

2015

Understanding Syrians in Turkey

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Background

It is estimated that over 2 million Syrians have taken refuge in Turkey since the outbreak of the crisis in Syria since March 2011.

An estimated nine million Syrians have fled their homes since the outbreak of crisis in March 2011, taking refuge in neighboring countries or within Syria itself. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), over 3 million have fled to Syria's immediate neighbors Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. 6.5 million are internally displaced within Syria.

Initially the Turkish government received most of the refugees in camps; while the latecomers spread out to cities where they could continue their lives in the safety of major cities such as Hatay, Gaziantep and Istanbul. To understand the lives of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, Xsights Social Research Institute, which is an independent organisation, conducted a study by interviewing 250 Syrians living out of camps in Turkey.

This research covers;

- Syrians' past experiences in Syria,
- Their current conditions in Turkey and
- Their plans for the future

This research is aimed at unveiling the current situation of Syrian refugees in Turkey who live outside the camps. It hopes to contribute towards a better understanding of the current situation as well as a more accurate needs' assessment for aid planning.

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Executive Summary

- ✓ This research has been conducted among Syrians who live outside refugee camps in Turkey between 26 June – 09 July 2015.
- ✓ A total of 250 Syrians in 3 cities where the Syrian refugees settled the most were interviewed. 120 Syrians in Istanbul, 40 from Hatay and 90 from Gaziantep were included in the sample.
- ✓ 20% of Syrians who live outside the camps say they have no family member left in Syria. 32% of them have members of their family living in a foreign country other than Turkey.
- ✓ The most common way of communication with Syria is online (%78). The Syrians (80%) use mostly social media channels to get information about politics of Syria. Facebook leads the information channel, followed by TV channels such as Aljazeera, Orient and TRT. (66%).
- ✓ 56% of the Syrians plan to move back to their country in the future. 21% think to stay in Turkey, the 16% plans to move to another country and 7% do not have any plans for future. The Syrians in Istanbul (29%) plan to stay in Turkey more than the others. The ones in Hatay (70%) and Gaziantep (62%) prefer more to go back to Syria in 5 years. If they immigrate to a country in the future, the top three destinations are Saudi Arabia, Germany and Netherlands.
- ✓ The Syrians are more positive about Turkey's future (3,6/5) than Syria's future (2,8/5). The Syrians who feel positive about the future of Syria (3,1/5) are more likely to plan to go back.

Executive Summary

- ✓ 21% of the Syrians speak Turkish fluently. Whereas 61% cannot speak Turkish fluently because they find Turkish language very complex (%27) or they do not feel that they need to learn it (24%).
- ✓ The majority (86%) of the Syrians rent a flat/house in Turkey. 11% of them stay in hotel/hostel. While most of them live in Turkey with family members such as spouse, parents, children or relatives; 26% of the participants live with people other than family members. The average housing price that Syrians pay is 719TL per month. The majority (90%) thinks that the housing prices are expensive in Turkey.. Among all, only 25% of them mentioned that they did not face any challenge in housing in Turkey. The rest complained mostly about high cost (39%) and negative attitude towards Syrians in housing (%34).
- ✓ In terms of employment, the most common difficulty that they face with is communication (32%). Besides, they are also not content with low salaries (26%) and poor treatment of Syrians (21%).
- ✓ In general, the Syrians are not informed about their rights in Turkey (2,3/5). They think that benefitting from public services in Turkey is not easy (2,8/5). Almost half of the Syrians in this research (46%) benefitted from a public service in Turkey. Health care is the most benefited public service, followed by schools and social aid.
- ✓ Syrians are more likely feel secure in Turkey (73%) and they think that they are treated well by Turkish people (3,5/5). Men (3,8/5) feel more secure than women (3,6/5). The half of the Syrians thinks that they are treated well by Turkish people. Only 5 % of them think the opposite. The participants think that Turkish people have moderate level of tolerance towards Syrians.
- ✓ As for integration to Turkey, only 26% of them think that they are integrated to Turkey, while 40% do not feel so.
- ✓ Almost the half of the sample (49%) like Turkish people and only one in four (38%) of them are satisfied with living in Turkey.

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Methodology

Research Method: Quantitative research

Data Collection Method: Face-to-face interviews in Arabic

Sample size: 250

Location: İstanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay

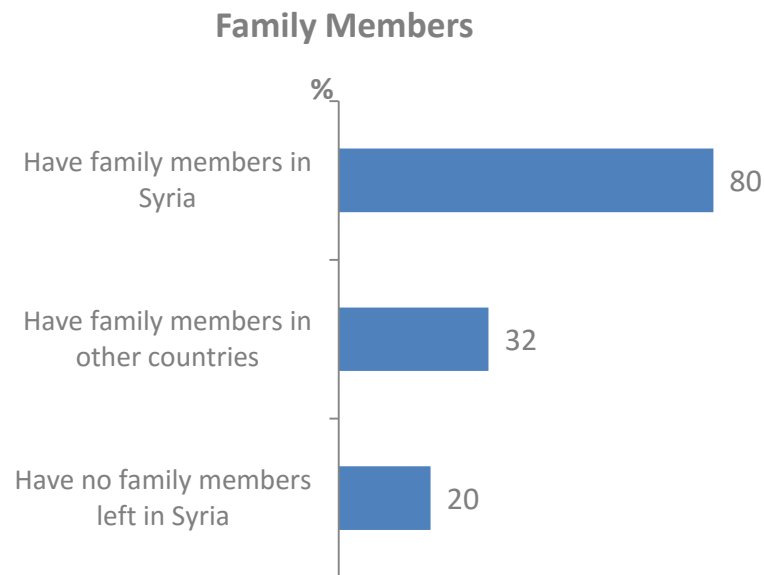
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Ties with Home for Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Findings – Ties with Syria

Family

20% of Syrians who live outside the camps have no family member left in Syria. 32% of them have family members in other countries.

