

Article

Turkey's Temporary Protection: Syrians' Perspective

Ziad ALAHMAD

トルコによる一時的保護：シリア人からの視点

ジアド アルアフマド

要旨

戦争や暴力を逃れた人々を保護する手段は多様だが、その一つとして、一時的、あるいは短期的な措置として用いられうる一時的保護がある。トルコは2014年以降、ジュネーブ条約（1951年）が定める時間や場所に関する規定を遵守しつつ、2011年以降に入国したシリア人に対して、国際的保護の代わりに一時的保護を採用している国家の一つである。しかし、同国の制度は、基礎的な法的要件を満たしているものの必ずしも充分だとは言えない。本稿は在トルコ・シリア人48人を対象として実施した半構造化インタビューの結果を通して、トルコの一時的保護制度が抱える問題点について、実証的な考察を行うことを目的としている。考察によって明らかとなったのは、国連難民高等弁務官事務所（UNHCR）が行う一時的保護および滞在アレンジメントの手法を基準とした場合、トルコの現行制度が以下に示される五つの主要分野において改善の余地があるという事実である——①より良い実施形態、②移動制限の緩和、③経済統合に向けた活発な支援、④より持続可能な解決策への移行の促進、⑥人種主義・差別の解消。

キーワード：シリア人、トルコ、一時的保護、避難民保護、持続可能な解決策

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1. Introduction

Ideally, when people are forced to leave their homeland due to violence and head to other countries seeking safety, the host countries treat them according to the internationally agreed laws, mainly the 1951 Geneva Convention and its protocols. The host countries respect the principles of non-refoulement and voluntary repatriation, and the forced immigrants enjoy a bundle of rights and services throughout their stay as protected persons.

If the host country is a signatory member of the Geneva Convention, it is required to provide the displaced people who arrive on its land with international protection. Yet, in some situations, like mass migration, it cannot immediately provide them with full protection. The reason for this is that every file is examined individually to ensure that the person seeking protection is fleeing justified persecution. Thus, until the process is completed, the applicant for protection needs to wait to get the official result. The host country can offer the newcomers temporary protection as an immediate procedure until their legal status is formally decided.

Nevertheless, the reality is often different, and even those countries that abide by the Geneva Convention may not adequately address protection needs. In addition to this, when the receiving country has not signed the Geneva Convention, it is not legally bound to offer the newcomers international protection, which further complicates the situation. In this case, it takes care of them as per its morals, culture, resources, and local laws, which opens the door for discussing different forms of temporary and alternative protection.

Turkey has a very special situation. Despite being a signatory of the 1951 Geneva Convention, it neither registers Syrians who arrived after 2011 as asylum seekers nor provides them with international protection. Turkey's refusal to ratify the 1967 New York Protocol, which upholds the convention's territorial restrictions, is the justification. Leaving Syrians who arrived after 2011 without a specific legal status for the first three years, bounding them between being guests and brothers, until 2013, when it was decided to adjust the foreigners' law, and grant them temporary protection in 2014, and allow them to legally stay in the country until it is safe to return to their homes.

Despite being Turkey's first experience with a system like this, the current temporary protection meets the majority of the protection conditions, mainly non-refoulement. However, non-refoulement on its own is insufficient, and the system has loopholes that need to be fixed (Zenginkuzucu, 2021, p. 385). Yet, this is not only Turkey's problem; it is claimed that there are several ambiguities in this area globally, specifically in the cases of mass influx, despite numerous established international frameworks and regulations in place to safeguard forced immigrants and their settlement in host countries (Içduygu & Aksel, 2022).

There are plenty of scholarly published works on Syrians living in Turkey in terms of protection policies and practices. However, there are not many papers that empirically analyse Turkey's temporary protection system in general and the Syrian perspective in particular. Studies like Erdogan's Syrians Barometer (2018, 2020, 2021), and others that examined Syrians' opinions on the temporary protection lacked emphasis and were overly generic and descriptive (e.g., Içduygu & Şimşek, 2016, Gültekin, et al., 2018; 2021, Jancewicz, 2021). They do highlight Turkey's temporary protection's efficiency and implementation, but this is not enough to cover the gap in knowledge. They represent only a fraction of broader studies that should be conducted to critically examine Turkey's temporary protection in terms of its practice, using the voice of Syrians.

