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NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
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Department of Geography

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Forms of modern slavery: Vulnerability and exploitation of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries

Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Israel

Master's thesis in Globalization and Sustainable Development
Supervisor: Marko Valenta
August 2021

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All my love:
To the country that I belong to, Iraq,
To the country that cared about me, Syria,
And to the country that believed in me, Norway.

Karim Tahir
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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ii
List of Figures viii
Abbreviations ix
Summary x
CHAPTER ONE 1
1 Introduction 1
CHAPTER TWO 5
2 Theoretical Framework 5
2.1 Introduction 5
2.2 Push and Pull theory 6
2.3 Maslow Hierarch of needs theory 7
2.3.1 "Survival needs" are fundamental to stay alive 7
2.3.2 "Safety or security needs" are related to the need for protection from harm 7
2.3.3 Moral and empathic needs 8
2.3.4 Esteem needs 8
2.3.5 Self-actualization 8
2.4 Realistic group conflict theory 8
2.5 Securitization theory 10
CHAPTER THREE 13
3 Research Methodology 13
3.1. Research method “step by step” 13
3.2 Sampling and choosing respondents. 14
3.3 Conducting interviews 15
3.3 Analysis of data 17
3.4 The researcher's positionality 18
3.5 Ethical considerations and research limitations 19

CHAPTER FOUR....21
4. Modern Slavery....21
4.1 Introduction....21
4.2 Forced labour....23
4.3 Child, early, and forced marriage....25
4.4 Sex exploitation....27
4.5 Migrants and refugee's vulnerability....29
4.5.1 Kafala and guardian system....30
4.6 COVID-19 the new challenge....31
CHAPTER FIVE....35
5. Syrian Refugees' Vulnerability in Turkey:....35
5.1 Introduction....35
5.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions....35
5.3 Forced labour....39
5.4 Child labour and the responses to bagging....43
5.5 Child, forced and early marriage....44
5.6 Sexual exploitation....47
5.7 COVID-19....48
5.8 Summary....49
CHAPTER SIX....51
6. Syrian Refugees' Vulnerability in Jordan....51
6.1 Introduction....51
6.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions....52
6.3 Forced labour....55
6.4 Child labour....57
6.5 Child, forced and early marriage....59
6.6 Sexual Exploitation....61

6.7 COVID-19 63
6.8 Summary 64
CHAPTER SEVEN 65
7. Syrian Refugees' Vulnerability in Lebanon: 65
7.1 Introduction 65
7.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions 65
7.2.1 Security attitudes 68
7.2.2 The protection space 70
7.2.3 Kafala system 71
7.2.4 Freedom of movement 72
7.5.5 Bond dept 73
7.3 Forced labour 73
7.4 Child labour 75
7.5 Child, forced and early marriage 76
7.6 Sexual exploitation 78
7.7 COVID-19 impact 80
7.8 Summary 80
CHAPTER EIGHT 83
8. Syrian's Vulnerability and Exploitation in Iraq: 83
8.1 Introduction 83
8.2. Migration drivers and mobility restrictions 84
8.2.1 Resettlement and protection 89
8.3 Forced labour 90
8.4 Child labour 93
8.5 Child marriage 95
8.6 Sexual exploitation 96
8.7 The Covid-19 impact 98

8.8 Summary 99

CHAPTER NINE 101

9. Israel and Syrian Refugees: The No Welcome Policy 101

9.1 Introduction 101

9.2 Solidarity and the security: the Israeli dilemma 102

9.3 The closed border 104

9.4 The safe path and destination, just for allies 105

10 Concluding Remarks 107

10.1 Future Research Implications 110

List of Figures

Figure 1: The overview of theoretical framework adapted in this thesis................................5
Figure 2: Modern slavery forms 21
Figure 3: Modern slavery and sex of victim..24
Figure 4: Forced marriage by sex 26
Figure 5: Forced labour and migration 29
Figure 6: Information economy workers significantly impacted by lockdown and physical distancing measures 32
Figure 7: Refugees and Asylum seekers in Turkey 35
Figure 8: Syrian refugees in Jordan - District level 51
Figure 9: Registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon by location................................66
Figure 10: UNHCR Presence..83
Figure 11: The Syrian Refugees distribution in Iraq 84
Figure 12: Employment sectors, by population group and gender 91
Figure 13: Locations perceived by women as most risky for Syrian women and girls..........97
Figure 14: What's behind Israel's ambitions for Golan heights 101

Abbreviations

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

NGO: Non-Governmental organization

UN: United Nations

ILO: International Labour Organization

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

NSD: Norwegian Centre for Research

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

SEA: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

CSE: Child sexual exploitation

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

IDPs: internally displaced persons

JRP: Jordan Response Plan

MSD: Ministry of Social Development

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

HRW: Human Rights Watch

KRG: Kurdistan Regional Government

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

NATO: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Summary

This thesis studies the vulnerable situation of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries; Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, which host the majority of the global Syrian refugees. It also includes Israel, which is also a neighbouring country, however, denies the access to Syrians into Israel. This thesis studies the Syrian refugees' situation through the modern slavery concept and through the global initiative of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 Syrian refugees as a primary resource data. The participants are Syrian refugees who have been living or had lived in Syria's neighbouring countries. Additionally, the data for this thesis is also based on secondary resources such as research centres, NGO's, governments and media's reports and articles.

The analysis in this thesis is based on two groups of theories; The first group includes push-pull theory and Maslow's hierarch of needs; to understand the Syrian refugees' attitude and the factors which forced them to leave Syria and choose the neighbouring countries and the factors which forced Syrian refugees to accept the challenging life conditions and the forms of exploitations, discriminations and vulnerability. The second group of theories includes the realistic group conflict theory and the securitization theory, which focus on the attitude of neighbouring countries toward Syrian refugees. Moreover, it helped to understand the factors which led the local communities to exploit, discriminate and prejudice the Syrian refugees and the reasons which led the host countries' governments to change their policy and regulations toward Syrians.

My findings show that most of the Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries do not have access to the formal employment sectors, and they are engaged in informal and undocumented work in factories, farms and construction works. Furthermore, Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries, both males and females, experience unfair working conditions and verbal as well as physical abuse. Females are also harassed by sexual exploitation from employers and colleagues, while Syrian children in Syria's neighboring countries are victims of child labour and early and child marriages. The factors causing Syrian children to be victims of child labour in Syria's neighboring countries were identified to be parents' economic difficulties, a lack of access to education, employers' ability to use cheap

and vulnerable labour, and, in some cases, cultural norms. I found that child marriage in Syria's neighbouring countries is a well-organized business that takes advantage of the Syrians' miserable and helpless conditions.
It was found that the refugee camps in Syria's neighbouring countries are dangerous places to house people and provide necessities. The authorities of the host countries use camps to detain violators of residency laws and labour rules, as well as to isolate criminals and terrorists. I also explored and compared the neighbouring countries hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees who are non-signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention (Turkey is committed to only the European Refugees through UN refugees convention), thus having higher chances of vulnerable situation for Syrian refugees. Here, Israel is the only signatory country included in this study, but is not accepting, hosting, or offering asylum to the Syrian refugees.

I also analyzed the factors that lead Syrian refugees fleeing the dangers of war, life difficulties, and poverty in Syria to migrate to a particular destination. I found that, in addition to a safe location, having a job was one of the factors that are driving Syrians to move to other countries. The host countries' border and visa policies against Syrian refugees played an important role in motivating Syrians to select their destinations.