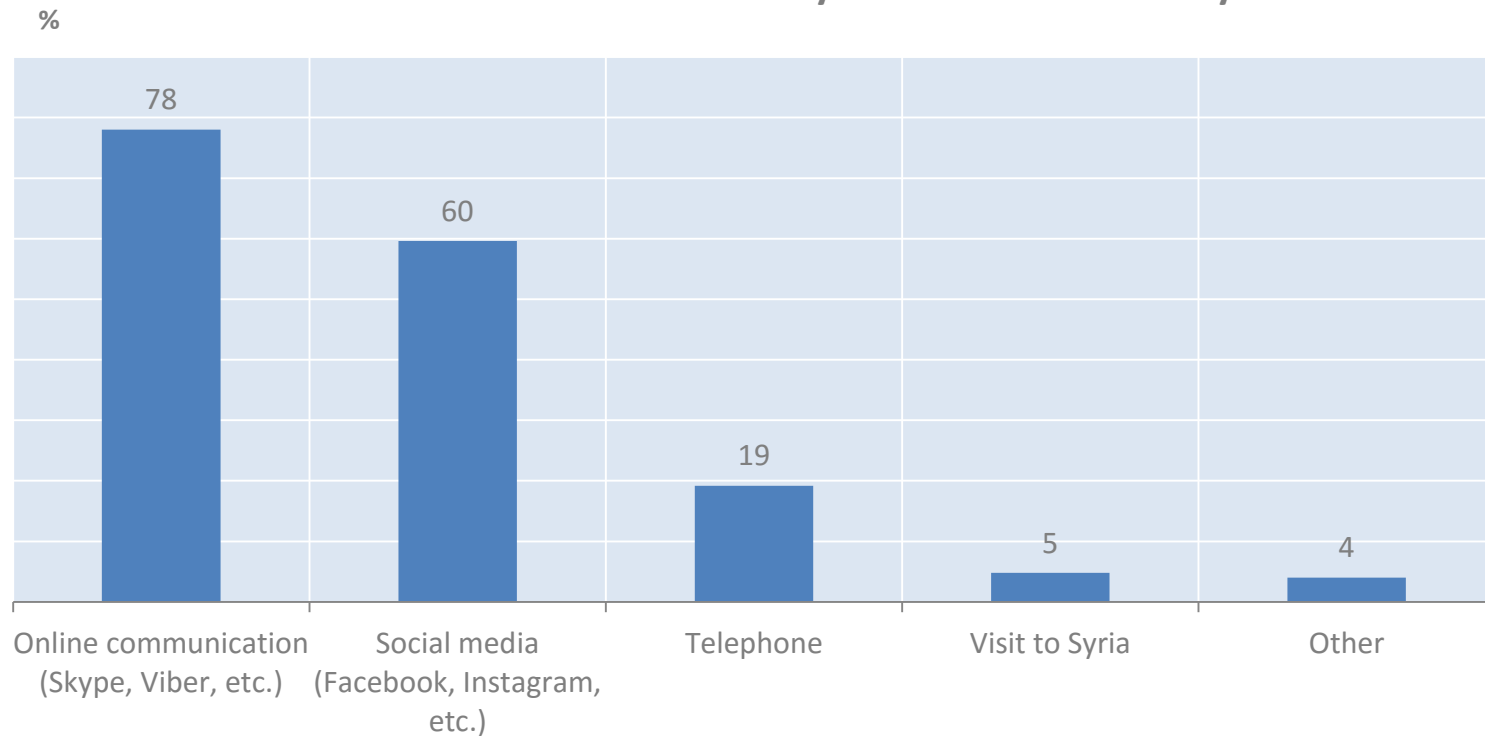


Findings –Ties with Syria

Communication with Syria

The most preferred way of communication with Syria is online (%78). Social media constitutes the second most popular communication channel (60%).

Communication Channels with Family and Friends Back in Syria

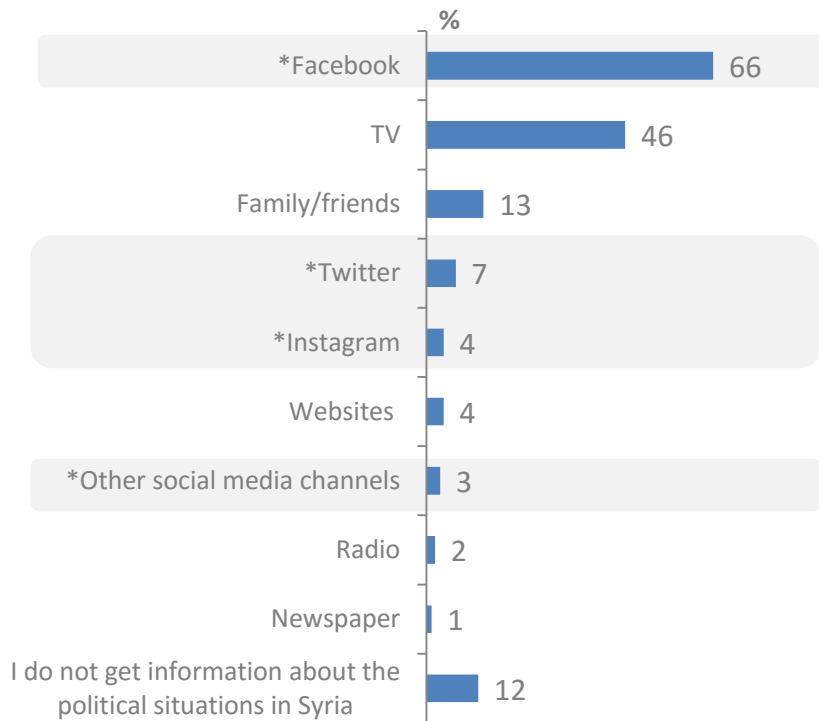


Findings – Ties with Syria

Sources of Information about Political Situation

Social media is the main source of political information for Syrians. 80% of the sources of information consist of social media channels.

Source of Information about Syrian Politics



Source of Information about Politics in Syria

TV Channels

Pan Arabic News Channels	N	Syrian TV Channels	N
Aljazeera	62	Orient	35
Al-Arabia	46	Aleppo Today	18

Websites

International TV Channels	N	Websites	N
TRT	6	Turkish newspapers	4
BBC	2	CNN	4
News Networks	1	Al-Jisr News	2

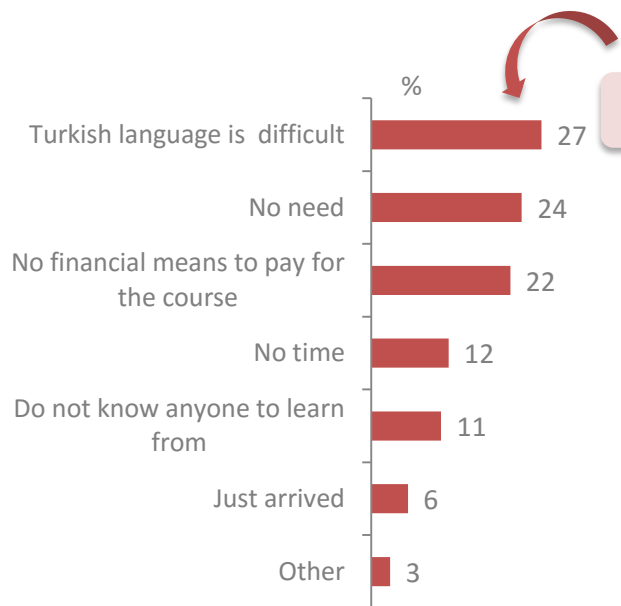
Current Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Findings