By providing a thorough empirical analysis of Turkey's temporary protection shortcomings, considering the opinions of the Syrian population, this study enriches the global discussion on the effectiveness, imple-

mentation, and development of temporary protection (e.g., Koser & Black, 1999; Kjaerum, 1994; Donatella, 1994; Fitzpatrick, 2000; Gibney, 2000; Brekke, 2001; Leach, 2004; Edwards, 2012; Yildiz & Uzgören, 2016). Besides, this paper will show how much the current practices in Turkey comply with international norms.

The research begins by referencing earlier works to describe the way Turkey's temporary protection evolved eventually. After this, the baseline of the analysis will be discussed and determined. The empirical investigation will be covered in the remaining sections of the paper along with the methodology, a profile of the sample, and finally the presentation and discussion of the results.

2. From 'Protection' to Turkey's Temporary Protection

Protection provision is not something new; it is part of all nations' history (Loescher, 2021, p. 22). In general, it refers to ensuring that people who cross international borders in search of safer havens and flee violence and persecution, must have access to fundamental rights and necessities.

In the contemporary era, during the 19th century, in particular, more people became in need of protection due to the massive violence that resulted from the first and second world wars. Hence, numerous international institutions and efforts were formed to support the rights of the displaced persons. Starting with Nansen's office in 1921, followed by the establishment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1950, which led to the arrangements of the 1951 Geneva Convention, the main contemporary document regulating the status and the rights of the people who leave their homes forcibly.

In its first form, the Geneva Convention suggested that protection should be provided to individuals that have to flee their homes:

'As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Anyone outside the country of their nationality and are unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of their former habitual residence as a result of such events, are unable or, owing to such fear, are unwilling to return to it.'

Article 1 (UNHCR, 2020).

The Convention recommended a group of fundamental minimum standards to handle forced migration. This covers things like having access to courts, education, employment, official registration and paperwork, such as a passport. However, not all the rights are obligatory, and the Convention assigned them varying degrees of precedence. While some of them should match the rights granted to the nationals of the host country, other categories of rights can be given based on host country's capabilities.

Yet, the 1951 convention set a date and geographic limitations; it grants protection to the people who experienced persecution in the past, not the ones who could face it after. Accordingly, there was a need to modify the convention by eliminating these limitations. In 1967, the Protocol was issued, making the Convention more inclusive, covering all people affected by wars and violence all over the world, beyond the ones who fled the events occurring before 1 January 1951 and those who fled Europe, to seek lasting solutions for all the forcibly displaced persons and share the burden globally. Governments, practitioners, and policymakers started using the Convention as a status and rights-based instrument to emphasise a group of principles,

including the; non-discrimination, non-penalization, and non-refoulement principles (UNHCR, 2020).

As the violence in the world increased and continued unabated, UNHCR, the primary actor facilitating the provision of protection to those in need, began to bear a heavier burden. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, it shifted its focus from providing solutions for durable protection to providing financial and in-kind assistance (Loescher, 2021, p. 38). Besides, granting conventional protection became a long and complicated process. It cannot be granted immediately by the host countries in the case of influxes and mass displacements, which made the implementation of the Convention more challenging.

In 1981, the Executive Committee of the UNHCR suggested rules to be adopted in situations of large-scale influx. The document stated that if the receiving countries cannot deal with the influx and provide durable protection, it should grant them protection, at least temporarily without any discrimination regarding race, religion, political opinion, nationality, country of origin, or physical incapacity (UNHCR, 1981). Also, the host countries should provide them with all the internationally recognized fundamental civil rights and the necessities of life, including food, shelter, basic sanitary, and health facilities. It also encourages the other members to adhere to the burden-sharing rule until they find a durable solution.

The 1990s took the protection system one more step beyond its conventional mandate, as the influx into central and western Europe from the Yugoslavia war (1991 - 2001) opened the door for more temporary protection practices. Even though the majority of the entrants were qualified for conventional protection, but at the time, the EU only provided them with temporary protection (Orchard & Miller, 2014).

In 2001, the temporary protection became official in Europe, as the European Union issued its formal Temporary Protection Directive to assure that all participating members adhere to the minimum standards of the EU's temporary protection, which was sufficiently similar to the Geneva Convention and covered a range of rights and privileges for a specific period (Commission, 2022).

Internationally, other types of temporary protection/stay policies have been put in place over time to respond to humanitarian crises and complicated or mixed cross-border population movements in a suitable manner. The UNHCR released its guidelines on Temporary Protection or Stay Arrangements (TPSAs) in 2014 as a practical 'tool' of international protection, reflecting states' commitments and practice of providing sanctuary to people fleeing humanitarian crises. The guidelines were based on the Geneva Convention, 1981's notes, and the EU's temporary protection. The employment of TPSAs, especially in non-convention states, is a supplement to the international refugee protection scheme and on occasion a means of addressing capacity and responsiveness issues at a national level (UNHCR, 2014, p. 1).