My study also suggests that Syrian refugees are victims of strict rules and regulations imposed by host governments which were implemented in order to monitor the economic, social, and security challenges posed by the presence of large numbers of refugees in their countries, as well as to prevent the spread of violence and terrorism from Syria to their countries. It is clear that the COVID-19 has increased the vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries due to quarantine regulations, which increased the economic difficulties for Syrian refugees.

Overall, this study suggests that Syrian refugees are exposed to modern slavery in its different forms in their neighbouring countries. Therefore, my findings are in line with previous research that suggests that Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries require urgent and considerable support from the global community to end their daily suffering by establishing projects, rules, and sanctions aimed to reduce and prevent their exploitation.

CHAPTER ONE

1 Introduction

"Cheap; for this reason, we want a Syrian's bride for our son.
This is the answer of the Jordanian mother who asked me if I know any single Syrian girl living on Zaatari refugee camp."

Respondent number 7, a Syrian mother of 3 kids from Dara, who worked as a teacher in Syria, and currently working as a teacher for Syrian children in Jordan.

Mohammed Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor, set himself on fire outside a government building on 18 December 2010 (Watson, 2011). This flame proved an ignition for the middle East's people to demonstrate against their dictatorships and failed political system. This movement is known as the ‘‘Arab Spring’’, which affected the whole world to this date. The Arab Spring made a significant political, economic and security changes which led to regimes changing in few countries like Tunisia and Egypt, and armed conflicts in others, such as Libya, Yemen and Syria. The impact of Arab Spring is not limited only to Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Bahrain, and Syria, its echo reached the whole world, by refugee crises, terrorist attacks, security and border issues.

Syria is one of these countries where the Arab Spring made a significant impact on its stability, economy, politics, security and social life. Currently, the population of the Syrian Arab Republic is 17,834,327 as of Saturday, 17 April 2021, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data. 13.1 million Syrians are in need, from which 6.6 million are internally displaced, and 2.98 million are hard to reach in besieged areas (UNHCR, 2018). Furthermore, over 5.6 million people have fled Syria since 2011 to neighbouring countries; Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and in some cases to Israel. These countries are the final destination or a temporary phase to reach the more safe and stable destination, like European countries, Canada, America and Australia. They reached other countries by registering themselves as refugees at united nations agencies or by illegal means such as crossing the sea or border, or by using fake passports at the airports.

However, the majority of Syrian refugees have been stuck in the neighbourhood countries, either voluntarily or by force. As a result, around 3.6 million Syrians are in Turkey, 0.66 million in Jordan, 0.9 million in Lebanon and 0.25 million in Iraq (UNHCR, 2020). As refugees,

Syrians' life has become full of struggle and difficulties, thus “83% of Syrians live below the poverty line" (UNHCR, 2019) because of little or no financial resources. The worst part is that there is no hope for a near ending to one of the largest refugees and displacement crises of modern times. This crisis has made Syrians vulnerable and exploited not only in Syria but also in other countries where Syrians have taken refuge. The information and facts about the exploitation of Syrian refugees such as forced labour, child labour, child marriage, forced marriage, sexual exploitation and prostitution are coming from the whole world.

The focus of this thesis is the vulnerability of Syrian refugees, their living conditions and difficulties in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Israel. I provide an overview of conditions in these countries and explore their experience and exposure to forced labour, child labour, child marriage, forced marriage and sexual exploitation. These forms of exploitation are defined as modern slavery, which international communities are implementing to prevent and end it around the world. One of the global initiatives to end the modern slavery is also addressed in the UN’s sustainable development goals. It focuses on

"effective measures to end forced labour, modern slavery, and human trafficking, as well as child labour in all its forms by focusing on two main issues; forced labour and forced marriage" (ILO, 2017, p.7).

The Syrian refugees’ crisis is one of the most pressing global issues that has piqued the attention of scholars, policymakers, and human rights activists. However, there is a lack of studies investigating the vulnerability of Syrian refugees, in particular, in neighbouring counties, through the term of modern slavery and its forms. The thesis also seeks to provide the reader with information regarding the general landscape of the Arab spring and its impact on Syrians, and how they forced to flee and find a safe land. Furthermore, the thesis will provide the reader with the reasons based on which Syrian refugees have migrated to various neighbouring countries. In sum: I explore these two general research questions:

- Which forms of modern slavery, exploitations and vulnerability are Syrians victims to in the neighbouring countries?
- Which drivers which lead Syrians to flee from their country to the specific destinations in Syria’s neighbouring countries?

The general objective of this thesis is to explore the types and the forms of exploitation which have been used against Syrians in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. I also provide an overview

of debates in Israel as Israel is the only neighbouring country that denied Syrians to enter the country.

In order to achieve the aforementioned aims, the followings research objectives were explored in this thesis:

- Provide insight into modern slavery term, its forms and the global initiatives to prevent it.
- Explore the Syrians' exploitation forms in Syria's neighbouring countries.
- Study types of modern slavery and exploitation experienced by different categories of refugee. Here, I distinguish between men, women or children.

In order to answer the above-mentioned objective, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 Syrian refugees as a primary resource Data. The participants are Syrian refugees who have been living or had lived in Syria's neighbouring countries, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Israel. The participants out of Norway were interviewed by Zoom or phone and the participants in Norway, who had lived in these countries as former refugees, were interviewed personally. The participants were interviewed in two languages: Arabic and English. Additionally, the data for this thesis is also based on secondary resources such as research centres, NGO's, governments and media's reports and articles.

This thesis is organized into 10 chapters. The first chapter introduces the main objectives and research question of this study, as well as the selected Syria's neighbouring countries. The second chapter presents the theoretical frameworks which will help to understand the reasons and the factors which led Syrian refugees to become vulnerable and victims for the modern slavery forms in Syria's neighbouring countries. Chapter three explains my methodological approach. Chapter four will provide general understanding of Modern slavery term and modern slavery forms, and it will highlight the global effort to prevent the exploitation and trafficking of humans. The collected data will be analysed in chapters 5,6,7,8, and 9. The data analysis is structured according to different types of modern slavery, exploitation and the category of refugees (men, women and children). Finally, the summary and conclusion will be presented in chapter 10.

CHAPTER TWO

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework, which will help to understand the reasons and the factors which led Syrian refugees to become vulnerable and victims of the modern slavery in Syria's neighbouring countries. The analysis is based on two groups of theories; The first group includes push-pull theory and Maslow's hierarch of needs. The first theory will be employed to understand the Syrian refugees' attitude and the factors which forced them to leave Syria and choose the neighbouring countries. The later theory, Maslow's hierarch of needs, will be used to understand the factors which forced Syrian refugees to accept the challenging life conditions and the forms of exploitations, discriminations and vulnerability.

The second group of theories will focus on the reaction and attitude of neighbouring countries toward Syrian refugees. Firstly, the realistic group conflict theory will help to understand the factors which led the local communities to exploit, discriminate and prejudice the Syrian refugees. Secondly, the securitization theory will be used to understand the attitude and reasons which led the host countries' governments to change its policy and regulations toward Syrians, for instance; closing the border, applying kafala system, complicated visa procedures, building fences and limit their movement inside the host country (as shown in Figure 1).

