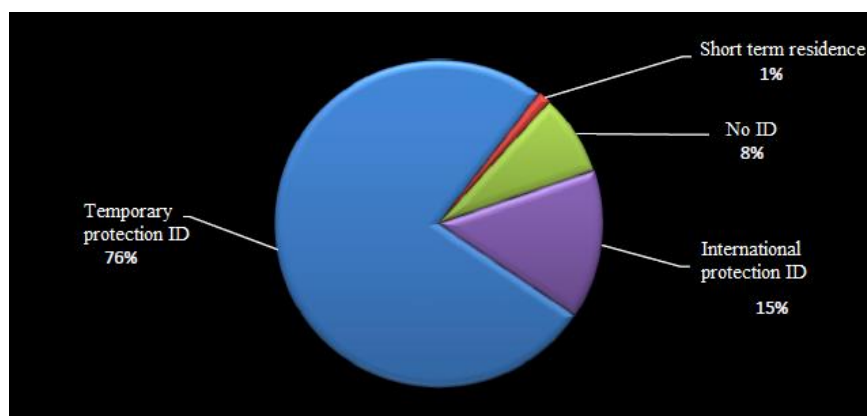
It can be seen from the answers that there are no promises made to refugees before they are brought to Turkey by smugglers. As is known, many tactics are used by smugglers such as promises to provide job, identity or home, etc. in order to convince the masses of forced migration, especially in some relatively backward geographies.

When asked if the refugees who have entered Turkey illegally have any identity, the answers indicate that few are still unregistered.

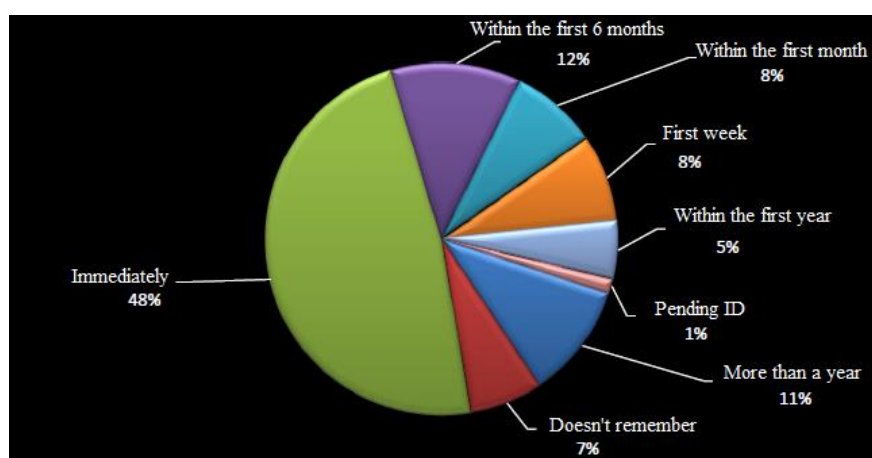
"And there are also dual married men who get married here and have a wife in Syria. If the woman in Syria comes here too, then watch the rumble. Two homes to support, numerous mouth to feed. There will be no jobs that they haven't get to earn a living, you name it." Taxi driver from Hatay

I have 3 daughters, my husband died in Syria. Two years before we arrived, ISIS attacked our city, so we started to flee. But our escape was never ended. We stayed in a village for a month, we lived in a tent in a county for 4 months. The weather was good during Ramadan, we lived under olive trees in Afrin's villages. We always wanted to come to Turkey, but we were waiting. We don't have any money, we don't have any food to eat, we've been migrating for 2 years until the border. They built a wall on the border, so we jumped over it. We were caught on our first crossing, the soldier didn't do us any harm, but he didn't let us go, they sent us back to Syria. We jumped off the wall the second time. This time, I begged tot he soldier to send me away, but I said let my daughters stay here. God bless, they let my daughters go, and they sent me back. Last time I jumped off the wall alone. I walked into the city without being seen by anyone." Syrian participant

Graphic 37 Registration Status with Immigration Authority

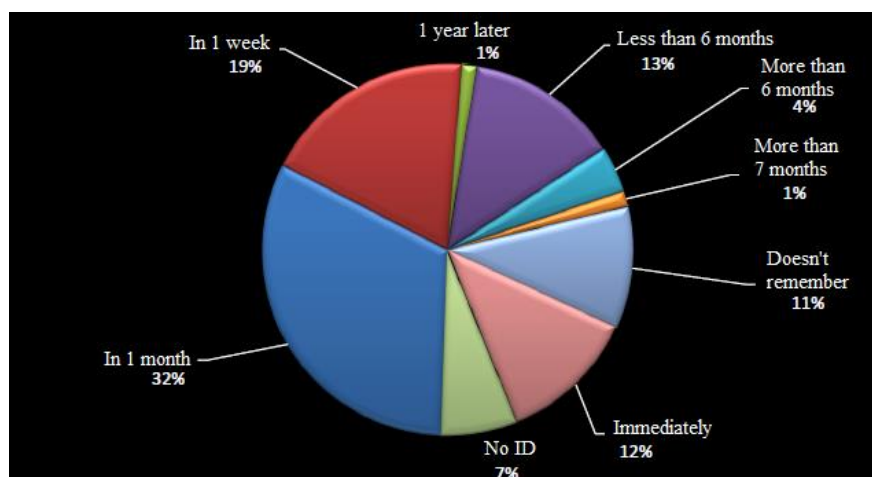


Graphic 38 First Application for Identity



At this stage of the study, the situation is as follows: It is seen that Turkey conducts a humanitarian open-door policy first with its own power, and then with the financial support of the EU, that it works with all its strength and gets good results in terms of identification and access to services.