Turkey has a long history of providing protection (DGMM, 2022); however, its history with temporary protection is recent. It started after the Syrians' arrival, who fled the civil war in their country in 2011. Even though Turkey is a signatory member of the 1951 Convention, it did not grant the Syrians arriving after 2011 international protection. The reasoning was that Turkey signed the 1951 Convention only, but not the protocol, which means that it keeps the time and geographic limitations in place and cannot grant conventional protection to non-European asylum seekers (Rygiel, Baban, & Ilcan, 2016, p. 317).

Accordingly, Syrians did not have clear legal status upon arrival in Turkey. They were called guests or brothers, in some instances, which limited their access to essential services and rights such as citizenship, regular employment, and permanent residency status (Rygiel, Baban, & Ilcan, 2016, p. 317). However, that was the case before the declaration of Law for Foreigners and International Protection (the 2013 Law) which

was implemented in April 2014, paving the way for regulating Temporary Protection (Regulation No. 29153 on Temporary protection) (Ineli-Ciger, 2017, p. 28). It stated that the temporary protection is for the:

‘Foreigners who have been forced to leave their country and cannot return to the country they left, have arrived at or crossed the borders of Turkey individually or in masses, seeking emergency and temporary protection, and to whom international protection status determination procedures do not apply’
Article 7.

In 2014, the implementation of temporary protection started rapidly. At present it covers approximately four million Syrians (DGMM, 2022). The services and privileges the Syrians can benefit from after registration under temporary protection were unclear in 2014's regulation. Article 26 stated, ‘Foreigners under this regulation may receive health, education, access to the labour market, social assistance, interpretation, and similar services.’ The regulations do not mention any mandatory standards; instead, they used the word ‘may’ which implies probability and leaves it up to the ministries to decide what they can offer the migrated Syrians.

In a nutshell, Turkey's temporary protection system is like other temporary protection systems. It does not violate any international obligation, particularly the non-refoulement (Ineli-Ciger, 2017, p. 29). Yet, it falls short of providing a durable framework (Rygiel, Baban, & Ilcan, 2016, p. 317). There is still room for further improvement and clarification as a gap exists between Turkish temporary protection and other international forms of temporary protection systems. For example, it does not mention the maximum duration, and Syrians do not get a set of basic rights like the full rights to work and access to social assistance (Ineli-Ciger, 2017, pp. 28-32).

3. Analytical Framework

When a country faces a mass influx, many questions arise. On top of them is the form of protection and its consequences (İçduygu & Aksel, 2022). The current temporary protection systems are not clear and lack formality, and no international legal framework gives temporary protection a precise definition or reflects agreement on its characteristics as a protection system (Ineli-Ciger, 2019, p.57). The formality and the international standardization of the system mean having a specific framework and fixed standards of treatment, as any lack of standards will encourage the host countries to limit the scope of protection for the newcomers (Fitzpatrick, 2000).

To perform such an investigation on Turkey's system, there is a need to employ a proxy document that can help in discussing the shortness of Turkey's temporary protection. When looking at the available international regulations and documents, the Geneva Convention, the EU's temporary protection legislation, and the UNHCR's temporary protection and stays arrangements (TPSAs) are three viable baselines that might be used for this paper.

Still, Geneva Convention is more reliable when we talk about full, long-term protection, and will not be just if it is used to compare with a temporary one. On the other hand, even though the EU's temporary protection system is one of the valid baselines, but still, it is tailored for European capacities and cannot be taken as a baseline for other regions.

At this point, UNHCR's TPSAs can take its original role in covering the gaps. It is the most recent international non-governmental document about the use of temporary protection. It provides recommendations globally regardless of countries' capacity and commitment to other protection agreements. Also, it offers clear suggestions in respect of temporary protection's minimum standards.