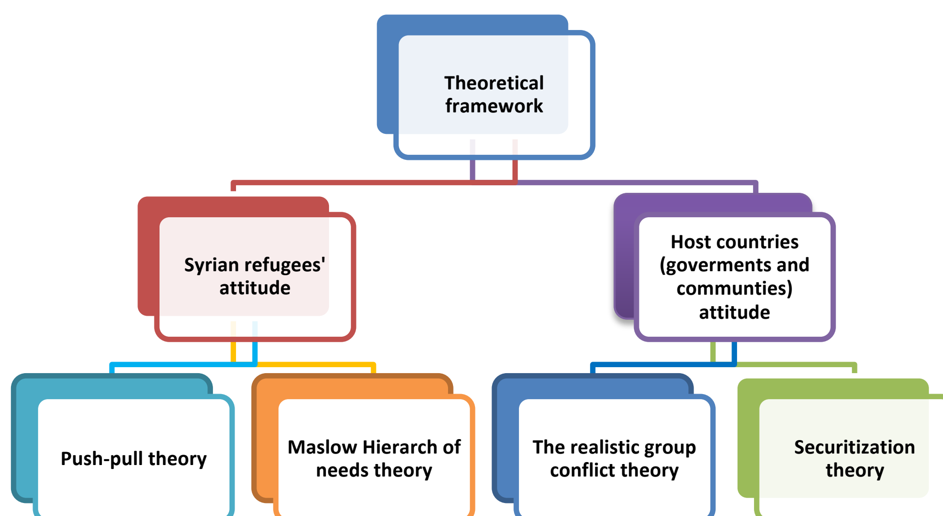

Figure 1: The overview of theoretical framework adapted in this thesis.

2.2 Push and Pull theory

The push and pull theory is one of the most known theoretical migration models (E. R. Thielemann, 2003, p. 11). This theory was inspired by Ernest Ravenstein, he argued; migration is influenced by the push and pull process, which on the one hand, unfavourable circumstances at one place such as governmental oppression, economic hardship, etc. "Push" people out, and on the other hand, favourable circumstances at an external place "Pull" them in (Vassilopoulou, Samaluk, & Seierstad, 2014, p. 196). In the classic literature, push-pull models argued that migrants were pushed by poor earnings in their home countries or regions and pulled by greater opportunities in more prosperous ones (Kumpikaite & Zickute, 2012).

Push factors are usually poor conditions and negative impacts, which cause people to emigrate from their country of origin. Civil war and persecution are among the factors that force migrants to cross national borders. Furthermore, lack of educational facilities, inadequate health care and "slavery and political fear" (Alsharabati & Nammour, 2017) also contribute to push factors.

Pull factors are usually described as favourable conditions which attract people into these countries. The main factor is being the tolerant societies, where people are respected regardless of ethnicity, race, religion and political perspectives, thus making some specific countries more interesting for potential emigrants (inst, 2017).
According to the Castles and Miller (Miller & Castles, 2009, p. 22), "Push factors" encourage people to leave their home countries, while "pull factors" entice them to move to a specific destination country of choice. Lack of economic opportunities, political violence and discrimination are all examples of push factors. Pull factors, on the other hand, include better opportunities and political freedom.

Parkins (Parkins, 2010, p. 6) stated that “emigration is a phenomenon that has increased considerably during recent years”. And he explained that “there are several factors which influence this phenomenon”. All of these are important factors, such as "crime”,"violence”, and "lawlessness" as well as a lack of social facilities.

I consider that the push-pull theory is relevant to my study. I can use it to analyse the factors for the condition of Syrian refugees at the individual level. Furthermore, it may help me to understand the factors which pushed Syrians to leave their country and the factors which attract them to migrate to different destinations. In addition, I will also use push-pull theory, to analyse the push-pull factors on macro-level, which will help me to study structural factors that coerced and enabled their migrations.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned perspectives will be used to understand movements of specific categories of refugees towards their destinations, for instance; why Syrian Christians migrated to Beirut and Syrian Kurds to North Iraq, and why Syrians from southern cities like Dara city migrated to Jordan and Syrians from Aleppo to Turkey. It will also help us to understand that how the refugees' attitude on choosing their destinations was affected by the host countries' policy toward Syrians. To give an illustration of this; why a massive number of Syrian refugees chose Turkey as a destination to their refugee trip and while there are no registered cases in Israel? According to Thielemann, the more lenient and generous a country's policies are, the larger the numbers of refugees that may be pulled into the country, and this can lead a country to implement the strict policy to push or reduce the refugee inflows (E. Thielemann, 2011, p. 2).

2.3 Maslow Hierarch of needs theory

Maslow describes human endeavours as an attempt to fulfil a "hierarchy of needs". Maslow's hierarchy is designed as a “pyramid to showcase the importance of needs being met in order to reach wellness” (Meshelemiah & Lynch, 2019).

2.3.1 "Survival needs" are fundamental to stay alive

These needs are intertwined with survival instincts to drive motivated behaviour, such as livelihood activities of human-environment interactions (David O Yawson, Armah, & Pappoe, 2009). For instance, they need for water, food, health, clothing, and shelter.

Maslow argued;

"if basic needs such as hunger and shelter are not met, the body will put all efforts on finding these things and the mind will not be able to focus on things of personal interest until basic needs are met" (Maslow, 1943).

In other words, Individuals who have not satisfied their survival needs will hardly be motivated to allocate resources to satisfying higher-level needs.

2.3.2 "Safety or security needs" are related to the need for protection from harm

Maslow argued that the “Safety needs” are the next most obsessive needs of individuals when their physiological needs are met.

“Safety needs to emerge and become stronger because they are psychologically (not physiologically) perceived to threaten life, survival, livelihood or well-being. Thus, these needs

relate to Safety from existential stresses or the capacity to cope with such stresses should they occur" (David Oscar Yawson et al., 2015).

Safety needs also include secure access to resources, opportunities, privileges and tools required for maintaining life and livelihood. Besides, "psychological and safety needs make up the bottom two tiers and operate as components of basic needs" (Maslow, 1943).

2.3.3 Moral and empathic needs

"Belonging and love, and esteem needs are the middle Two tiers as well as the components for psychological needs"(ibid). furthermore, the emotional needs are kinship ties individuals tap opportunities to build social resilience against some stresses (David Oscar Yawson et al., 2015). This is accomplished by forming social networks or joining groups that may be religious, political, social, or economic in nature in order to get affection, sympathy, and a variety of forms of support during a crisis. As a result, social networks play an important role in both individual and societal self-protection, satisfying emotional and "psychological need" for belonging. (ibid).

2.3.4 Esteem needs

The need for self-respect and respect from others, as well as self-worth (defined as the desire for societal recognition of one's accomplishments, prestige, status, renown, or power) are among them.

2.3.5 Self-actualization

The pinnacle of the hierarchy is self-actualization. Maslow refers to it as transcendence, which is a pinnacle experience. The ability to retain or restore well-being after a tragedy or calamity is referred to as self-actualization. The individual can be really "independent and functional in an interdependent relationship" at this time. "In order to reach self- actualization, the basics of human physical and psychological needs must be met first" (Maslow, 1943).

In the case of Syrian refugees' vulnerability, applying Maslow's theory will help to understand why exploiters control Syrians. Furthermore, why they accept to stay with these challenging life conditions with a lack of basic needs. and the motivation to change their vulnerable situation is weak. Until they can achieve the access to their daily life needs, they will stay victims of vulnerability and exploitations.

2.4 Realistic group conflict theory

Many studies have mentioned that "work and/or economic" related threats lead to a more negative attitude toward immigrants (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong,

1998; Hayes & Dowds, 2006; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). The realistic group conflict theory is one of the theories which will help us to understand the discrimination and prejudice towards Syrian refugees from the host community, and why do these negative attitudes exist and why do they increase? It will also help to realize the reasons for the existing of natural or positive attitudes on the individual level towards Syrians refugees on individual and group levels.