Communication

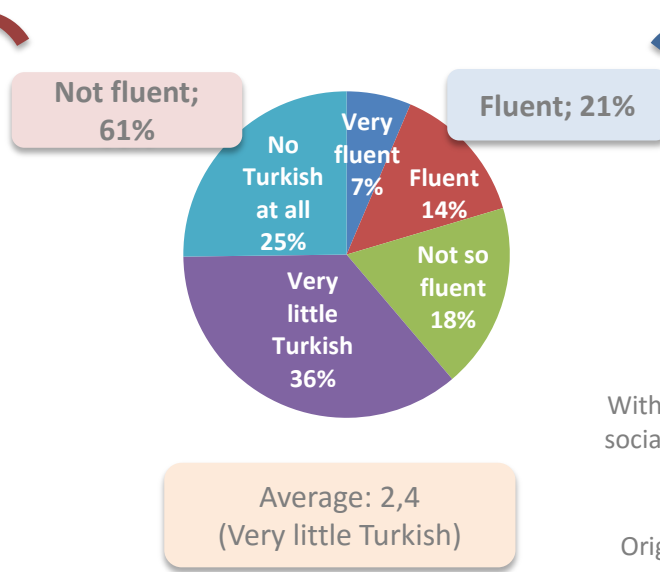
79% of Syrians who live outside the camps encounter language barrier on a daily basis.

Reasons for Low Levels of Fluency in Turkish



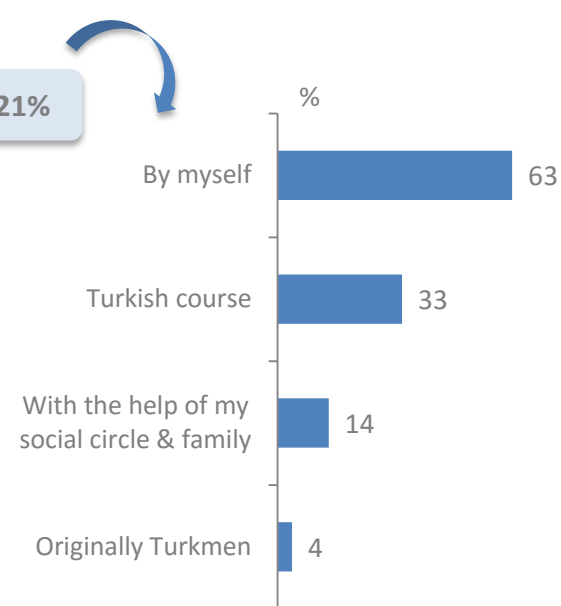
N: 153

Level of Fluency in Turkish



N: 250

How did you learn Turkish?



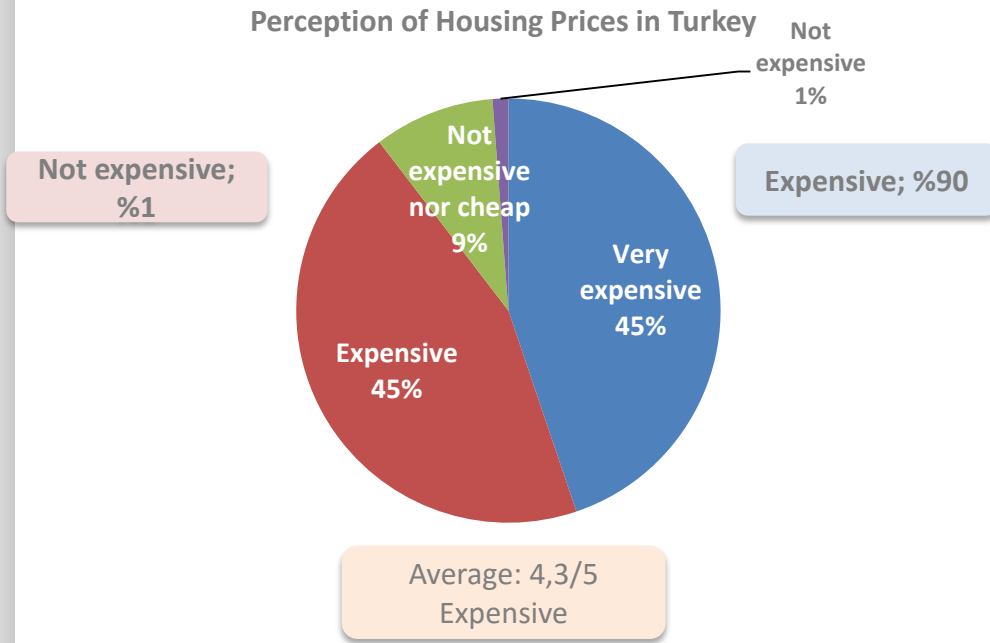
N: 51

Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

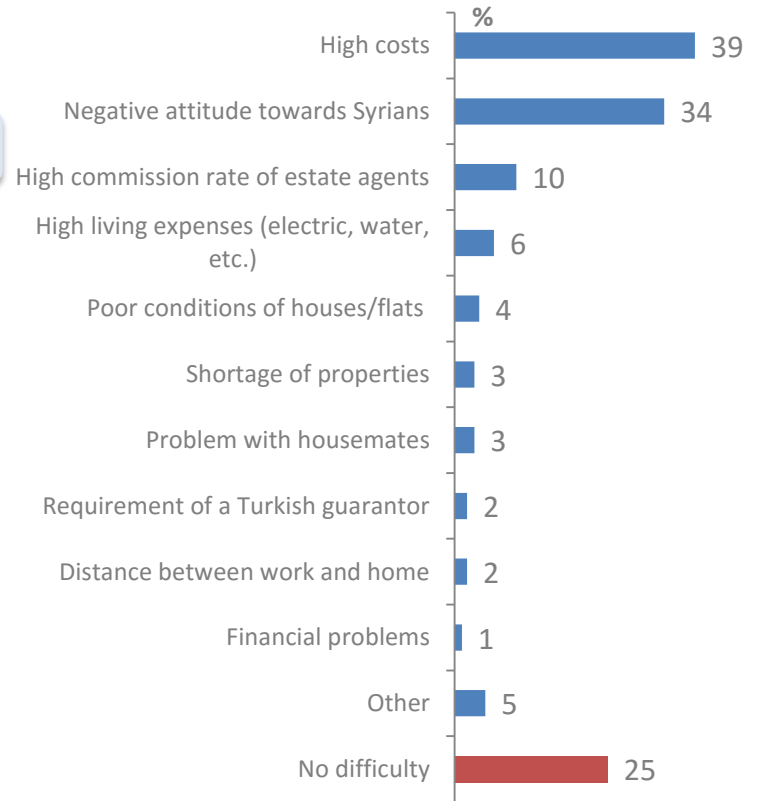
Housing

75% of Syrians outside the camps have experienced some difficulties with housing. On average, Syrians pay 719 TL for housing per month. Majority of them (90%) find housing prices in Turkey expensive.