UNHCR's TPSAs suggest the following minimum standards:

- 'Recognized and documented permission to stay for the designated period.
- Protection against arbitrary or prolonged detention.
- Non-discriminatory, humane and dignified treatment, including guarantees of shelter/housing, access to health and other basic services and education; freedom of movement, except as may be warranted by national security, public order or public health considerations.
- The registration of births, deaths and marriages.
- Physical security, including protection against sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation.
- Special care for separated and unaccompanied children, guided by the best interests of the child.
- Respect for family unity and tracing, and opportunities for a reunion with separated family members.
- Particular attention and special arrangements for persons with special needs and disabilities.
- Self-sufficiency or work opportunities.
- Access to the UNHCR and relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations, and civil society.' (UNHCR, 2014)

Besides, UNHCR's TPSAs encourage discussing durable solutions as soon as possible, which will help in assessing the validity of the system, and when it can be used. Stating that temporary protection should come to an end when:

- (i) 'It is determined based on an objective assessment with clear indications that the situation causing the displacement has ended. Voluntary return is reasonable and can be carried out in safety and dignity;
 - (ii) the TPSA has been replaced by another form of protection, including the transition to refugee status, as appropriate;
 - (iii) an individual has transitioned to an alternative status (including, for example, residency status, work visa, or another migration status); or
 - (iv) an individual has been admitted to a third State on a humanitarian basis or through resettlement.'
- (UNHCR, 2014)

4. Methodology

To analyse Turkey's protection system in practice and unveil the necessary modifications using the voice of the persons of concern, the qualitative case study approach was used in this paper. This approach offers a deeper understanding of a certain issue based on people's interactions and individual stories in a particular context and how it is developed over time. It also relates to the present and the future (Mohajan, 2018, p. 11).

According to recent statistics, Turkey hosts 3.648.983 Syrians under temporary protection. The majority of them arrived between 2013 and 2017 (DGMM, 2022). The numbers also show the top ten hosting cities, which are: Istanbul, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay, Adana, Mersin, Bursa, Izmir, Konya, and Ankara respectively (DGMM, 2022).

It is noted that the number of Syrian males under temporary protection is higher than females (54% and 46% respectively). The young Syrians under the age of 18 are 50% while the Syrians over the age of 55 are 5% of the total population (Multeciler, 2022).

Face-to-face interviews were conducted between the 1st and 23rd of February 2022 with 48 Syrians living in Turkey. The participants were selected using the simple random sampling method (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 38) in four Turkish cities (Table 1) which represents the cities that host the biggest number of Syrians, besides, to assess the system nationwide the selected locations cover different regions in Turkey: north, central, and south.

Table 1: Interviews per Governorate

Conducted Interviews	Governorate
21	Istanbul
12	Gaziantep
7	Konya
8	Ankara
48	Grand Total

The youngest participant was 19 years old, and the oldest was 53. Regarding gender, 22 female participants joined the interviews while the rest were males, which gives a good representation of the actual statistics of the Syrian community in Turkey.

To understand the background of the participants, they were also asked about their marital status, education level, and year of arrival in Turkey, as Tables 2, 3, and 4 show:

Table 2 Interviewees per Marital Status

Marital Status	Number of Participants
Divorced	1
Married	34
Single	10
Widow	3
Grand Total	48

Table 3 Interviewees per Educational Level

Education Level	Number of Participants
Literate	5
Elementary education	4
Secondary education	10
High school	11
University or associate degree	17
Graduate degree from Turkey	1
Grand Total	48

It is worth noting that more than 50% of the interviewees have completed high school or hold a higher degree, as the persons with higher education understand the purpose of these studies and are more eager to give their opinion on such a topic.

Table 4 Interviewees per Arrival Year

Year	Number of Participants
2011	1
2012	3
2013	7
2014	11
2015	10
2016	7
2017	2
2018	2
2019	1
2020	1
2021	3
Grand Total	48

The interviews took the semi-structured form, using the following open-ended question: ‘As a Syrian in Turkey, what is the main shortcoming in the current temporary protection system?’. The main question was followed by more detailed questions to clarify the answers. The interviews took place in Arabic and the length varied between 20 to 35 minutes. Besides, a written consent was taken from the participants before the start.

The data analysis was done in three stages; the transcript was written and translated into English. Then, the frequent patterns were identified and grouped according to their relativity to the conceptual framework. Lastly, each group was examined intensively using phrases and quotes (Mohajan, 2018, p. 16).

It is worth noting that, despite the studied sample being diverse, the size of the sample and the results do not represent the whole Syrian community in Turkey, as each Syrian has his or her own special situation. Still, as the voice of the Syrians has not been clearly employed in recent research, this paper gives the Syrians a chance to represent their community and speak up about the concerns and difficulties they encounter while living in Turkey under temporary protection.

Lastly, it should be noted that the participants are real humans, not only participants in a study. To maintain their privacy, they were given pseudonyms instead of codes or real names.