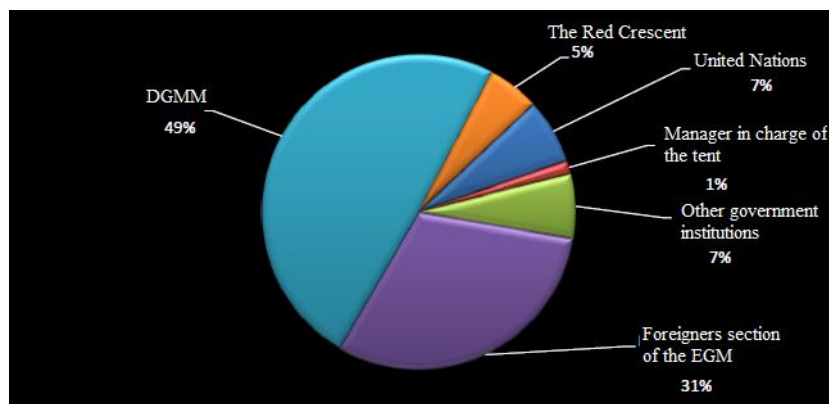
Graphic 39 Identification Process After Application



In terms of orientation for identification, many institutions, organizations, international and local non-governmental organizations are working. In this sense, further expansion of the work scope of Migration Managements, moreover, improving services by support increase will improve the mechanisms for dealing with the influx of refugees both from the point of view of EU member

countries, Turkey and refugees. The fact that the Directorates of Migration Managements have reached a leading role in the records can also be considered as an indicator that all the human actors of the issue are on the right track.

Graphic 40 First Applied Institution for Identity



Despite all these developments, in terms of sustainability, the increasing influx of migration, the fact that Turkey has plumb the depths of its capacity, and insufficient foreign aid and support create question marks. In this sense, wishes for return were frequently expressed in the conversations with the participants after the interviews. Especially in Syria, the wish for the regions created under international guarantee to become more stable and fully secure and livable is emphasized by all participants. The common desire of all the participating family members interviewed from the smallest family members who can remember their lives in Syria to the elderly of the family, is the desire to return to their country as soon as possible and resume to their normal lives.

Iraqi, Afghan and other participants expressed their desire to return if their homeland could stabilize, like Syrian participants. The fact that almost all participants talk about their days in their homelands with longing in one way or another also sheds light on some facts that may be the solution to the problem. In this context, it stands out as an indicator of how much work falls on the international community in terms of improving the places where refugees come from, both in security, political and socio-economic dimensions, normalization of daily life in these areas, and minimizing migrant smuggling. All improvements and aids to be made jointly in the countries of origin will be reflected in the dynamics of illegal migration as a decrease in the phenomenon of migration flows, and will provide positive developments.

2.7.3 Irregular Migrants' Life in Turkey with Networking Approach

The migration network approach describes the relationships that immigrants maintain with other immigrants from their country of origin, with whom they have common descent, ancestry, and bonds of friendship. When immigrants migrate, they have a tendency to live in a way that they can maintain their socialization processes and cultural characteristics. For this reason, migrating groups are in relationship with their descendants, compatriots, and friends who have migrated to the same region before them. Migrant groups expand with each migration wave and diversify as the region continues to receive migration (Faist, 2003).

One of the participants in the interview stated that the reason he chose Turkey during the interview was because he had relatives here. During the meeting held in Hatay, the participant noted that before the war, he often came to Hatay to visit his cousins, and they also came and went to Syria to visit them. Since they already have a community in Hatay, they stated that they prefer to come to a city where they know and have relatives without thinking of any other options when the conditions of war require them to leave their country.

Although this prevents the assimilation of immigrants, it also brings along many problems such as social adaptation and social integration. As immigrants build their own network of relationships and continue their lives, it becomes difficult for them to adapt to local population. Immigrants who establish networks to meet their vital needs within themselves, create their own closed culture. This also causes immigration to continue in time and space, even if the migration process is completed (Özcan, 2017).

During the field process, as a result of observations made by researchers, it was observed that there were settlements in the cities such as the “Syrian market” and the “Aleppo Bazaar”. It has been observed that the local products of the refugees were found in these bazaars and markets. This is an example of migrants maintaining their culture by avoiding contact with the local population by creating their own networks in the areas where they migrate.

Network approach explains the choices of immigrants. The data obtained as a result of the research study also supports this theory. Irregular migration, in particular, contains a systematic open to execution by a network of people's relationships.

First of all, 81% refugees from countries with close border settlements such as Syria and Iraq, answered the question, “Did you do any research about Turkey” as no. People who said no also stated that they knew Turkey well before the war and from their acquaintances living in Turkey. During the interviews, especially in the provinces with border villages such as Şanlıurfa and Mardin, information was given that Turkey was frequently visited before the chaotic situation brought about by the war. It was stated that, since both countries developed kinship based on “intermarry” in the border villages, each of them had knowledge of each other's lifestyles and sociological structures. It has been observed that the refugees who answered the question “Did you do any research about Turkey” as yes, were irregular immigrants from the inner regions of the countries of origin and refugees from Afghanistan. These people have stated that they need information about Turkey.

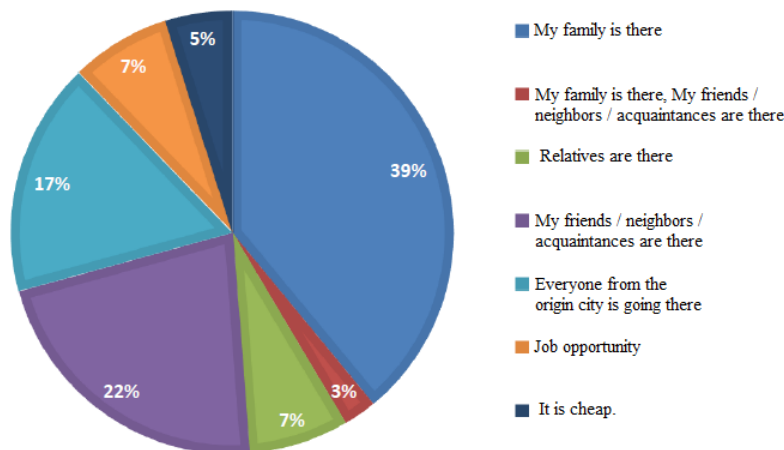
“I'm not leaving this place. We escaped from bombs, from persecution. Of course, there is also pain here. There are earthquakes, there are terrorists, but this is my home now. I gave birth to my child here, I laughed, I cried, I lived here. I wouldn't leave, if they gave money.” A Syrian participant interviewed in Mardin-Nusaybin

Then, when the method of reaching to the organizers was questioned, 71%¹⁹ of the participants stated that they had reached by using their relations. This, in turn, is a data that supports the understanding that the network approach leads old immigrants to new immigrants. In the light of the information provided by the participants, it was observed that they tend to stay away from public institutions due to their illegal entry. Before arriving they contact with an acquaintance, friend, relative or family member who has gone to their destination city before them and then they are going to them. Then, in order to obtain legal status in Turkey, they act under the guidance of acquaintances who have experienced this before. Immigrants who did not have such acquaintances indicated that they were caught and deported. Exiles also state that they have experienced the irregular migration journey again with a second, sometimes even a third attempt.