Levin and Campbell (1972) argued that according to the realistic group conflict theory, prejudice and discrimination are frequently underpinned by the conflict of interest between groups. Campbell described his theory as realistic because he argued that there is the real competition for limited resources (Esses et al., 1998).

The theory argued, that, the attitudes and behaviours between groups mirror group interest, and are at least partially based on the compatibility and nature of group objectives. Thus, when group objectives are incompatible, conflict, and negative intergroup behaviours and attitudes are likely to exist. Moreover, when group goals are compatible, they may generate positive relations between the groups.

Furthermore, attitude changes are underpinned by changes in the level of actual competition. (Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009). Realistic group conflict theory argued; "a group inclines to perceive an out-group/s as the competition when they both compete for limited resources and this in itself leads to prejudice." (Esses et al., 1998).

Furthermore, the fundamental hypothesis of the realistic group conflict theory does not necessitate that there must be actual competition over resources for prejudice and discrimination to exist between groups. Instead, it is the perception over a competition that results in the intergroup hostility and conflict (Esses et al., 1998, p. 701).

Therefore, to understand the reason of the negative attitude toward Syrian refugees from the local groups; the realistic conflict theory argued:

"host community members that are vulnerable socio-economically are more likely to have negative attitudes toward immigration due to a perception of ethnic competition over scarce resources such as jobs and economic benefits" (Lancee & Pardos-Prado, 2013).

To understand the reason of this negative attitude, especially towards Syrians instead of other immigrants or refugee groups; "the perceived threat is greater when citizens of the host country

believe that the immigrants are similar to them on relevant dimensions" (Zárate, Garcia, Garza, & Hitlan, 2004).

The realistic group conflict theory will give us a conception for the reasons of why there are individual cases of Syrians refugees that are not feeling threatened, and individuals from host community are not involved of the conflict towards Syrians. The theory holds,

"the conflict between groups is assumed to transpire at the group level and not necessarily at the level of the individuals. Thus the protection is sought for the group's interests and not solely the interests of individual group members" (Esses et al., 1998).

The realistic group conflict theory is particularly relevant for the thesis, to understand the changes (negative or positive) in behaviour and attitude of local communities toward Syrian refugees and the factors and reasons behind these attitudes.

2.5 Securitization theory

The host countries where Syrians refugees decide to flee to has changed their way of treating them. They make a significant change on rules and regulation, for example, receiving the Syrians, allowing them to stay, allowing them to work, their free movement inside the host county or allow them to leave and come back to that country. All these new stringent regulations have increased as a result of increasing numbers of Syrian refugees. Furthermore, the continuation of the Syrian crisis and its economic, social, cultural and security impacts on the host communities, have been considered as a threat for their existence and future. These factors have increased the discrimination and exploitation of the Syrian refugees and thus increasing the vulnerability of Syrian refugees. To understand the factors and the reasons which lead the host countries' governments to make these changing in regulations and their way of treating Syrian refugees, for example, from the open border policy on receiving Syrians to complicated procedures of visa, building fences toward the Syrian refugees and limited their movement inside the host country. I expect that the securitization theory will help to understand the factors which lead the host countries to change their policy toward Syrian refugees and the reasons for making more restrictive policies.

The foundations of Securitization theory can be found in works of Waever, Balzacq, Buzan and de Wilde. They were represented by the so-called, Copenhagen School of security studies. They contributed significantly to principal shifts within the field of Security Studies, both broadening and deepening the concept of security (Farny, 2016).

Copenhagen school argued; "The Security issues are socially constructed by the citizens' perceptions of what constitutes a threat in a particular moment" (Buzan, Wæver, Wæver, & De Wilde, 1998). Furthermore, Security is a self-referential practice in the Copenhagen school, because if this issue becomes a security issue, it's not necessarily because there's a real existential threat, but because it's presented as such. (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 24).

Moreover, the securitization theory stresses that security agenda did not include only traditional political and military sectors (Buzan, 1997). The Copenhagen school states that "in order to be considered as a security issue, the different threats and vulnerabilities that can arise in military and non-military areas have to meet specific criteria" (Buzan et al., 1998). Furthermore, The securitizing actor must stage them as existential threats to a referent object in order to garner support for emergency measures beyond rules (ibid, P5).

Therefore, "securitizing actors" such as political leaders, bureaucracies, governments, lobbyists, and pressure groups (Wæver, 2004, p. 13) they can have the speech act. SO, the analysis of discourse and political constellations is necessary to understand security issues (Buzan et al., 1998). Copenhagen school considering the securitization process "is not a subjective one, but an inter-subjective one" (Wæver, 2004, p. 13). While further, the framework of securitization involves a process of identifying and approaching issues as existential threats to particular political communities through speech acts and audience acceptance (McDonald, 2011) And thy argued to the securitization of an issue by nations will have a political consequence by leading them to act differently ((Buzan et al., 1998).

According to the Copenhagen school of international relation, three main criteria have to be fulfilled for an issue to become securitized. First, an actor claims that a referent object is being threatened (Buzan et al., 1998). Second, to deal with this threat, an actor demands the right to use extraordinary measure (ibid). Third, the audience to which the actor directs itself accepts the securitizing move, and that extraordinary measures are justified and necessary to defend the threatened object (ibid). When the issue defined as a security issue, the issue is given the priority (ibid).

Therefore, this priority means that the issue is given disproportionate attention and resources, and the actor authorized to deal with the threat to respond to the threat with urgency from the "securitizing actors", government and community. Successful securitization of an issue, therefore, takes this issue outside the realm of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt by legitimizing extraordinary measures, without the normal rules

and regulations of policymaking (Taureck, 2006) and, 'security' has an executing character, in the sense that it does not only describe the world but can also transform social reality (Balzacq, Léonard, & Ruzicka, 2016).

CHAPTER THREE

3 Research Methodology

3.1. Research method “step by step”

Babbie’s “step by step” model proposes research design that the first phase of the methodology may be a brainstorming session on the researcher's interest, concept, and related theory. The next step is to determine and raise the questions of concern, which necessitates the selection of an investigation process (Babbie, 1989). The methodology used was "procedures for scientific investigation," which should be empirically supported (Babbie, 1989, p. 7). Since logic and observation are the "two foundations of science," scientific study must "make sense" and "correspond to what we observe" (Ibid, p. 8). Buckley, and Chiang compare the researcher to “an architectural designer” who defines strategy for exploration of problems and their solutions (Buckley, Buckley, & Chiang, 1976). That is why deciding on an effective method for collecting empirical data that will explain the entire picture of the study is so important.

This thesis used a qualitative research method to gain a “deeper and fuller understanding” of the phenomenon (Babbie, 1989, p. 324). According to John Lofland, qualitative research is the most effective approach for studying social settings (Anderson, Lofland, Lofland, & Snow, 2006), so it must be possible to conduct research on the vulnerability forms of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries: Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Israel. Furthermore, the qualitative research method encompasses a range of methods, none of which are numerical and concentrate on a deep amount of knowledge with a limited number of cases (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994). For the purpose of this research, I will use both oral and written data collection methods that are commonly used in qualitative research (Winchester, 2000).