Perception of Housing Prices in Turkey



Housing Difficulties



Average housing cost per month: 719 TL

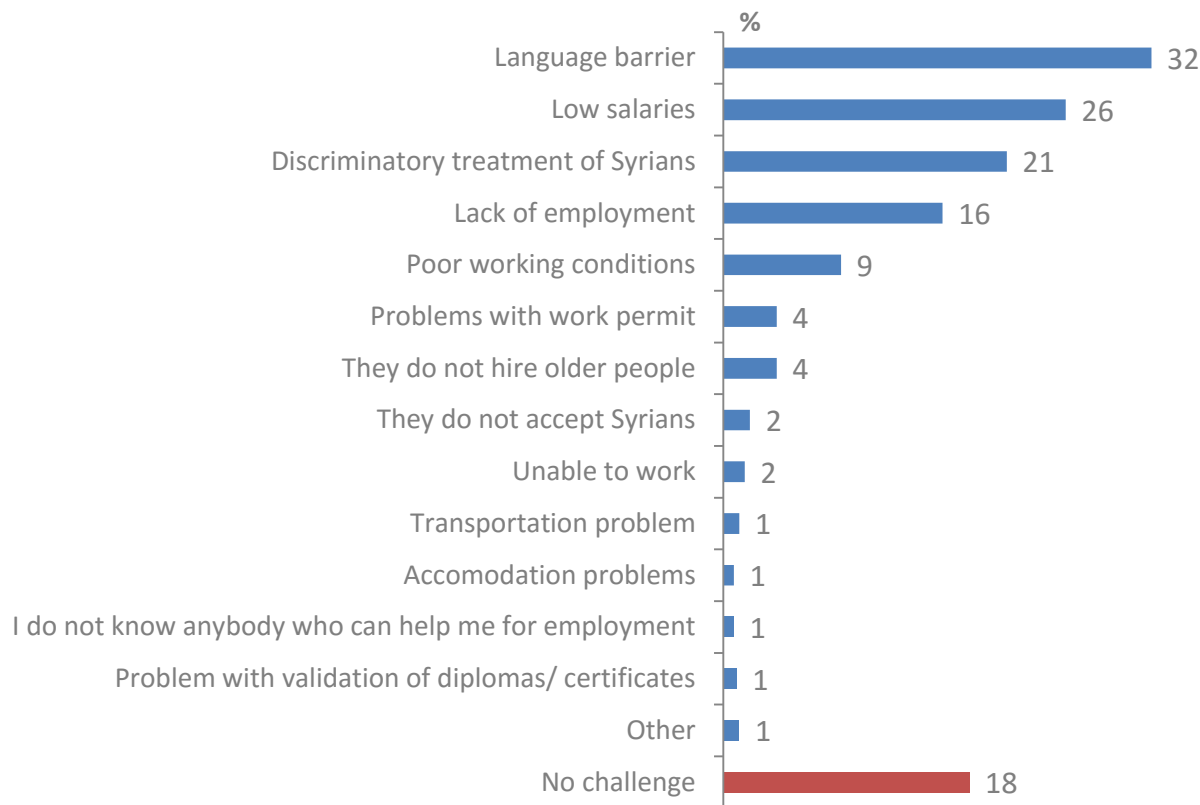
Average satisfaction with housing : 3,1/5
Neither satisfied nor not

Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Employment

82% of Syrians have experienced some challenges about employment in Turkey. The major problem for them in terms of employment is the language barrier.

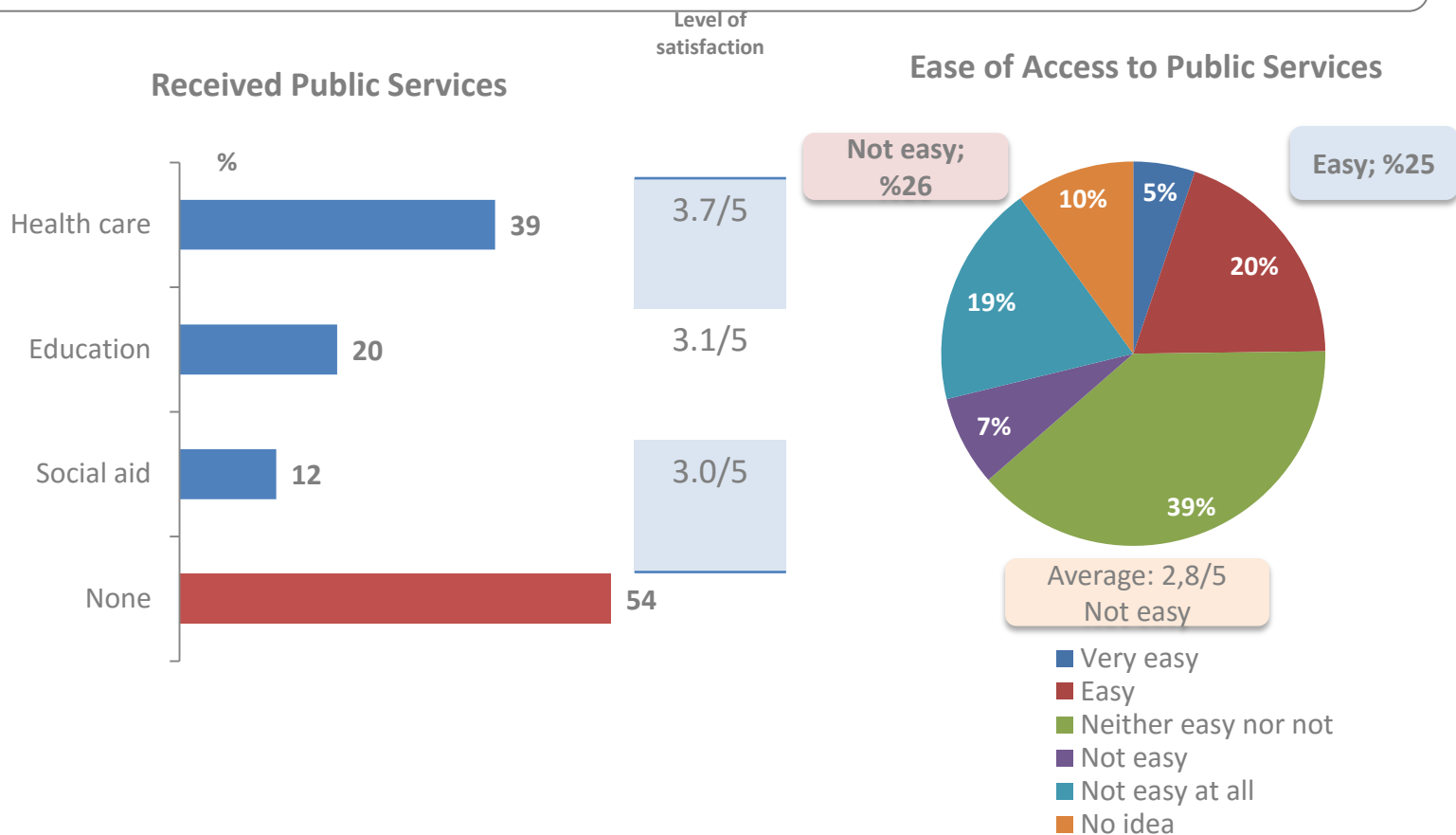
Employment Difficulties in Turkey



Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Public Services

Only 46% of respondents have ever accessed to public services since they arrived to Turkey. 26% of respondents find it difficult to access to public services.