People were asked the question of the city they want to live in in Turkey and why they choose these cities. Except for the answer that 7% said they preferred due to job opportunities, all the answers indicated to migrant networks.

¹⁹ A compiled ratio from acquaintance/neighbor/friend, relative, family and already knew answers was used.

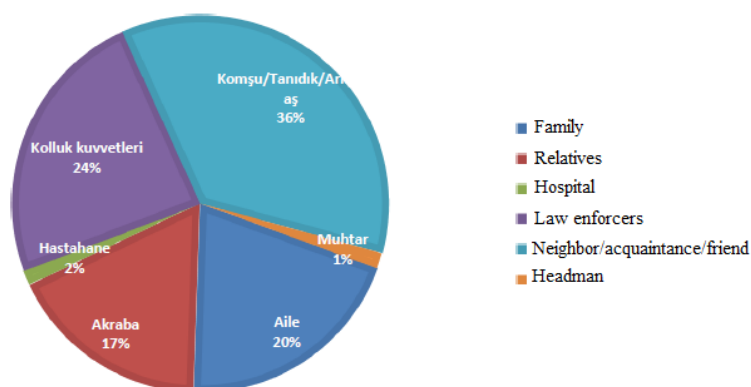
Graphic 41 Reason for the City Preference



Some of the questions posed to migrants are related to the process operated for identities granted to them by the Directorate General of Migration Management within the framework of the “Foreigners and International Protection Law”, which includes legal recognition procedures in Turkey. When the participants were asked from whom they obtained information about where to apply for registration, compared to 24% law enforcement, 2% hospital and 1% headman responses, the rate of people who answered family, relatives, acquaintances / neighbors / friends is 73%.

"I love Kahramanmaraş. My sister lives there. She married before the war and settled there with her husband. I visited once. I really liked it. And it is where my sister lives. I'm comfortable here at my uncle's house, we're staying with my cousins, but if it was my sister's house, it would be different. I'm saving money by sewing. To go over to my sister's." A Syrian participant

Graphic 42 From Whom The Information Is Obtained For The Identity Application



As a result, as supported by the results of the study, refugees' practice of continuing their lives in Turkey confirms the network approach. Refugees live by following the footsteps of immigrants who came before them, and thus creating a living space for themselves. While these living spaces support immigrants to create spaces that will allow them to protect their cultural capital, they make it difficult to adapt to the local population and create a distance between immigrants and local mechanisms in terms of access to services that they can benefit from.

They use their native language in their own network to protect cultural characteristics. It has been observed that they use intermediaries and interpreters to ensure the necessary communication with the local people. So much so that field researchers came across a caption, “an employee who speaks Turkish is wanted”, during their visits to immigrant neighborhoods. Another important aspect conveyed by the participants at this point is their own negative experiences with their children attending school. They reported that their children experienced adaptation problems in schools due to the language barrier, peer bullying, or the attitude that Turkish children developed due to negative news in the media.

2.8 Psychological Processes and Access to Psychological Support

There are excruciating events such as natural disasters, wars, accidents, fires, migration, (physical, sexual, psychological) violence that can affect individuals, families and the entire society in the world, and people experience stress when faced with those events. Among these phenomena, migration, by its nature, is a life event with a high level of stress for the refugees at the stages of leaving their country, the process of the journey and settling in another country after the journey (Hodes, 2000). To understand the relationship between forced migration and psychological health (Bhugra, 2004);

- Pre-migration Period: A person's perspective on existing situations, personality structure, motivation for migration and reasons that lead to migration,
- Migration Action: The loss of social support systems, sense of bereavement, the mourning caused by separation, traumatic experiences during the migration process and post-traumatic stress disorder,
- Post-migration Period: Cultural shock, perceived and exposed discrimination, economic difficulties and psychological burdens in the periods of longing and seeking for the country of origin should be taken into consideration.

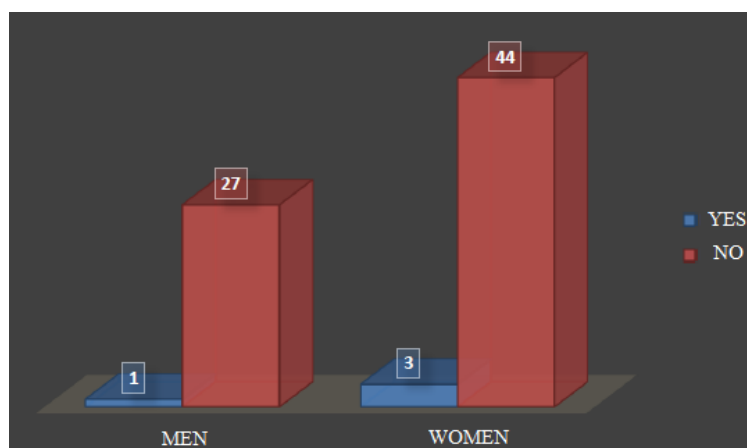
In addition to all this, the traumas they had suffered during the road, the problems in meeting basic needs after arriving in Turkey, barriers such as unfamiliarity to the language, culture and system, insufficient conditions of nutrition and shelter due to poverty-camp experience, cases such as adverse working conditions seriously affect their psychological and physiological health.

Post-traumatic stress reactions are observed when stress exposure continues and stress is not dealt with effectively. Physiological reactions such as exhaustion, over-arousal, loss of appetite, and sleep disorders; cognitive reactions such as time, visual, and auditory distortions; emotional reactions such as anxiety, anger, depression, and helplessness are formed for post-traumatic stress (Akbaba, 2012).