“Semi-structured in-depth interviews” with Syrian refugees were used to conduct the thesis research. Syrian refugees, who are currently or have previously resided in one of Syria's neighbouring countries. The Syrian refugees living or previously lived in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, or Israel were used as the unit of the study. These countries were selected because they host the world's highest number of Syrian refugees (UNHCR,2020). Many reports and articles in Syria's neighbouring countries reported exploitation and abuse of Syrian refugees in the labour market, streets, schools, health canters, and camps(Buchan, 2016; DW, 2020; T. R. Foundation, 2016; UNHCR, 2020; UNICEF, 2017; Velasco Regulez, 2019; WFP, 2020;

WHO, 2021; Women, 2020). They are victims of forced labour, child labour, child marriage, and sexual exploitation, which could be all considered as forms of modern slavery. All these motivated me to study the vulnerable life conditions of Syrian refugees in the largest host countries of the Syrian refugees, who have migrated since 2011. I used a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to keep respondents concentrated on particular topics while also allowing them to openly and broadly discuss the subject without losing track of it (Jamshed, 2014). The qualitative research allowed not only for recording of data, but also "achieve, challenge and reinforce" it (Oakley, 1998).

A qualitative methodology offers the ability to explore the fine line between individual humans and their experiences on the one hand, and structural and process analysis on the other. Rather than focusing on the structure's essence and makeup, qualitative works on structures emphasize the relationships and mechanisms that sustain, challenge, or change it. Humans also have different reactions to the same phenomena and locations. Individual opinions that would otherwise be ignored or silenced are given a voice when a qualitative method is used. Instead of implementing a single dominant interpretation, qualitative research emphasizes various interpretations and definitions (Winchester, 2000).

The interviews were conducted in Arabic because Syrians speak Arabic as their mother tongue, and it was effective and doable because Arabic is also my mother tongue. I tried to give interviewees more opportunity to express their stories, thoughts, and experiences during the interviews. I returned them to the subject of the question if they were distracted from it. I was often passive when the interviewees were speaking; but, in a few cases, I became active. When respondents did not understand or misunderstood the questions, for example. Through the semi-structured interviews approach, I got the information about the vulnerable situation of the Syrian refugees in Syrian's neighbouring countries.

3.2 Sampling and choosing respondents.

Bradshaw and Stratford defined seven types of purposive sampling extreme/deviant case, typical case, maximum variance, snowball, criterion, opportunistic, and convenience sampling. They argue that any method of purposive sampling often employs a combination of the aforementioned strategies (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2010). Strategic sampling was used to sample the respondents, which was achieved using the snowball sampling technique. When the research involves a specific group that is difficult to locate, snowball sampling is one of the techniques used. The researcher begins with a few members of the group, knit with them and asking for

other members' contacts. Since first responders provide the network for subsequent respondents, the term "snowball" is associated with the term "accumulation" (Babbie, 1989). According to Sandelowski the sample size must be appropriate and not reductionist, based on "judgment and experience in evaluating the quality of the information collected." While a large sample size is not required or sufficient in qualitative research, it is critical to provide the sample size from which the data can provide answers to the research questions (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 179). On the other hand, the informants were chosen in order to create a snowball effect of respondents and to learn more about the phenomenon. In terms of the information they may supply, the informants are not respondents (Babbie, 1989, p. 131).

The study's respondents were Syrian refugees living or who previously lived in Syria's neighbouring countries, and who had experienced or are still experiencing vulnerable conditions in these countries.

The respondents of the research have given more information about phenomenon and have provided network as the snowball technique. Around three respondents from each country have been interviewed: Turkey 3, Jordan 3, Iraq 3 and Lebanon 2. All 11 respondents were Syrian refugees who flee to these refuge countries after 2011. Most of the respondents were between 25 and 55 years old. I interviewed 5 Syrian women and 6 Syrian men. The respondents had different education levels and carriers and they are from different Syrian cities: Dara, Aleppo, Damascus, Idlib, Tartous, Homs, and Rif-Dimashq. The sampling criteria of the research was to find Syrian refugees who could provide me with information of vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries. Moreover, to figure out what kind of exploitation experiences, abuses and challenges they have been faced in these host countries. I could get the information about Syrian vulnerability in Syria's neighbouring countries through this sampling. The only problem was to find Syrian refugees in Israel. I did not find any respondents who had fled to Israel as a refugee or who knew about the challenges and difficulties that Syrians face if they want to flee to Israeli territory.

3.3 Conducting interviews

Interviews have become an inherent framework for gathering data and are likely to be encountered in all facets of life (Howell, 2012). According to Dunn (2000), conducting a research interview is much more than just talking with others. He goes on to say that good study interviews necessitate careful planning and preparing. Conducting an interview would necessitate prior research into the essence and type of questions to be asked (Hay, 2000).

To Structured, semi-structured, and unstructured the interviews are categorized by a number of researchers (Crang & Cook, 2007); Dunn, 2000; Howell, 2012). Structured interviews consist of a fixed and systematic log of questions that are asked in nearly the same manner and order in each interview, whereas unstructured interviews do not. Unstructured interviews are driven by the interviewee's answers rather than pre-planned questions. Finally, semi-structured interviews are said to fall somewhere in the middle of the structured and unstructured interview spectrum. This method of interviewing follows a predetermined order to some degree but enables respondents to address issues in their own way (Dunn, 2000, p. 102).

In order to achieve the study's goals and objectives, I conducted a face-to-face semi-structured interviews with Syrian refugees who live in Norway by meeting with them personally and through Zoom for those who live outside of Norway, because scope of the research includes Syrians refugees in the neighbouring countries, such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Israel. I got the impression that the respondents were really eager to share their stories with me. The arguments in the empirical analysis sections of chapters six, seven, eight and nine are sufficed with their quotations to provide voice to the data and relate them to informants' practical life experiences, perceptions and attitudes.

My informants provided to me a large number of contact information to other Syrian refugees who also felt the need to share their stories of vulnerability with me.

The interviewed informants provided a network of contacts with other Syrian refugees who live or have lived in one of these countries, but no one could provide a contact with Syrian refugees in Israel. Three Syrian refugees were interviewed via Zoom from each country (Turkey, Jordan and Iraq), which has a sound recording feature. Except from Lebanon, two Syrian Refugees who responded and interviewed face to face in Norway. Jamshed (2014) advises researchers to record qualitative interviews because they provide with lots of details that is difficult to remember and analyse later. The recorded interviews provide researchers with "verbal prompts" and enable them to create "verbatim transcripts," which are lately analysed (Jamshed, 2014, p. 87). Since the data processing is incomprehensible, a researcher requests data analysis of the collected data. As a result, the data was analysed and interpreted with the goal of "drawing conclusions that reflect the interests, ideas, and theories" (Babbie, 1989, p. 116). Furthermore, the researcher must ensure that the data he or she has gathered is accurate and reliable. Validity refers to whether data measurements "actually measure what they supposed to measure while reliability refers to whether repeated measurements produce the same result (Ibid, p. 353). As a

result, getting the recorded interviews will allow the researcher to assess the given responses at any time and remeasure and reanalyse the results. The researcher must carefully consider each case to avoid the ecological fallacy, which leads to incorrect conclusions from individual study based on group observation. I looked at each respondent individually to see what the differences and similarities were between them and their experiences. The interviews with Syrian refugees went as expected. As I previously said, the only limitation I had was to find a Syrian refugee in Israel. In order to research and explore the vulnerable situations of Syrian refugees in Israel, I used reports and press articles as a main basis.