5. Findings

Based on the highlighted points in the analytical framework, using UNHCR's TPSAs and its minimum standards, the results are grouped into five main areas in a way that reflects Syrians' experience with the temporary protection system. The areas are:

- Registration and documentation
- Freedom of movement
- Access to work opportunities
- Racism and discrimination
- Durable solutions

This section will explain the highlighted areas based on Syrians' opinions. The results will be presented in a narrative format. Direct quotations and phrases from the interviews will be used to justify the analysis.

It is worth noting that, even though UNHCR's minimum standards include eleven points, the findings were grouped into five points only, as this research focuses on the phenomenology patterns that show the shortness of the system. Besides, although some minimum standards are not highlighted in the findings, that does not mean that Syrians do not have problems concerning them, but it can be said that they are not among the most urgent issues.

i. **Registration and Documentation**

Getting registered is one of the fundamental rights granted by the UNHCR's TPSAs as well as the distinct types of temporary protection. However, the Syrians in Turkey are still struggling to access this right, and obtaining the temporary protection card became a mission impossible as thousands are struggling for registration (DW, 24). This forces them to seek unofficial ways to register such as paying bribes and dealing with middlemen. Abdulrahman (a 27-year-old man) said: 'I thought corruption is only in Syria. But I found that here as well; every kind of government-related document needs a middleman.'

Ali (a 28-year-old man) was one of the Syrians who struggled to be registered. He summarized his experience as follows: 'Do you want to hear? Do you want to know that I and my wife are exhausted and frustrated just because we want to get our basic right, which is being registered under temporary protection, and get the ID? We faced really bad treatment; they closed all the doors in front of us, and we had to pay around 13 thousand Turkish lire to some people to facilitate our application in the DGMM.'

Also, it is worth noting that the registration process is getting more complex every day. Syrians are becoming restricted from being registered in the big cities and some neighbourhoods in other cities (Kisadaga, 2022). It causes a big disadvantage for them, they do not know anyone, have no ethnic enclave support, and there is a lack of opportunities compared to the big cities, which pushes the Syrians to unfollow the rules and stay where they can survive regardless of the area of registration. Ali continued: 'at the end, they threw us in Amasya! Ten hours away from Istanbul, where my widow mom lives! There are no jobs in Amasya! What should I do there?'

Living out of the registration area will prevent the Syrians from accessing other essential services, such as health and education, and put them at risk of deportation. Ali was an example of this situation 'So now I am living in Istanbul, I do not have a work permit, and I cannot benefit from the health services, and my children cannot go to school!'

Moreover, it seems like being registered is not the end of the story. Usually, Syrians in Turkey suffer from mistakes happening during the registration process. For example, Salah (a 30-year-old man) explained his problem as follows: 'Long story short, I suddenly found myself in a black hole, the staff at the migration management (DGMM) wrote my surname wrong, and it became different from the other family members. I was not able to speak Turkish at that time, and the staff could not speak Arabic. That issue happened in 2014, but until now, I could not solve it. The DGMM sent me to the court, and the court sent me to the DGMM, and that is wasting my time and money.'

And most of the time, the situation becomes more complicated, similar to Rima's (a 48-year-old woman) story. 'My husband's ID is Istanbul, while mine is from Urfa; I want to transfer it here, but they did not accept

it, and they want me to go back to my city! How will we live? Each one of us in a different city?’

In addition, the DGMM asks the Syrians periodically to update their information which requires hours of waiting and bringing impossible documents and proofs, for example, the ones from the Syrian Embassy. Randa (a 32-year-old woman) explained her problem with the system as follows ‘I am a widow, I live with my two children, one 5 years and one 6 years, both of them do not have temporary protection ID. Wherever we go, they say the registration is closed. Once they opened, they asked us to bring proof from the Syrian Embassy stating that my husband passed away to register the children. I cannot get it because of the cost, and I do not understand why I should go to the Embassy if I ran away from that country. The problem now is that the children cannot go to school, and if they get sick, we cannot take them to hospitals, help me please!’

And even though there are clear regulations, still, according to Mousa (a 39-year-old- male) ‘Government officials always deal with Syrians according to their mood, not the written regulations.’ Rasha (a 24-year-old immigrant) also stated, ‘The situation is awful, the racism of DGMM staff is too much, everything is according to their mood.’

Lastly, it is not only about the registration; a group of Syrians complains about the ID shape, which is very big, around A5 paper size. It is made of paper, so it is not durable and can be damaged easily. However, this issue looks important for the Syrians, and they consider issuing such an ID as disrespectful to them. Rami (a 43-year-old man) stated that; ‘the ID card is funny, it does not fit to any wallet in the world, they should replace it with a more civilized one.’

ii. Freedom of Movement

Freedom of movement is another big issue Syrians in Turkey under temporary protection face. It is divided into two types: domestic and international movements.