Psychologically, since the effects of migration itself on refugees and migrants are taken into account, the participants were asked questions about whether they had access to psychological support before and after arriving in Turkey.

In this context, when participants were asked if they had received psychological support in the countries of origin before arriving in Turkey, all participants reported that they had not received such support. Since psychological support was not perceived as a clinical illness, some of the Syrian participants perceiving the question we asked in order to find out if they received psychological support as if they went to the hospital and received treatment for other ailments, and conveyed their problems related to heart and kidney diseases. The team members, who provided translation support during the interviews, stated that Syrians do not have much knowledge and pursuit for psychological field in their geography and culture. The main reason for investigating the situation of receiving psychological support in the process before arriving in Turkey is to be able to determine the effects of this situation and the extra burden caused by migration when individuals who already have such a psychological burden decide on the migration process. When they are asked what feelings they have regarding their location when they thought about the period before they set off, it is seen that pessimistic and negative emotions, mostly fear, unhappiness, sadness and anger, are conveyed.

Graphic 43 Psychological Support



When participants were asked if they received any psychological support after arriving in Turkey, only 4 people answered “yes, we did”. Iranian-born Afghan male participant who answered as yes stated that he decided to come to Turkey after experiencing serious threats against his wife and himself in the village where they lived in Iran. The participant conveyed to the team that they needed support due to these events, and that only his wife could get support for now.

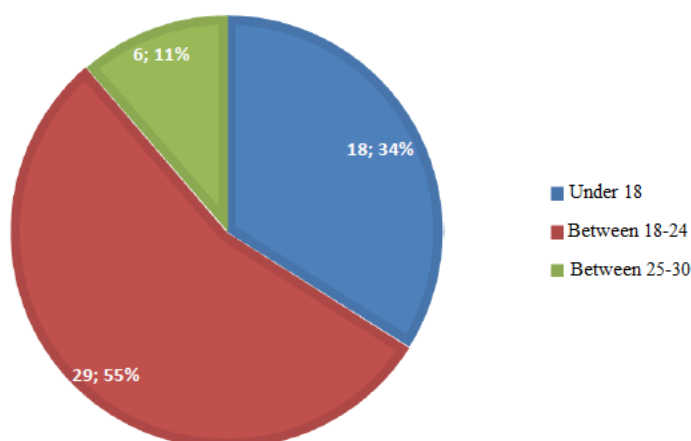
In addition to the few participants who received support, there are also participants who have not yet received psychological support and say that they are seeking support. In one of the interviews held in Şanlıurfa, the Syrian female participant stated that she did not dare yet, but wanted to get support from a center as soon as possible; they went through very difficult things and continue to do so; conveyed that she now wanted to fully recover herself psychologically. In addition, in some interviews, it was observed that people felt emotional when describing their lost experiences, continued the processes related to the mourning of their losses, some participants do not have any information about what they left behind, and to some extent the mourning they held turns into ambiguity. Feedback was received from some participants that they remained intact in terms of structure despite their experiences, and that they were also psychologically strong.

When examining the illegal transition practices of immigrants and the normalization processes of this practice in the psychosocial sense; there are migrants who have entered Turkey illegally, as well as the migrants who have entered and left several times for repatriation, unfinished business in Syria or other purposes. In one of the interviews, a Syrian participant stated that the doors should be opened, that people are struggling and that those without money couldn't come. In addition, in some cases, there were also people who had to go and see their relatives with various disabilities (old age, physical disabilities) in Syria. Apart from these, they stated that even if they have entered, they will continue to seek a way for the remaining family members to come, despite their serious risks. Similarly, a Syrian female participant reported that her husband left them in Turkey after entering Turkey, that he returned to Syria to sold their house and bring its money, but was killed in Syria. Another participant reported that three months after his father's arrival, he returned to Syria to get their things and sell the house, but he was not heard from and is now missing. As can be seen in these findings, illegal entry and exit is an extremely common and obligatory process for migrants. Although illegal border crossings are defined as a crime, it seems that the crime is normalized in people's minds due to needs and obligations. These reactions are natural responses to these stress-laden unusual experiences; they should be perceived as extremely normal psychologically, and it should be taken into account that they develop functionally to cope with the experiences of traumatized effects.

2.9 Women and Family in Irregular Migration Journey

When migration processes are examined, the socialization, cultural and religious structures of migrant groups cause them to be affected differently from the migration process. When examining the studies on the socio-cultural structures of war-victim migrants seeking refuge in Turkey, it seems that women are not involved in decision-making mechanisms (Dağdeler, 2018). By compiling the findings of the participants' decisions on issues such as age, gender, marital status, age of marriage, marriage decision, the effects of these findings on the migration process will be examined.

Graphic 44 Marriage Age



When examining the marriage status of immigrants, it is observed that child marriage data is a remarkable amount with 34%. According to the cross-table analysis presented, the age range in which the family is most effective in the marriage decision process is in marriages under the age of 18. The age range in which one's own decision is highest is in marriages performed between the ages of 18 and 24. In marriages between the ages of 25 and 30, the person's own decision and the family's decision have the least percentage effect. No data on marriage over the age of 30 were found within the scope of the study sample. However, the rate reached for child marriage is alarming.

Considering the focus group discussions and the observations of the participants' attitudes, it was concluded that child marriages are very common in the countries of origin of immigrants. Girls have almost no say in marriage. Below is a table showing the relationship between the marriage decision and age ranges of participants.