3.3 Analysis of data

The qualitative method uses questions made up of words and specific concepts, which is a "tricky business" that must guide data collection in the right direction (Ibid. p. 348). Conceptualization is a framework process in which the codes, categories and concepts have to achieve the agreement of what they are meant (Ibid, p. 166). The conceptualization process is a source of concern in social science research since not all researchers agree on the interpretation of a concept. Furthermore, concepts are described as “theoretical creation” of "constructs" (Ibid, p. 168).

The main categories that emerged in the research thesis are: (i) Syrian refugees who fled from Syria after 2011 because of the civil war there; (ii) vulnerable and exploitative conditions (iii) forms of the modern slavery forms, such as forced labour, child labour and child marriage and sexual exploitation; (iv) categories of refugees: men, women, children; (v) contextual categories: Syria’s neighbouring countries that received large numbers of refugees such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and those that did not, like Israel (vi) Governments, communities and NGO’s in these countries.

In other words, once the research project and fieldwork begin, the data analysis process starts. The constant focusing and refocusing of research questions and priorities, the methods used in collecting specific data, the manner of resolving specific concerns, and the selection of research informants/participants, according to Crang and Cook (2007) are examples of this. The data analysis chapters, on the other hand, consist of formally detecting and categorizing themes and trends, deciding their relationships with one another, and highlighting critical ones that represent and/or lead to theoretical ideas in the latter part of this study.

Crang and Cook stated that the “formal” data analysis stage of a study is designed to reconfigure, scrutinize, and likely de- and re-contextualize various sections of already “well”

collected data that is far from “raw” in order to produce new observations, themes, and patterns. According to them, data analysis is just another step in an inventive and critical research process that is already underway in a different section/chapter of the study's broad area. As a result, it is a “connected and connective” mechanism that does not take place in a vacuum. As a result, writing and interpretation are inextricably linked throughout the research process (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. 133).

Finally, I gathered secondary textual data from research centres, NGO, media, reports and articles to supplement the interviews. Secondary data, as described by Johnson and Turner (2003, p. 715), is data that was originally collected or gathered by someone other than the researcher who is currently using it, and was primarily for purposes other than those of the person who first recorded or gathered it. In a nutshell, it's data collected and maintained by others (Daas & Arends-Tóth, 2012). Textual data, according to Benoit (2011), is content that has been methodically gathered and consists of printed, recorded, or electronically published documents that are often written for a reason or transcribed from the talk. He goes on to say that texts collected for data often represent a deliberate research goal driven by a design aimed at providing insight into some aspect of the social or political environment (Badie, Berg-Schlosser, & Morlino, 2011, p. 2).

3.4 The researcher's positionality

Carling, Erdal, and Ezzati propose a “dynamic approach” to researcher positionality. They say that a researcher with a migrant background who performs migration research is perceived as an insider by migrants, while a researcher who is a member of the majority population of the host country is perceived as an outsider by migrants. They argue that in the ethical consideration of research, researchers must have “strategic and reflexive management” of positionality (Carling, Erdal, & Ezzati, 2014, p. 36). Positionality can have both positive and negative aspects, but one thing is certain: the researcher's position influences the study process. A researcher with linguistic skills and a migrant experience may have access to specific diaspora populations, while an outsider researcher may have difficulty gaining access to migrants, refugees and foreigners' communities who may perceive the researcher as a “threat” to migrants (Ibid, p. 42). John Lofland proposes using “selective competence”, such as the researcher's knowledge and experience, as the positionality that connects the researcher and the respondents (Anderson et al., 2006). Furthermore, the “third position” can be used to describe positionality, implying that one is neither insider nor outsider (Carling et al., 2014, p. 49). Scholars advise migration researchers to look for similarities and differences between themselves and migrant

respondents, since any study may uncover some similarities with migrants, such as gender or class, and this is referred to as “intersectionality” between researchers and respondents (Ibid, p. 38). I have a refugee background and have lived in Syria for about 25 years, and members of my family are Syrians, which has put me in position of an insider, but being different ethnically reaffirmed my position as a researcher. Similarly, Babbie (1989, p. 328) shows regret about different positions of the researcher who may face the “problem of reactivity” when respondents are aware of being under study that might change their reactions and attitudes. As a result, the researcher must interview the respondents while avoiding the “problem of reactivity” which can be accomplished by giving respondents more freedom to convey and describe their views, experiences, and feelings. The fact that I speak their language and have knowledge of Syria and Syrian society, as well as my personal experience of some of their hardships during wartime in Syria or during the refugee's trip. all these helped me to prevent the issues of reactivity and encourages the respondents to speak and share their stories.

3.5 Ethical considerations and research limitations

Respondents in a research and the researcher must both feel secure, so the researcher must ensure that his or her respondents are not harmed as a result of participation in this study. As a result, every type of research method procedure necessitates participants anonymity and confidentiality (Babbie, 1989).

Professor Marko Valenta, my supervisor, and the administrative coordinators of the Geography Department told me about the mandatory evaluation of the project by NSD, Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata, as a student in the program of Globalization and Sustainable Development and having my master thesis under the department of Social Work at NTNU. Therefore, I wrote my thesis proposal and interview questions and sent them to NSD for project evaluation. NSD gave the master thesis proposal a positive review and accepted it.

The methodology section of the master's thesis was based on semi-structured interviews with Syrian refugees who had been briefed about their rights as study participants. They have the right to confidentiality and anonymity, as well as the right to withdraw from the research at any time; the data collected will be discarded at the conclusion of the study; the data will be used only in the master thesis; their identity information will be encrypted in a private computer with only the researcher's access; and the respondents would have the right to provide feedback on the study.

Because of their security concerns, I found the one respondent who lives in Jordan was a little curious. He was concerned that information about Syrian refugees' poor living conditions could lead to Jordanian authorities tracking him down and harming him; he believes security agencies are monitoring them, their phones, and their social activities. But I told him that it was up to him whether he wanted to continue or withdraw, and that he could end the interview whenever he felt uncomfortable. He suggested that he would pass questions that could negatively impact his ability to live in Jordan, and I agreed. It seemed however, that my questions were not experienced as controversial or threatening and at the end of the interview, I discovered that no question had been skipped over, and all questions had been answered.

The most recent Pandemic limitations and regulations placed strong limitations to my master thesis. I was prepared to conduct face-to-face interviews with Syrian refugees while also conducting field research in Syria's neighbouring countries and in refugee camps in the region. COVID-19, as well as the imposed quarantine, curfews and lockdowns, travel limits, and the risky health situation, have all prevented me from doing so. As a result, I conducted face-to-face interviews with my respondents in Norway and conducted Skype interviews with respondents outside of Norway in order to dig deeper into the information by analyzing and interpreting the data, which provided a more comprehensive image of the phenomenon I studied.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Modern Slavery

4.1 Introduction

Modern slavery as illustrated in Figure 2 is an umbrella term that refers to the exploitation of men, women, and children at different arenas and areas of social and economic life. Moreover, these types of exploitation are also referred as "trafficking in persons", and "human trafficking" as under this situation of exploitation, a person cannot refuse or leave due to threats, violence, coercion, deception or abuse of power (W. F. Foundation, 2018). There are ca "40 million people who are victims of modern slavery; including 25 million people in forced labour and 15 million people in forced marriage" (Organization, 2017). Therefore, for every 1,000 persons in the world, 5.4 persons are victims of modern slavery (traffik, 2021).