Starting with the domestic movement, the Syrians registered under temporary protection cannot move from the governorate where they have been registered and other Turkish governorates without obtaining a travel permit, which needs well-founded proof and justification and has a limited duration.

Omar (a 27-year-old man) is registered in Şanlıurfa, but he could not find a proper job there, so he had to move to Istanbul, where he managed to find a decent job. Omar said, ‘The Turkish authorities are putting us in cages. We need permission if we want to travel from one governorate to another. Even though I found a job in another governorate where I could feed my family, they did not consider it a good reason and did not permit me. Still, I moved because I wanted to survive, but now I do not have access to health services, and I am worried that they will deport me if the police stop me there. Is it protection or detention?’

Obtaining a travel permit inside Turkey is a big disadvantage for Syrians looking for business opportunities. For instance, Bushra (a 32-year-old woman) was planning to start her own business in the tourism sector, but she could not succeed as she says that the ‘Biggest deficiency? Travel permit! It freezes my work.’

The other issue is with the international movement. Even though the UNHCR's TPSAs asked the hosting countries to grant the forced immigrants the right to free movement, Turkey did not grant such a right to the Syrians living on its territory. As a result, this represents a big challenge for them, especially for those who have relatives abroad or are running a business that requires international travel.

Malek (a 34-year-old man) said, ‘As a tradesman, temporary protection is not good, because I have to travel a lot inside and outside Turkey to sell my products, but I do not have such a right, so the best solution

will be getting the citizenship and having the Turkish passport.’ On the other hand, Alaa (a 33-year-old man) thinks that this issue is the most important one, and there is no need to change the system but solve this issue. He said, ‘Believe me, temporary protection is good, and I am not asking for Turkish citizenship; I only want to get a travel document.’

Lastly, Marwa (a 30-year-old woman) argues that having this right will benefit Syrians and Turks as it will open new doors. She wondered, ‘Why does Turkey not allow the Syrians under temporary protection to travel abroad and come back whenever they want? That will certainly put less pressure on Turkey, and many Syrians can find opportunities abroad. And the most important thing that will make us feel like humans.’

iii. Access to Work Opportunities

Turkey's temporary protection regulations did not grant Syrians the full right to work; instead, it was stated that ‘the Council of Ministers shall determine principles and procedures regarding the employment of persons benefiting from temporary protection’ (Article 29/1). However, such a notion leaves the vast majority of Syrians without an official employment status regardless of their skills and accreditations. They have to seek different ways for an income source. Ibrahim (a 24-year-old man) said that the problem of finding decent work is the main reason to stay in a country or leave, and most of the time, finding the opportunity is not enough; it is about the quality of the opportunity. He explained his biggest concern with the system is the ‘lack of work opportunities. And if you find one, you will receive a really low salary, and most probably they will cheat on you and not give you your money, and for sure you cannot get any rights because you are Syrian and working illegally. Personally, I want to go to Europe. I cannot survive here.’

Ali (a 28-year-old man) explained his situation as follows, ‘even though we are well educated, my wife and I speak English, and use the computer perfectly, no one agreed to recruit us, even the Syrian institutions. I do not know what is happening to humans! They do not know how much we suffered before coming here! I lived in a besieged area for five years without any work opportunities! I am living the same situation here!’

The lack of decent work opportunities is a problem for all groups of Syrians regardless of their skills and education level. Khaldoun (a 28-year-old man) stated, ‘In simple words, Turkey is not a good place to make a future. I am an engineer, but I cannot find any job. If I cannot cover my daily needs, how will I think about my future?’

While there is a need for income, there is a lack of opportunities, especially for women, Syrians will keep on using all available means to sustain their income. Similar to Betul (a 53-year-old woman) who said, ‘As a woman, I have fewer opportunities out of my home, so I am trying to sustain my income in simple ways. For example, I make sweets at home nowadays, and I sell them to my relatives and neighbours.’

Also, Rasha (a 24-year-old woman) was frustrated with the situation, saying that ‘As a mother of two children, I need decent work to cover the needs of my family, but even though I have a university degree, I could not use it here. I had to pay 10 thousand Turkish lire as a commission to get a job that could barely cover my basic need.’

Mohamad (a 42-year-old man) has another opinion regarding the livelihood issue. He said that it is a problem of the country in general because of the bad economic situation and not related to the temporary protection system, ‘Syrians under temporary protection are in good condition generally. However, all the people in Turkey are suffering from low income. I mean everyone, Syrians and Turks, not only Syrians.’