Table 1 Relation Between Age of Marriage and Marriage Decision

		Marriage decision		TOTAL
		Oneself	Family	
Under 18	Number % Marriage decision	9 25,7%	9 50,0%	18 34,0%
Between 18-24	Number % Marriage decision	21 60,0%	8 44,4%	29 54,7%
Between 25-30	Number % Marriage decision	5 14,3%	1 5,6%	6 11,3%
TOTAL	Number % Marriage decision	35 100,0%	18 100,0%	53 100,0%

Just as in the decision of marriage, in many decisions taken within the family, people act according to the general rules of the patriarchal family structure. The men or elders of the family decide for the whole family. The reason for the emphasis on the marriage decision and age of marriage is the focus group interviews conducted in the cities that constitute the sample. In the cities where the interviews were held, opinion leaders of immigrants, people who are familiar with the cultural structure of refugee groups and members of the local community stated that immigrants also went on an immigration journey for the purpose of marriage. Among these goals, examples such as wanting to get married in Turkey, getting married to come to Turkey were suggested in focus group interviews. Participant data is also available to support the resulting outcome: For example, a participant stated that he came to Turkey to guarantee the future of his daughters, as well as the conditions of war. He stated that if his daughters reached the age of marriage and married in the country where they came from, he also decided to leave because of the fear that he would be separated from his daughters, depending on the course of the war. He said that he thought a marriage in Turkey would guarantee their children a safe future. Similarly, parents who are worried that they will not be able to protect their children if they are exposed to attacks on the road, stated that they accelerated the marriage decision of their children depending on the migration process. But the participants of this study do not state that marriage is main and only reason for changing countries.

In addition to the marriage decision, significant connections were detected between variables such as the age of having children, educational status, the marriage age of the spouse, type of marriage (religious and official) and the migration journey. The result that families are resorting to irregular migration in search of a guarantee of a safe life was supported by these analyses.

Finally, the effects of the patriarchal family structure on the decision to emigrate are also observed here. It was observed that female participants were ignorant of the issues that contain valuable data of irregular migration from security wise, such as migration decision, selected route, expenditures made. The research revealed that the decisions regarding the migration process were made primarily by the men of the family, including the fathers, grandfathers, husbands and then uncles of women.

"We used to live in a village, we tried to hang on when ISIS first arrived. I'll never forget my next-door neighbor, her death has made us very sad. After that, we couldn't stay there. My neighbor had a little boy. He always ran to the field. The 5-6 year old boy have ants in his pants. One day, his mother was trying to bring him back from the field. She said to her son, 'I'll kill you, come to me right now.' We didn't see it, but ISIS soldiers were passing through the back. They got angry that she yelled at her son like that and started arguing. They killed her on the spot because she couldn't yell at the man, even if he is her son." An Iraqi participant

After arriving in Turkey, changes in decision-making mechanisms were observed. In Turkey, the respect for women to make their own decisions, the fact that they lead a freer and more valuable life has also affected the lives of refugee women. Women who live more closed and passive in their own countries stated that they are freer and happier in Turkey.

3. CONCLUSION AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 Migration Notion Within the Framework of Border Security of Turkey and the European Union

The EU, which was established by the countries whose members are mostly on the European Continent, came together with a series of agreements, became one of the important actors of the multi-polar world and started to search for a new security understanding. One of the main goals of the

Union, the abolition of internal borders and the right to free movement practices²⁰ were implemented in 1985 between the five EU member states under the name Schengen Area²¹, and the necessity of ensuring full security of external borders arose in line with these practices. In this context, in the Treaty of Amsterdam drafted by the Union in 1999, this issue was particularly highlighted with the articles of law; due to cases such as increased international migration, terrorism and the activities of transboundary criminal organizations, these articles were updated again with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009. In the agreements made to develop and increase the responsibility of the member states in matters such as asylum, visa, immigration and ensuring border security, the section "Border Controls, Asylum and Migration Policies" has been created under the title of "Freedom, Security and Justice Area" and in this context, it was decided to "take all necessary measures to gradually establish an integrated management system for external borders" (Ministry of EU, 2011a). Due to the detailed content of asylum and asylum issues, the Dublin system was established with the Dublin Convention in 1990; the system was updated in 2015 and a biometric database was created with fingerprint comparison; then, the European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database system (EURODAC) was activated to identify where the refugees or asylum seekers entered the Union's borders and their identity (European Commission Migration Affairs, 2019).

In the Presidency Declaration of Tampere Summit Decisions, within the framework of an integrated management system for the adopted external borders, while the necessity of the union to determine a common asylum and immigration policy was emphasized again, the legal asylum rights of third country citizens were also regulated. With the Tampere Summit, UNHCR made recommendations for the summit and emphasized the necessity of addressing the articles in the EU acquis, which include border security especially on migration movements and asylum seekers, in a more humane and legal manner (DGMM, 2005). In the Laeken Summit declaration, which took place after the Tampere summit, Article 42 was structured within the framework of anti-terrorism and Treaty of Lisbon strategies, and it was decided to establish advisory offices with a common visa identification system within the scope of external border control and integrated management (Council of Europe, 2001).

As of 2002, the EU Management Plan for External Borders (European Union Council, 2002), the EU Common Border Management Manual has been prepared and published in the EU official bulletin. This document clearly to the member states only crossing the border is not highlighted, it concerns the EU as a whole; the preparation of legislation and risk analysis to be dealt with in a common framework, crew and equipment supply and the necessity of coordination and burden sharing for all of those applications (European Union Law, 2004) took place as important issues in the document. This manual is updated periodically by looking at new situations and crises developing on a global scale (European Commission, 2010).

The Operational Cooperation Agency for the Management of the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, namely FRONTEX, has been established within the scope of Regulation 2007/2004 in line with the aim of realizing the objectives of "ensuring cooperation, coordination, training and burden sharing", which are frequently written within the framework of EU border security agreements (Frontex, 2014). Taking its abbreviation name from the French term "Frontières Extérieures" (external borders), FRONTEX has undertaken the EU's border patrol duty after 2010, prioritizing the use of military equipment, especially due to the illegal immigration movements that escalated in the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean²².

²⁰ Treaty on EU Common Provisions Article 3: "The Union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice where the free movement of individuals is ensured through appropriate measures for the control of external borders, asylum, migration, crime prevention and the fight against crime, without internal borders." (Ministry of EU, 2011a)

²¹ In 1985, 5 countries of the EU (Germany, Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) decided to create an area where borders were abolished among themselves. The area in question was called the Schengen Area in reference to the name of the city of Luxembourg, where the first agreements were signed (14 June 1985).