Figure 2: Modern slavery forms (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resour) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

The primary victims of modern slavery are women and children where women and girls are accounting for 71 percent of modern slavery victims. Furthermore, "every 4th victim of modern slavery is a child"(Organization, 2017). Many initiatives have mentioned the need to address the exploitation and the forms of modern slavery in order to stop it and punish the exploiters

and the traffickers. It started with the 1926 Slavery Convention of the League of Nations. The slavery was defined as: "the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised" (article 1.1). In 1956, the United Nations released its Supplementary Convention on the abolition of slavery, the slave trade, institutions and practices of slavery. This convention redefined the slavery given in the 1926 Slavery Convention of the League of Nations (art. 7a), including also *"the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime"* describe this compelled service using several different terms, including involuntary servitude, slavery or practices similar to slavery, debt bondage, and forced labour (Calabrese, 2020).

International community by the 17 sustainable development goals and by The SDG 8.7 clearly mentioned to implement effective efforts to eliminate forced labour, human trafficking, and all forms of child labour. Furthermore, by focusing on; forced labour and forced marriage(Organization, 2017) as well as the forms of "forced sexual exploitation of adults, commercial sexual exploitation of children and state-imposed forced labour"(Ibid, p.7). The goals for 2030 included the immigrants in this initiative by the SDG 10.7 and states "facilitating orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, by implementing planned and well-managed migration policies" (Ibid, p.7). Through its Objective 10, the international community emphasized the importance of managing and decreasing migration vulnerabilities, "calls on the international community to prevent and combat trafficking in persons in the context of international migration"(NATIONS, 2018).
Therefore, based on the above discussion, the primary forms of modern slavery are defined by;
1. forced labour
2. Child, early and forced marriage
3. Sexual exploitation

Hereafter, in this chapter, I will discuss in more detail the forms of modern slavery. Furthermore, I will explore the vulnerable situation of men, women, and children, and also the reasons of this situation for refugees in the host countries. Additionally, I will highlight the new challenges and impact of the COVID-19 on the victims of modern slavery.

All this will establish the understanding about the vulnerable situation of Syrian refugees in the neighbouring countries and how they are exploited for their everyday life by the employers, local communities, local and international NGOs, and some of the governmental institutions.

4.2 Forced labour

International Labour Organization-ILO described the forced labour in forced labour convention, 1930 (NO.29) as; “all work or services that exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily” (Organization, 2017). Around 7.5 million (47%) forced labour victims work in construction, manufacturing, mining, or hospitality(first, 2017). Sometimes, forced labour referred to as labour trafficking which encompasses the range of activities: “recruiting, harbouring, transporting, providing, or obtaining, involving a person who uses force or physical threats, psychological coercion, abuse of the legal process, deception, or other coercive means to compel someone to work”(Calabrese, 2020). There are at least three aspects of precariousness that distinguish this type of labour from others: “non-standard forms of work, wider insecurity, and undocumented and supra-legal practices of labour exploitation” (Hollifield, Martin, & Orrenius, 2014). Furthermore, Exploiters, smugglers, labour brokers, recruiters, and business owners in both the home country and the country of destination can influence to debt bondage by charging employees recruiting fees and high interest rates, making repayment challenging, if not impossible. Such situations might arise as a result of “employment-based” temporary labour programs, in which a worker's legal status in the host country is related to the employer, and as a result, workers are hesitant to seek recourse (Calabrese, 2020).

Moreover, the involuntary domestic servitude, which is a form of human trafficking and exploiting under distinct circumstances, work in a private and locked residence, that create unique vulnerabilities to victims. These crimes involve the inability of a domestic worker to leave their position, as well as physical, sexual and physiological abuse as well as underpayment, if not nonpayment. Basic things like a day off are not provided for many domestic workers. Furthermore, their mobility is typically restricted, and their job in private houses exacerbates their vulnerability and isolation. The forced labour includes exploitative work conditions; such as wage arrears or non-payment over long periods of time, and the non-existence of a contract (Kanchana, 2018). Forced labour contains all forcing forms on the work field. According to the gender perspective of vulnerability, forced

labour, sexual exploitation, and forced marriage are all kinds of modern slavery that affect women.

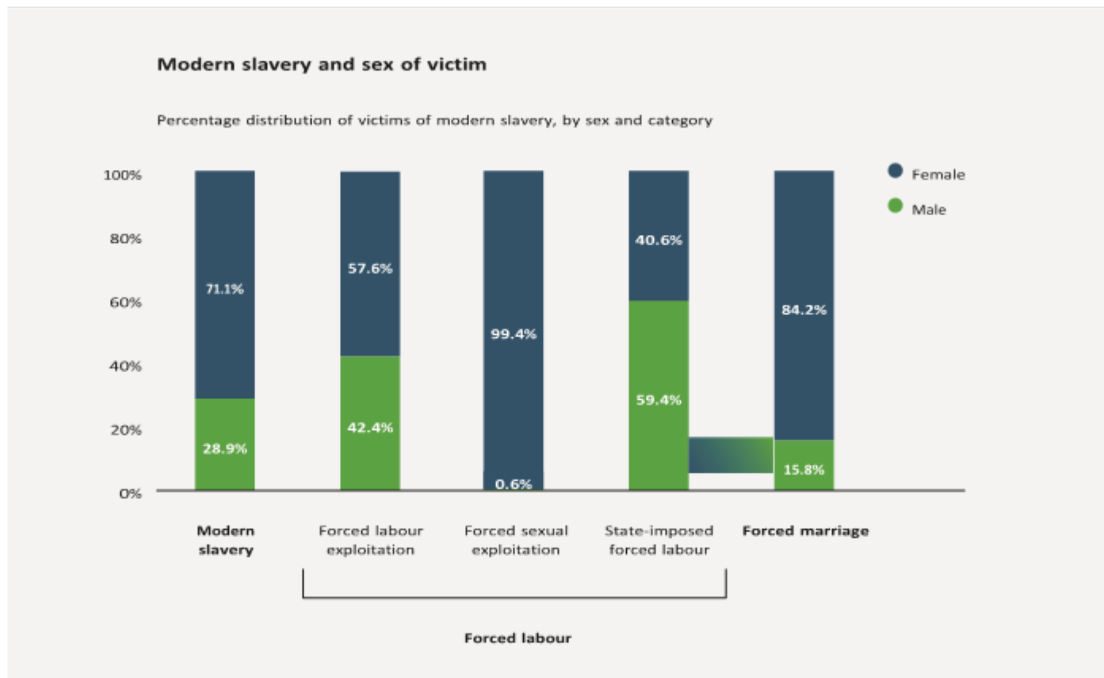

Figure 3: Modern slavery and sex of victim (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

According to the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, 28.7 million women and girls are victims of modern slavery as well as 71% of the modern slavery victims. The commercial sex business employs 99 percent women and girls, while other industries employ 58 percent women and girls. Moreover, 40% of the victims of forced labour and 84% of forced marriages are imposed by state authorities, as shown in Figure 3. Furthermore, Children are victims of modern slavery, as every fourth victim in 2016 was a kid under the age of 18. About 4.3 million children under the age of 18 are forced workers, constituting 18 percent of the 24.8 million total forced workers globally. Children are also victims of state-forced labour which accounts 7 percent of persons affected by the state-imposed forced labour"(Organization, 2017). Child soldiering is a form of exploitation and modern slavery when: "he unlawful recruitment or use of children through force, fraud, or coercion by armed forces as combatants or other forms of labour". The perpetrators may be members of the armed forces of the government, paramilitary groups, or rebel groups. Numerous children are kidnapped and forced to fight, while others are forced to serve as porters, chefs, guards, servants or spies. It is good to know that if "a kid is recruited, enticed, harboured, transported, provided, obtained, patronized, solicited, or maintained to perform a commercial sex act, proving force, fraud, or coercion is not necessary for the offense

to be prosecuted as human trafficking"(State, 2021). Children who are exploited in trafficking are modern slavery victims, and there are no exceptions to this fact: no economic, cultural or social reasons can change the fact that they are modern slavery victims.