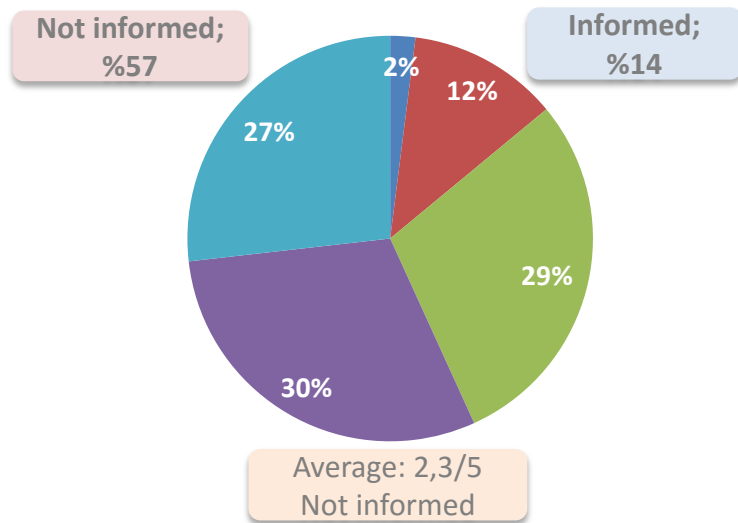


Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Rights in Turkey

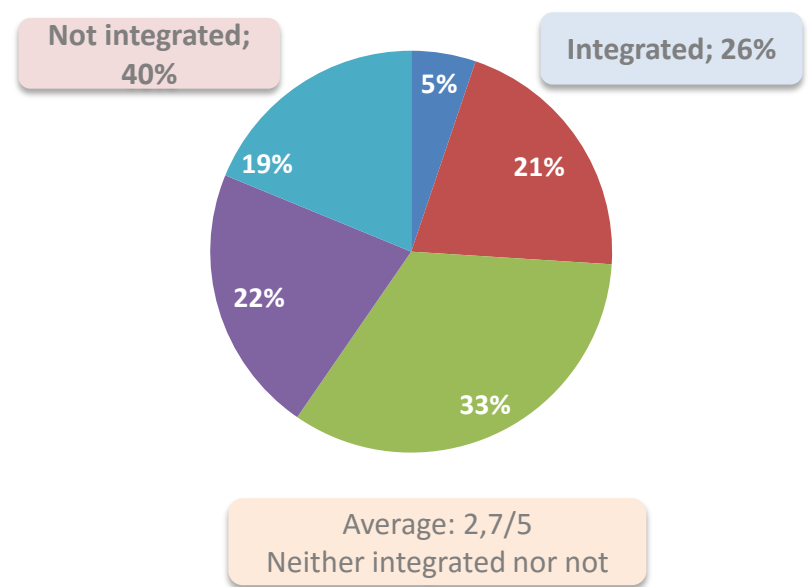
Only 14% of respondents feel that they are informed about their rights in Turkey. Only 26% of respondents feel integrated to Turkey.

Level of Information about Their Rights in Turkey



- Very informed
- Informed
- Neither informed nor not informed
- Not informed
- Not informed at all

Integration to Turkey



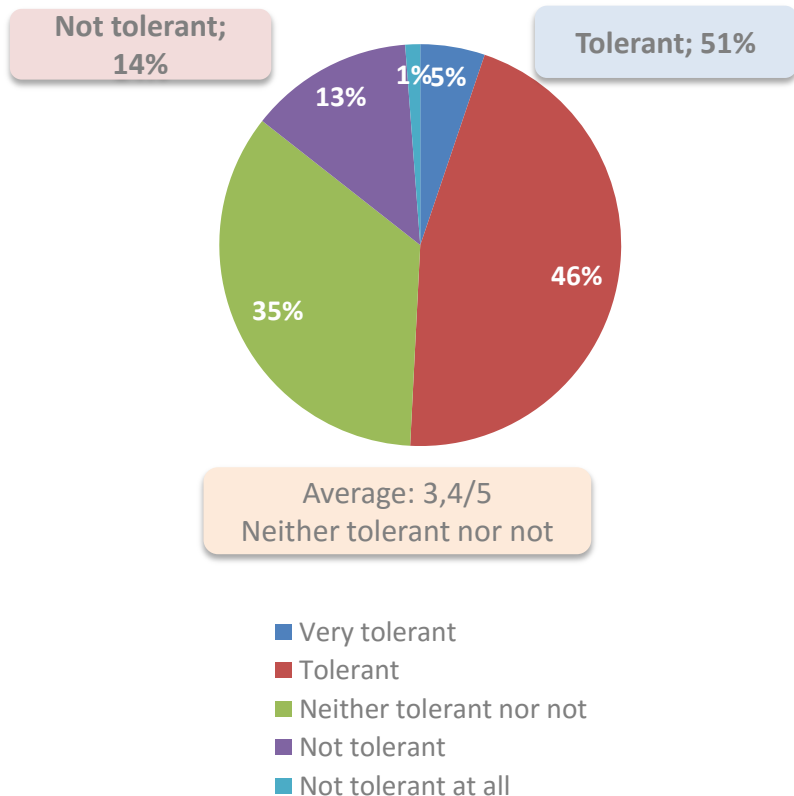
- Very integrated
- Integrated
- Neither integrated nor not
- Not integrated
- Not integrated at all

Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

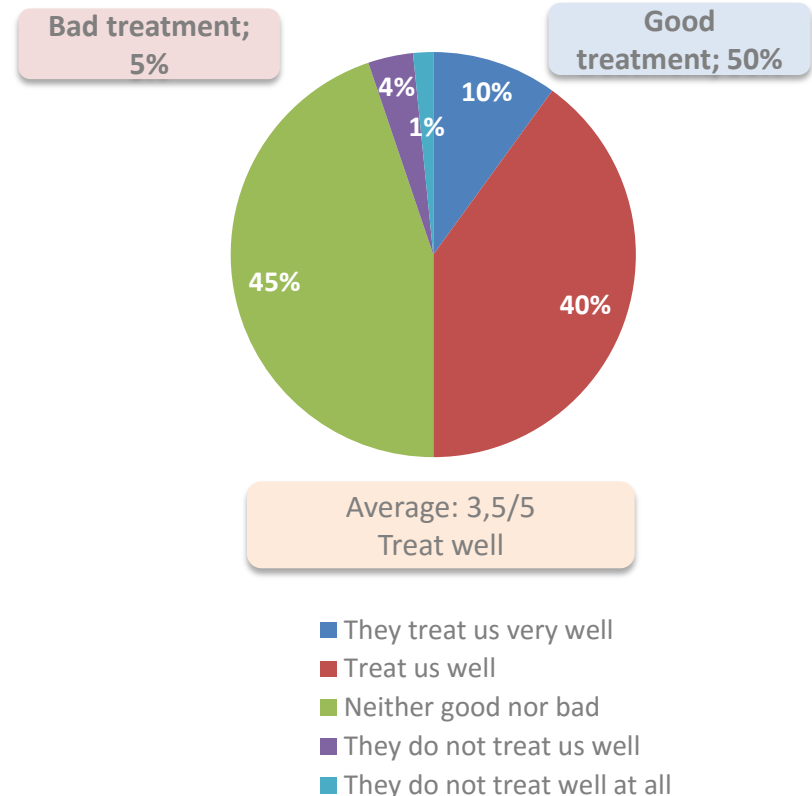
Being Welcomed in Turkey

51% of respondents think that Turks are tolerant towards Syrians in Turkey. Similarly half of respondents think that they are treated well in Turkey.

Tolerance towards Syrians in Turkey



Treatment by Turkish People



Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

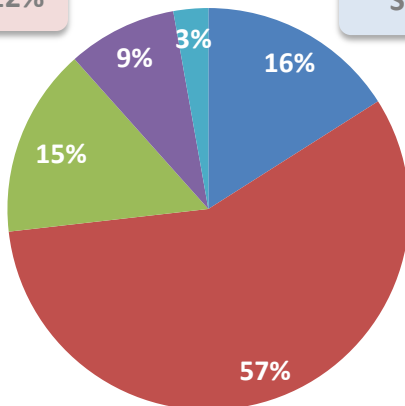
Feeling Secure in Turkey

73% of Syrians who live outside the camps feel secure in Turkey. Only one in four (38%) is satisfied with living in Turkey.

Feeling Secure in Turkey

Not secure; 12%

Secure; 73%



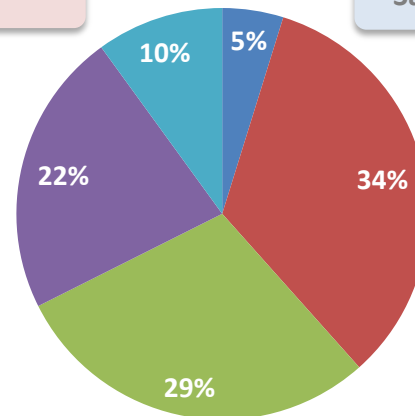
Average: 3,7/5
Secure

- Definitely feel secure
- Secure
- Neither secure, nor not
- Not secure
- Definitely not feel secure

Satisfaction with Living in Turkey

Not satisfied;
32%

Satisfied; 38%



Average: 3,0/5
Neither satisfied nor not

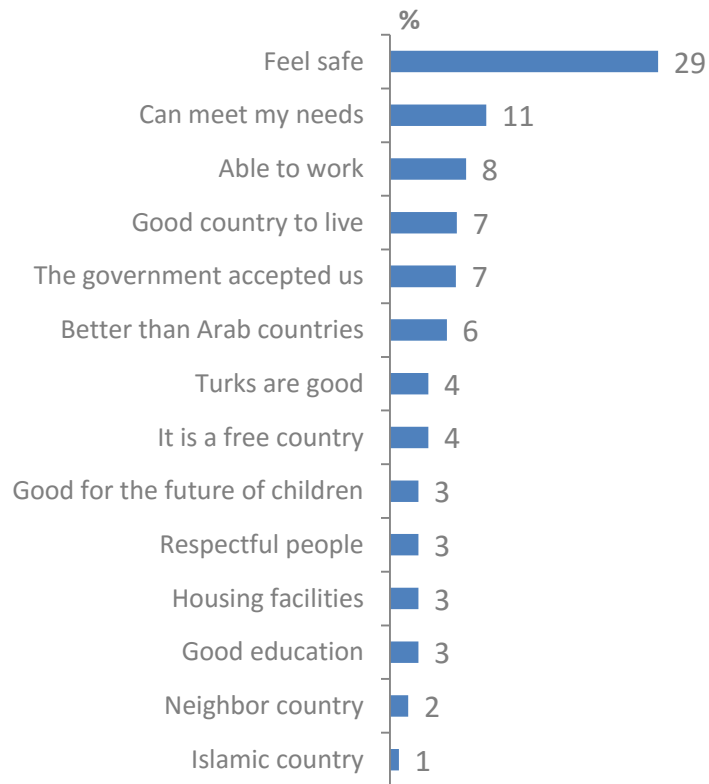
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor not
- Not satisfied
- Not satisfied at all

Findings – Living Conditions of Syrians Who Live Outside the Camps in Turkey

Living in Turkey

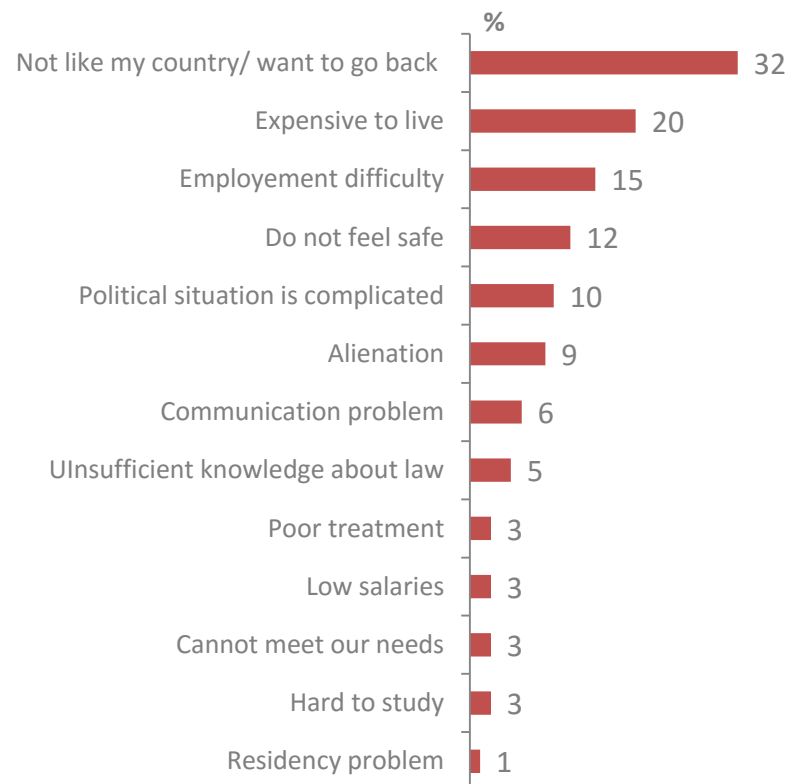
Feeling safe is the most important factor for Syrians to be satisfied with living in Turkey. Missing home country is the main reason for dissatisfaction.