²² RABIT (Rapid Border Intervention Teams), which managed by FRONTEX, intervening with heavy military equipment against migrant and asylum seeker groups trying to cross the border, faced with the reaction of civil

Due to the dynamic and constantly changing nature of border security, in addition to the Schengen Agreement signed in 1985, with the decision of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 March 2006, the Schengen Borders Regulation was adopted to establish a European Union law that will consider the provisions regulating border security and human crossings in a wider perspective. Along with this regulation, the Schengen legislation has raised not only the issue of external border control, but also the risk analysis for internal security for all member countries and the analysis of threats that may affect the security of external borders, and practices have begun to change in this direction (Council of the European Union, 2006).

As a result of all this structural background, the practices in the understanding of EU Border Management have developed as follows (European Parliament, 2018):

- The Schengen Border Code, which puts border crossings in a legally sound structure and includes a system that constantly renews and updates itself;
- Internal Security Fund application for border and visa procedures, which enables financial burden sharing among member countries, since the flow of migrants is not at the same intensity for all member countries,
- The Schengen Information System (SIS), Visa Information System (VIS) and EURODAC (European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database), which structured to ensure migrant information and border security through the creation of a centralized database
- Establishing a deterrent and punitive legal system within the scope of illegal entries and crimes
- Commissioning of a Border Management Agency, namely FRONTEX, which will work in operational cooperation.
- Ensuring international cooperation, agreements to be made with candidate and member countries for this purpose, and in this context, a new entry and exit system for non-EU citizens (Council of Europe, 2017) and implementing the Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) (Council of Europe, 2019a) in support of this structure

In the face of increased migration, mobility and security tests at EU borders, the EU Commission has proposed for the long-term 2021 and 2027 plan to increase the 13 billion Euros that existed in the previous financial period by 3 times to 34.9 billion Euros. It is planned that the fund allocated for Integrated Border Management will be increased much more, that Frontex will operate with a fixed force of 10,000 people, and a new Integrated Border Management Fund will be launched under the name IMBF. In this context, it is aimed to strengthen the external borders of EU, to establish a stronger and more efficient visa policy, to provide better customs control equipment at external borders, to strengthen EU border management agencies, and to support a more durable, realistic and fair policy at the sky point (European Commission, 2018b).

Because of its geographical location, Turkey is located at the confluence of continents and is affected by both turbulent socio-political movements and conflicts in neighboring countries and the large influx of refugees as a result of these movements. Again, because of its location, it also creates a traffic route for transboundary criminal organizations on the east-west axis and refugees from distant geographies within the framework of a wide range of illegal activities and illegal crossings. Likewise, the weaknesses of neighboring countries in their own border security constitute another important factor that should be taken into account (Deniz, 2014).

Especially the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian Border Region is the main transit route of these traffic routes due to the fact that they contain difficult geographical conditions to control. In addition to the harsh landforms and severe climate in this geography, the activities of terrorist centers in the region bring a security paradigm of different dimensions for law enforcers. In addition, increasing migration movements along with the Syrian crisis have made Turkey not only a transit route in terms of migration, but also a destination country (Kaya, 2013).

society throughout Europe; these teams were accused of using unnecessary violence and forcing refugees and migrants to take a more dangerous journey (Human Rights Agenda Association, 2008).

The issue of Border Security is of great importance in the geostrategic sense in the process of Turkey's integration into the European Union. Turkey, which will become a full member and will also become the eastern border of the European Union, has started an integrated border security efforts in 2002 and created three working groups in the field of Borders, Migration and Asylum. As a result of the work of this group, "Strategy Document for the Protection of External Borders in Turkey" in April 2003, "Strategy Document On The Work Envisaged To Be Carried Out In The Field Of Asylum In The Process Of Turkey's Accession To The European Union" in October 2003, "Strategy Document That Will Contribute To The Migration Management Action Plan In Turkey" was prepared again in October 2003. The 2003 "Turkish National Action Plan for the adoption of EU community legislation" for the adoption of the EU *acquis communautaire* was published in the Official Gazette No. 25178 dated 24 July 2003 and went in effect (DGMM, 2003).

"Turkey's Integrated Border Management Strategy and National Action Plan" was approved by the prime minister in 2006 within the framework of the "Strategy Document On The Protection Of External Borders In Turkey" Twinning Program (Twinning/Support Project for the development of Action Plan for the implementation of Turkey's Integrated Border Management Strategy) (EU Ministry, 2011b) (Prime Ministry, 2010). Turkey's Integrated Border Management Strategy and National Action Plan aim to have a more open and secure border control structure as content and to harmonize all institutions, organizations and legal superstructure related to border security with the EU *acquis*. In addition, it includes the establishment of a professional border security organization affiliated with the Ministry of Interior at all border gates and *gesil* (land) and *blue* (sea) borders. In the context of Turkey's integrated border management, it was decided to monitor the progress and to establish the "Integrated Border Management Coordination Board" with the participation of Ministry of interior, the General Staff, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the General Commandership of Gendarmerie, the Undersecretariat of Customs, the Undersecretariat of Maritime Affairs, the Secretariat General for EU Affairs, the General Directorate of Security, the Coast Guard Command and the General Directorate of Provincial Administration in order to ensure the supervision and coordination (Prime Ministry, 2010).

The studies and projects in Turkey's Integrated Border Security point discussed in the document of "National Action Plan for Accession to the European Union in January 2016-December 2019", and the title of Justice, Freedom and Security which covering the Article 24; and in this context, the issues, such as the Border Security Organization Law should be regulated in the regulation no 562/2006/EC on the Schengen Border Code, the request for amendment on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Interior No. 3152 with regard to the Establishment of a European Border Surveillance System, the amendment to the regulation on the Fight Against Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims, the amendments to be made in accordance with the Regulation Regarding the Form and Conditions of the Residence Permit to be Given to the Third Country Citizens in the implementation of the Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection; the regulation on Interagency Cooperation and Coordination in the Field of Border Management in accordance with the EU regulation No. 562/2006/EC on the Schengen Border Code; the alignment of Legislation on the Physical Structure and Functioning of Repatriation Centres with the 2018/115/EC Coded Regulation on Repatriation of Third Country citizens; the establishment of Border Management National Coordination and Joint Risk Analysis Center; the strengthening the administrative and technical capacities of units operating at borders, including border gates; updating the migration and Asylum Action Plan and implementing an international cooperation mechanism on border management, have been addressed (Ministry of the European Union, 2016).