On the other hand, the negative impact of the lack of work opportunities affects children as well, not only adults. Some employers will recruit children instead of adults because they accept less money, and their families are in need. Lina (a 34-year-old woman) stated, 'I am sad because my children are not going to school. They are the breadwinners of our household; they have to work. Financial stability is a priority here.'

Lastly, it is important to mention that only a group of Syrians under temporary protection receive financial support regularly. This payment is supported by the European Union and administrated by the Turkish Red Crescent, and it is given to the most disadvantaged ones only. However, even if they receive this support, they still need to work as the monthly amount is minimal, around 11 US dollars per person.

iv. **Racism and Discrimination**

A good protection system can protect people on the move from racism and discrimination. However, it seems like Turkey's protection system did not really work well in this regard, and Syrians still face it in their daily life.

Almost half of the participants have stated that racism is one of the main difficulties they face in Turkey. It starts with obtaining a temporary protection card, renting a shelter, and finding a job. Mohammad (a 28-year-old man) summarised his situation as follows: 'As a Syrian under Temporary protection living in Turkey, I am exposed to all kinds of pressure; mentally, financially, socially, and a lot a lot of discrimination.'

Also, Rami (a 40-year-old man) thinks that racism is everywhere in Turkey. Even at courts where justice should be, he wishes that 'judges in Turkey look at Syrian's problems in a neutral and just way. If we are guests here, that does not mean that Turkish people are right, and we are always wrong.'

Even though racism could happen for various reasons, Amin (a 35-year-old man) believes that the problem is not with the system. He believes that 'Syrians will live peacefully in Turkey if all the politicians leave us alone, and do not use us now and then to cover their internal problems.'

v. **Durable Solutions**

After long years of their displacement, the Syrians started looking more into sustainable solutions and a stable future for themselves and their family members. As the temporary protection does not have any specific duration, Ramez (a 31-year-old man) explained it as 'Temporary protection does not support our integration in Turkey, because we do not feel safe, continuous rumours are saying that they will send us back to Syria.'

The interviewees were divided into two main groups; the first aimed to get Turkish citizenship and become part of the host community, while the others were looking for opportunities outside Turkey.

The ones who want to get citizenship have their reasons. For example, Jalal (a 34-year-old man) said, 'temporary protection is a good alternative in emergencies and refugee influxes, but it does not give us the feeling of stability. Syrians cannot feel stable socially, mentally, and financially as long as they are threatened now and then with expulsion. Also, another important thing for me is that I cannot own a property as a Syrian under temporary protection even if I have the capability; citizenship might solve all my problems.'

Even though around 200 thousand Syrians are granted citizenship so far (Multeciler, 2022), the process is moving slowly. Besides, the requirements are unclear, leading to Syrians' frustration and Turks' anger. Moneer (a 24-year-old man) expressed his frustration with the process, saying that 'citizenship should be given to the ones who stayed in Turkey for more than six years without any discrimination. Both educated

people and illiterate ones are all Syrians; they are all humans.’

Dima (a 32-year-old woman) also insisted on the benefits of citizenship and suggested more practical procedures to grant it to the Syrians. She claims that ‘citizenship is the key. I hope the general directorate of migration searches for Syrians who have good behaviour and have lived in Turkey for five years or more and did not go out of Turkey during this stay. Citizenship will grant us dignity and equal rights. If not for me then for my children, who were born in Turkey, and studying in Turkish schools. They have full rights to live in this country safely like any other Turkish child.’

On the other hand, the Syrians who consider leaving Turkey will do so if they get the opportunity, as it will be the best solution for their protracted suffering. Husam (a 29-year-old man) says, ‘I wish they deal with the Syrians in a respectful and civilised way, we cannot live here as normal humans. At the same time, the Syrians in Europe have better and clear rights. They receive fair treatment and full rights. In Europe, people can travel, and they receive support in accommodation and finding proper jobs. Because of that, I want to go there whatever it costs.’

Ammar (a 26-year-old man) added, ‘What is urgently needed for the Syrians in Turkey is not modifying the system. What they need is supporting them to leave Turkey to another country where they will be respected as humans.’

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Temporary protection can be one of the best alternatives to dealing with mass influxes as an immediate action. However, looking at the different versions of this system, Turkey's system is the most debatable for several reasons. In addition to the fact that it is used as a long-term solution rather than a short-term one, and that it offers limited rights compared to the other relevant international forms (Ineli-Ciger, 2017; Zenginkuzucu, 2021), there is a gap between the way it is regulated and the way it is practised, as well as its shortcoming in explaining the limits of the system to the Syrian and Turkish communities.