Reasons of Satisfaction



N: 96

Reasons of Dissatisfaction



N: 81

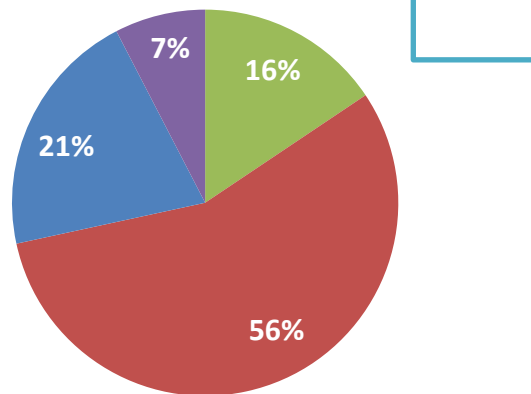
Future Plans of Syrians Who Live Outside The Camps in Turkey

Findings – Future Plans of Syrians

Future Country

More than 50% of Syrians who came to Turkey, plan to go back to their country in the next five years.

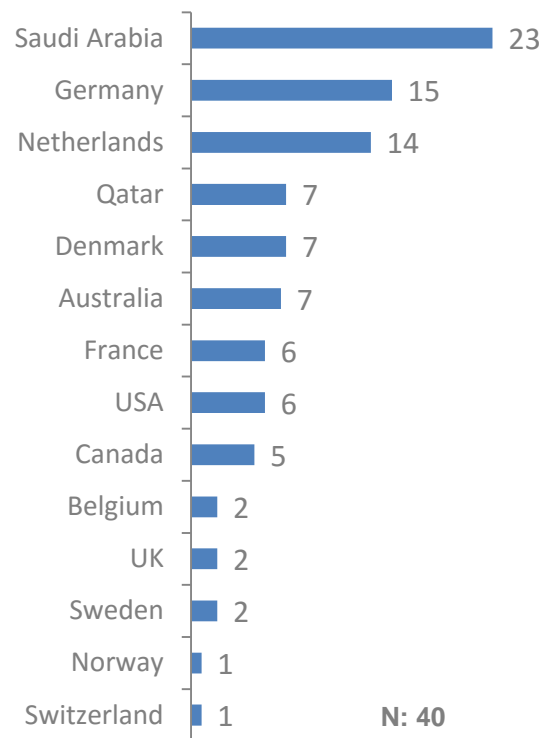
Plans for the Next Five Years



- Plan to move to a different country
- Plan to go back to Syria
- Plan to stay and settle in Turkey
- No idea

N: 250

Target Countries for Emigration

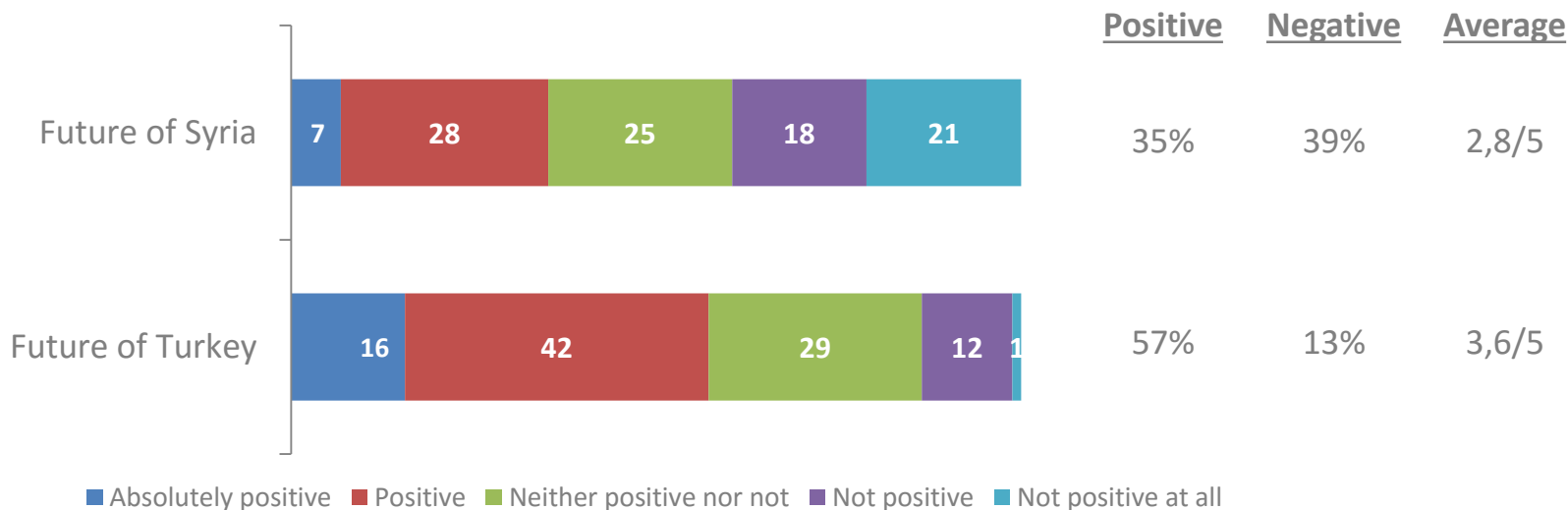


N: 40

Findings – Future Plans of Syrians Future of Turkey and Syria

Only 35 % of Syrians feel positive about the future of their country. Those who feel more positive are more likely to go back to Syria than others.