In this context, the Integrated Border Management Project Phase-1 and 2 (Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, 2019); Regional Cooperation Project on Border Management Between Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria; Electro-Optical Watchtower Supply At Turkey-Greece-Bulgaria Border; Electro-Optical Watchtower Supply On Turkey's Eastern Borders (Phase 1-2); Reconnaissance Surveillance Vehicle Supply At Turkey-Greece-Bulgaria Border; Supply Of National Passport Entry-Exit Stamp Devices; Supply Of Thermal Cameras In Southeastern Borders Of Turkey; Project To Support Border

Management In Turkey Phase 2 are still ongoing projects (Ministry of Interior, 2019). Again, within the framework of Integrated Border Management, Coastal Surveillance Radar System (CSRS) (Governorship of Ankara, 2018) and the Integrated Border Security System (ESGS) is being prepared to continuous surveillance of the blue and green borders of Turkey and prevent illegal crossings and transboundary crimes. Similarly, “Clearing Mines on Turkey's Eastern Borders and Increasing Border Control Capacity to Ensure Socio-Economic Development” is another important ongoing project (UNDP, 2014).

In the EU Annual Progress Reports²³, the development stages of Integrated Border Management in Turkey are closely observed by the EU. Again, within the framework of “National Action Plan for Accession to the European Union January 2016-December 2019” Integrated Border structuring in Turkey, the fact that most titles and projects planned to be completed appear to be still in preparation is reflected by the EU in the Progress Reports as a criticism for the slow movement of the Turkish side. In the 2018 and 2019 Progress Reports, even if Turkey's External Borders and Schengen Legislation have been prepared on the basis of EU acquis and practices, the incompatibility of its legal and administrative frameworks with the EU; the lack of coordination; the immediate implementation of risk analysis units at the central and local organizations and border points and in this context the activation of the Joint Risk Analysis Center (UKORAM)²⁴; the need to improve and increase the observation mechanisms in the Coast Guard Command, and to increase the capacity of the security forces at the point of irregular border crossings, especially in the name of identifying forged and falsified documents, were highlighted (European Commission, 2018). Another point that is most stated by the EU is that the taking over of border management and security operations of a single civil agency was suspended by the Turkish side due to security problems at the border. Likewise, the warning that the “Department of Border Management, External Relations and Project” established under the Ministry of Interior has not been able to provide the necessary coordination and that UKORAM has not been able to work at full capacity has been replaced in the 2019 Progress Report. Within the framework of all these dynamics, the EU has declared the need for a new law to be established in the context of the control of border crossings and security of a civilian and professional organization in Turkey (Council of Europe, 2019a).

Turkey is advancing rapidly in the EU Integrated Border Security; however, due to the harsh geographical conditions on its borders, the versatile terrorist and criminal activities in its close geography, intense migration movements, the endless problems and conflicts in its neighbors, the tension caused by the parallelism of Visa Liberalisation with EU with Readmission Agreement²⁵ and similar problems, it has not yet reached a level of humanitarian, civil and professional border management that is compatible with the EU acquis and is desirable.

3.2 International Cooperation on Irregular Migration: Challenges and Opportunities

When the findings and observations of the study are evaluated, it can be clearly seen that the irregular migration influx to Turkey continues intensively for different reasons. Again, based on the findings, it is an undeniable fact that land surveillance and patrol systems should be fully operational as soon as possible, especially in the eastern and southeastern borders. In this context, equipment such as advanced electronic systems and databases should be used for passport and visa controls at airports

²³ The European Commission evaluates the progress made by the candidate country in the field of adaptation with the acquis or the shortcomings it observes in the annual progress reports (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2019).

²⁴ Development of Integrated Border Management Joint Database Project with the Establishment of National Coordination and Joint Risk Analysis Center (UKORAM) (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2018).

²⁵ The main objective of the agreement, which signed on 16 December 2013 in parallel with the start of the Visa Liberalisation Dialogue, is to establish procedures for the rapid and systematic readmission of people from each party who do not meet the conditions for entry, presence or residence in the territory of the other party within the framework of reciprocity. This agreement covers provisions concerning the readmission of both EU member states and Turkish citizens who enter or remain in the territory of one party to the territory of the other party, as well as all other people, including third-country citizens and stateless persons (European Union, 2014).

and border gates. In addition to this, improvements against counterfeiting reveal the necessity for all teams working at airports and in the blue and green border regions to undergo constant up-to-date training. On the other hand, it is obvious that the whole Integrated Border Management should be managed from a single source, that a large institutional structure should be implemented urgently with legal regulations, and that the whole coordination should be provided by this institution with the transfer of all integrated border management to this institution.

In this sense, it should be ensured that the police forces, which will fight against smugglers networks, increase their international and local cooperation within the framework of institutions such as EUROPOL; the operational capabilities and training of all teams serving against migrant trafficking should be reviewed, and with advanced equipment support, criminal networks should be constantly one step ahead.

Problems should be better conveyed to the European Union, which is dependent on both integrated border management and humanitarian borders and post-entry services, and from the point of view of the “distribution of financial burden sharing by geography” contained in the agreements, the EU should take on responsibility at the point of border management and challenges of Turkey, which will form the eastern borders of the EU in the future. Likewise, it is necessary to improve the control mechanisms and to ensure regular supervision in intermediate countries such as Iran and Pakistan; to increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and to strengthen joint efforts. In the countries of origin, the international community should aim to ensure stability, increase democratic rights and freedoms, and normalize daily life at least to a minimum.

Looking at the overall study, the result is as follows: Turkey continues its work on border management and migrant smuggling; but given the overall situation, institutions should be quick in every sense. In order to achieve a fully Integrated Border Management and to reduce migrant smuggling to a minimum level, the necessary institutions, laws and regulations should be established as soon as possible within the framework of international cooperation and existing works should be accelerated. Another important issue is that within the framework of all this struggle, Turkey should not be left alone and all international actors who are the targets of migration flows should increase their support.