In comparison to UNHCR's TPSAs, there are several weak areas in the current system in practice, namely: the registration process, access to decent job opportunities, freedom of movement, living peacefully with the host community, and making future plans.

Turkey's temporary protection shows a discrepancy between what is stated in the regulations and the way it is implemented in practice. For instance, the right to be registered and obtain a temporary protection card is challenging for Syrians. Although the regulations state clearly that the procedures should be done by trained staff (Article 21/2), the results indicate unprofessional behaviours from the staff and the system being applied according to their understanding. Ten years should be enough time to solve such issues, but still, there is a gap, and there is a need to pay more attention to this aspect of the system.

Besides, even though the current regulations do not clearly state any restrictions on Syrians' movement domestically and internationally, Turkish authorities have limited their international movement and minimised their travel inside the country for reasons such as protecting the security of the country and avoiding their concentration in a certain area (HRW, 2022). Still, freedom of movement is one of the rights granted by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the Geneva Convention, and UNHCR's TPSAs. Syrians believe that this point is crucial, and they should be granted the full rights to travel domestically and internationally as free humans. They trust that granting such a right will be a win-win for them and Turkey, as

they can find new opportunities abroad or open the door for new investments, reducing the burden on Turkey.

The regulations stated that the Syrians staying in urban areas might be provided with some services and support (Article 38/2). However, in reality, most Syrians in Turkey do not have the right to benefit from social assistance; they have to depend on their savings to sustain their lives, which will not last forever. Hence, they have to work to cover their needs. Yet, Turkey's temporary protection system does not offer them many options when it comes to the right to work (Article 29). Besides, even after 2016's work regulations, the number of work permits issued is too small (Multeciler, 2022), especially with the quota condition that prevents employers from recruiting up to ten percent of the Syrians out of the total number of national workers.

Syrians in Turkey do not only think about their current situation. They think about their future, stability, safety, and a place to call home. The temporary protection is not enough for them and cannot grant them a bright future. Instead, they seek more durable solutions, such as getting Turkish citizenship or moving again to another country where they can get citizenship or permanent residency. However, neither option is available, citizenship is for the lucky ones only, and the way to Europe is too risky.

Therefore, the solution can start with following UNHCR' TPSAs' recommendations and other temporary protection laws on stating the duration of the temporary protection and opening the doors for more durable solutions. In other words, similar to Eren's (2019) conclusion, Turkey should find a solution for the prolonged issue, set a maximum duration for the temporary protection, and give Syrians the option to decide if they want to apply for citizenship and be part of the Turkish community or continue to other countries because temporary protection is not a permanent solution. Yet, Turkey is delaying such a policy as they have the hope of sending Syrians back home, which might help them mitigate the Turkish community's reaction to such a decision, as the majority of them are against granting citizenship to Syrians (Alahmad & Aoyama, 2022). On the other hand, Turkey cannot open the door for the Syrians to move to Europe as it is obliged to keep the Syrians under the 2016's EU-Turkey agreement.

The last point to discuss here is racism and discrimination, which are getting worse every day in Turkey. Aside from the indistinctness of the regulations, there is a lack of communication between the Turkish community and the Turkish authorities regarding the limits of the regulations, which makes locals depend on misleading 'new nationalist' media sources that promote hate speech and wrong information (Bozdağ, 2020; Fahim, 2022).

Besides revising the regulations and clarifying the minimum standards of treatment for both the hosts and the forced immigrants, and the temporary protection system should be reinforced by other programmes to improve the resilience of the forced immigrants and minimise racism and discrimination; these may include language courses, cultural meetings, and mandatory integration programs. It is worth noting that even though racism and discrimination might not be the fault of the system itself, it is the system's responsibility to ease them by clarifying the basics of integration and making more efforts to bring the two communities closer. It is not easy for Turkey, but it can learn from the successful practises of other countries, such as the integration programmes carried out in Germany (Council of Europe, 2022).

Lastly, this paper highlights the importance of two points: first, stressing the need to formalise and standardise the temporary protection system globally to maintain control over the way it is implemented, and guarantee equal rights and benefits for displaced persons worldwide. And second, it shows that an efficient temporary protection system needs an effective feedback mechanism. There is a dire need to establish an

effective feedback mechanism to hear the voices of the people of concern and ask them to participate in developing the system, as they are the ones who live with it, experience it day by day, and can give an objective evaluation of the way it is applied.

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