Opinion about Future

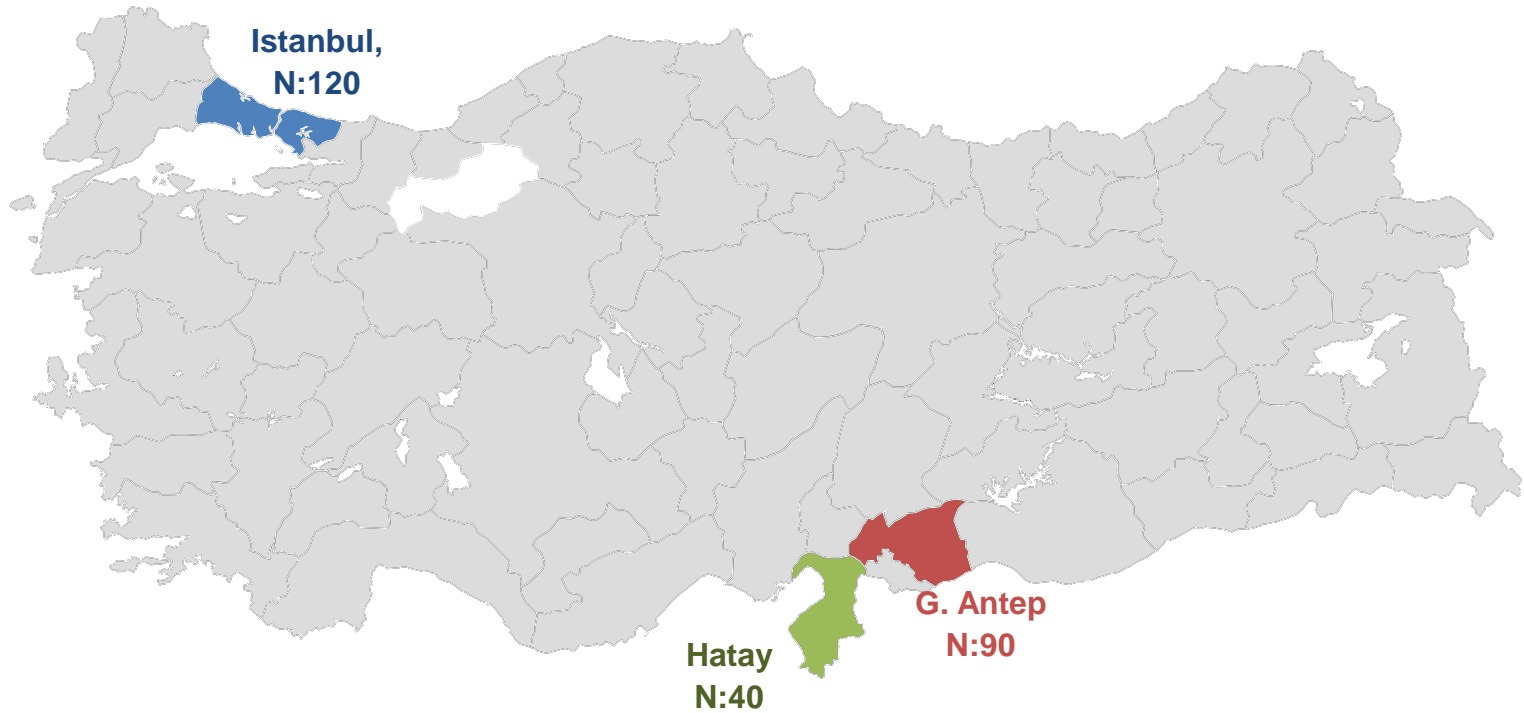


The respondents who feel positive about the future of Syria (3,1/5) are more likely to plan to go back.

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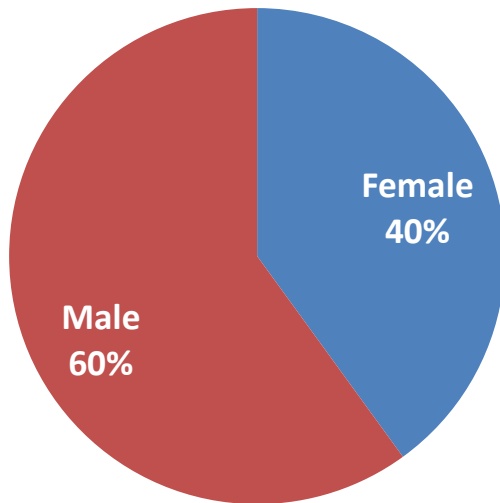
Geographic Spread



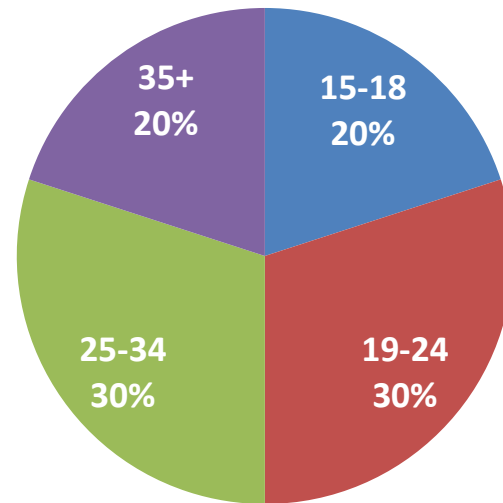
The distribution of the sample is determined by the overall distribution of Syrians. The sample focused on three cities where most of the Syrians moved to live.

Sample

Gender



Age



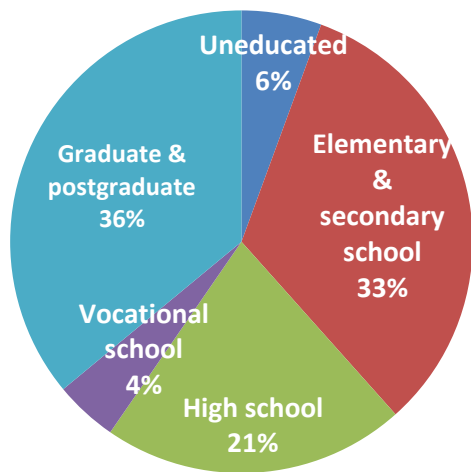
Average age:
28,3

Quotas were set on gender and age to get a better representation within limited sample size.

Sample

12% of Syrians who live outside the camps are not registered in the Turkish system. Half of these only have Syrian identity cards and the other half does not have any papers at all.

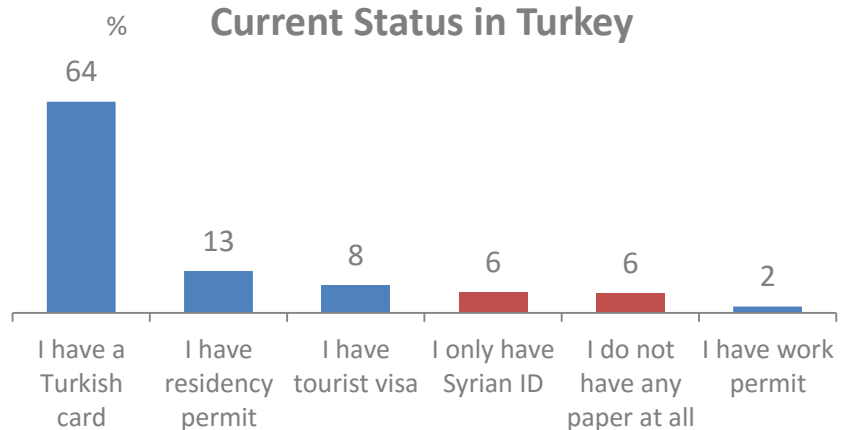
Education Level



36% of the sample consists of respondents who are at least high school graduates. The rest consists of elementary/secondary school graduates and uneducated ones.

The Syrians who are out of system are mostly from Gaziantep (27%) rather than Hatay (5%) and Istanbul (4%)

Current Status in Turkey



Current Status