3.3 Sociological Outcomes of the Study and Recommendations

In the sociological dimensions of the study, the results we have reached are as follows: Irregular migration puts immigrants from a disadvantaged position in the society in a more vulnerable situation. The fact that the journey took place illegally creates a reservation in their application to public institutions in Turkey. This reservation can cause people to be deprived of services such as basic health, safety, and protection. Especially in the light of the findings of the study, health control and access to health services represent an important service area that individuals cannot perform. The necessity of improving health services after the migration journey in order to ensure the personal health of individuals and to protect the country from epidemics has been demonstrated in this study.

Immigration of refugees involves a temporal uncertainty depending on the chaotic environment in their country. It seems that due to this uncertainty, the adaptation process of immigrants is affected. Depending on the inability of migration to be accepted by local people, the resistance of the people to immigrants is an obstacle to this adaptation. Another obstacle is the structures that contain networks, spaces, and cultural elements of immigrants in order to create the conditions in the region they come from. These structures come across with examples such as immigrant neighborhoods and immigrant markets. As mentioned before, the fact that local people do not accept immigrants and that immigrants continue their closed culture creates social conflicts. This situation causes the two groups to prejudge each other and slows down the processes of social adaptation considerably.

Ensuring migrant access to humanitarian services and adaptation efforts are among the suggested solutions in line with the results obtained within the scope of this study. Efforts should be expanded to ensure humanitarian living conditions in Turkey for refugees entering illegally, especially in health

care. At this point, it is also essential for public health that refugees who have physically lost resistance as a result of irregular migration travel undergo health screening. It is observed that people sometimes hesitate to go to the official institutions as a result of coming by illegal ways. In order to break this bias, it is strongly recommended that both public institutions and non-governmental organizations conduct public opinion building activities.

As part of the adaptation work, it is also important to break the prejudice of local people and immigrants against each other. From this point of view, it is recommended to conduct briefings for the local population on the migrants' journey of hope and their status in Turkey. Again, it is envisaged that social cohesion can be supported by public opinion building activities. The adaptation of immigrant groups, whose physical, psychological and social sensitivity has increased due to the migration journey, to the geography in which they seek refuge will prevent negative situations that may arise due to social conflict. It is predicted that the negative effects of forced and irregular migration can be minimized with long-term integration studies led by non-governmental organizations and social service organizations. The main point that should not be forgotten within this framework is that no matter how much security-related measures increase, these people who carry the fear of death in their homeland will be on their journey to safety in any way.

3.4 Psychological Outcomes of the Study and Recommendations

In terms of view of psychology, within the framework of Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, it is possible to make recommendations in particular regions where migration is intense. People basically build their social identity in the form of ingroup-outgroup organization. They identify with this social identity based on the characteristics of the group they belong to; such as Galatasaray fan ID, doctor ID, Istanbulite ID, Syrian ID... It can be said that these identities have high emotional value to individuals and that they enter into in-group-out-group rivalries to protect it. Therefore, in the context of the continuity and intensity of irregular migration movements, especially in Syrians, the study of emotions on “feeling safe” and “ensuring a sense of belonging to a place” gives an idea of individual migration motivations in the research area. It also reveals the need for even more precise execution of humanitarian practices in these regions.

According to the results of the study, the necessity to examine the economic, cultural and historical dimensions of migration practice as well as the individual-psychological dimension arises. In this context, while total and general explanations such as internal confusion and climate crisis are used in the definition of the factors that push migration, the motivations of the individual and the factors that affect decision-making processes should also be examined. Based on the findings of the study, it should be taken into account that migration is an individual and subjective process, and its effects on psychological health can also be seen in various ways from person to person. Looking at the content of the studies conducted in the field, it seems that the studies were conducted within the framework of a preliminary view and this preliminary admission that all refugees should experience trauma and various psychological problems. But as can be seen from the research findings, it has been shown that studies should be conducted in a more comprehensive manner and free from this pre-acceptance.

During the migration journey, especially women and children are likely to face greater risk of problems on the road. In this context, it should be kept in mind that the current gender specific, especially Syrian women, are disadvantaged and more distressed in terms of accessing rights and services, and preventive and inclusive psychological support activities for women and girls should be increased.

"Refugees who have entered illegally are concentrated in Kırıkhan, Altınözü and Reyhanlı. There are about 30 to 40 illegal refugees in the repatriation center, and they have made this situation regular. Among them, there are those who were sent from the repatriation center 2 or 3 times and came back illegally. We call them boomerangs among us." A police officer in Hatay

In the context of migrant smuggling, border crossing by illegal ways and through smugglers is of interest to the security units that deal with these cases, as well as to the refugees. In this context, from the perspective of the humanitarian dimension of the migration journey, it should be taken into account that the units fighting against migrant smuggling have also witnessed extremely traumatic life events or, in some cases, may be involved in these events. In this context, it is also necessary to support the security forces, military personnel and teams responding within the scope of humanitarian aid to develop self-care skills, to screen for secondary traumatic effects, to carry out prevention and awareness studies.

Refugees' access to psychological health-related support mechanisms remains at a very low level. Immigrants who are in search of a safe place should also be able to feel safe in a psychosocial sense and maintain a state of psychological well-being. Although there are Psychosocial Support Services in all non-governmental organizations working in the field of migration, especially in the Southeast Anatolia Region, it turns out that more efforts should be made to access this area for refugee groups. In order to make these services more accessible, long-term studies should be carried out in which more systematic impact and monitoring systems are more qualified rather than more innovative, intervention-oriented, short-term projects.

In 2015, the World Federation for Mental Health (Society of Prevention Psychiatry, 2016) announced in its urgent call that there are millions of refugees affected by conflicts around the world; that they were displaced by internal migration and external migration movements; that 5% to 10% had immediate mental health problems. They issued a call on the mental health of refugees, internally displaced people or groups affected by conflict; stated that all states, communities, professional organizations and humanitarian organizations should work to protect the mental health of refugees. Turkey continues the necessary humanitarian work to the extent of its capacity. However, based on the rate of receiving psychological support in this study, it is shown that especially each humanitarian relief organization and non-governmental organization should carry out more practical, more need-oriented and inclusive studies.

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