4.3 Child, early, and forced marriage

The child, early and forced marriage is one of the forms of modern slavery, which has affected significantly the young girls, children and women. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 11% of women worldwide were married before reaching the age of 15(Jessen, 2013). This shows that annually 14.2 million girls or daily 39,000 will marry too early. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) gives more detailed statistical data about severity of this crime in the global level. 41% of girls under 18 are married in east and central Africa, 29% in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 15% in the Middle East and North Africa ((UNFPA), 2012).

According to global estimates of contemporary slavery, one in every four victims was a kid under the age of 18 (Organization, 2017). The SDG 16.2 calls for the abolition of child labour and all forms of child exploitation. "Ending abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of children" (W. F. Foundation, 2018). Forced exploitation of children is "an appalling violation of human rights and robing the rights of education, health and long-term prospects" (Jessen, 2013).

Furthermore, More than one-third of victims in forced marriages were kids at the time of marriage, and nearly all child victims were girls. (Organization, 2017). SDG 5.3 aims to enhance the situation of children by eliminating child marriage and abolishing all harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage, as well as female genital mutilation (Ibid, p.7) (see Figure 4).

Child marriage can be due to problematic situation (economically and socially) of the bride's family. In few cases, the family wants to minimize the family members by sending one of its children to a new family who can take care her. Whereas, in few cases, the families want to protect the virginity and girl's pride from strangers or criminals by any sexual relation or assault and thus marrying their children at an early age. In war and armed conflict areas:

"Young girls may be forced to marry or be raped by commanders and male combatants. Both male and female children are often sexually abused or exploited by armed groups, and are

subjected to the same types of devastating physical and psychological consequences associated with child sex trafficking" (Calabrese, 2020).

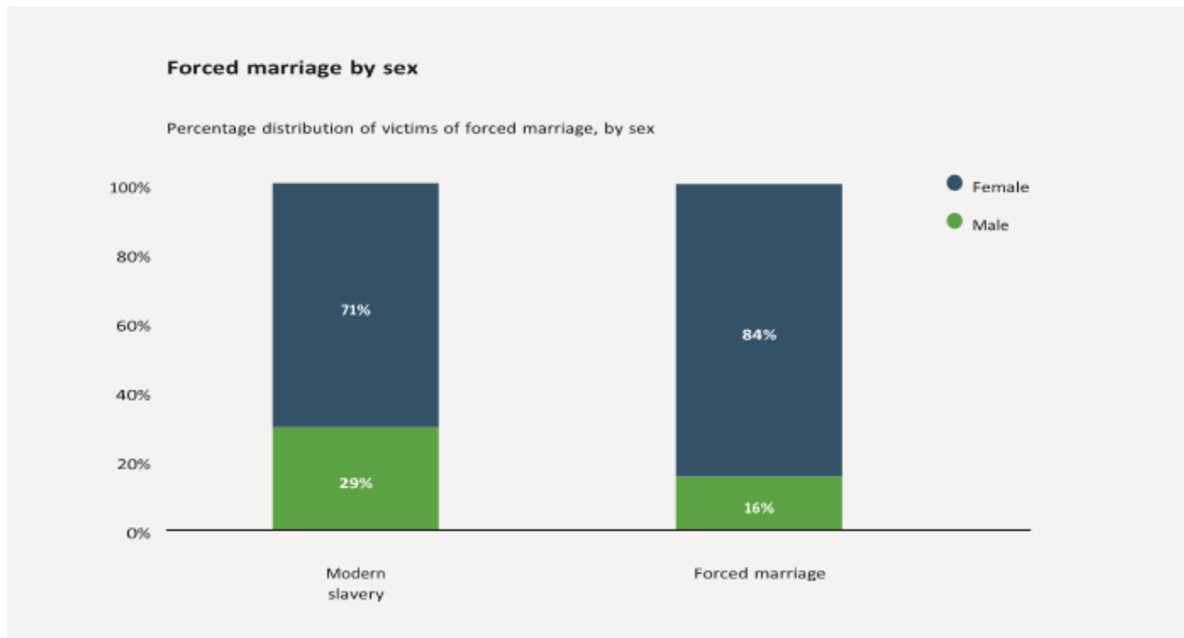

Figure 4: Forced marriage by sex (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

In other words, the main factors for the forced marriages of girls are lack of economic opportunities and insecure conditions including the threat of sexual violence (Stoter, 2015). Therefore, The difficult life conditions and fragile economic status of a few families push them to marry their daughters in order to relieve their financial commitments, directing refugees into this harsh activity (Atkin, 2016). The main reasons of the children and young girls' vulnerability are the economic, social and security situations of their families. The abuses and exploitation of these young girls firstly and partly start by their families. This then continues by their husbands, in-laws and society. The young brides face various type of abuses and exploitations, such as the sexual relations, hard housework, and in few cases, they start working to become financial resources for their husbands. The child brides do not have the freedom of accepting or refusing the marriage offer, which is ordered by their father, brother or the guardian of these children.

The young girl cannot choose her husband, continue going to school or decides if she wants to work or not. The young girl becomes a slave for her husband with little or no support from her families and community. The most powerful risk and impacts in the

children physical and mental health, because lack of sex education, the sex becomes as rape acting, not a love relation and behaviour between two parts. Furthermore, the early pregnant and the needing to health care during the pregnancy and after birth increase the risk on the life of the young brides. Based on aforementioned reasons, child marriages must be understood as a dangerous situation for girls characterized by widespread rape and a life of servility. Thereby also, there is a significant threat to their basic rights as a result of ending their education, preventing them from gaining vocational and personal skills, exposing them to the dangers of too-early pregnancy, child bearing, and motherhood before they are physically and psychologically prepared, and growing their danger of intimate partner sexual violence and HIV infection (YILDIZ, 2017). Bachelet, executive director of UN Women, emphasizes that "no girl should be robbed of her childhood, her education and health, and her aspirations. Yet today millions of girls are denied to their rights when they are married as child brides" (Jessen, 2013).

Moreover, there are mainly three problematic elements about child and forced marriage and its assessments under international instruments. Firstly, it is still an applicable practice for societies as a part of tradition or as a method of gaining money. Traffickers and sometimes their own family members compel women and young girls into marriages against their will. In the case of the Syrian refugees, there are incidents where even father forces his daughter to get married with older, but rich man. Secondly, there is no specific legal instrument about the issue. This needs different practices and preventative strategies against child and forced marriage from one country to another. Finally, yet importantly, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and states establish powerful linkage to observe, to criticize, to evaluate and to prevent the issue and its brutal outcome (YILDIZ, 2017).

4.4 Sex exploitation

Women and girls are adversely impacted by modern slavery, with 28.7 million victims worldwide or 71% of the overall total. More exactly, 99% of forced labour victims in the commercial sex industry are women and girls, 40% of victims of forced labour imposed by state authorities are women and girls, 84% of forced marriages are women and girls, and 58% of other victims of forced labour (Organization, 2017). The sexual exploitation of trust, authority, or vulnerability is the real or planned violation of this position for sexual purposes, including monetary, social, or political gain (WHO, 2021). Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) involves any sexual contact with a child, defined as a human being under the age of eighteen years in any circumstance. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is when a child or young person is

exploited for their own personal gain, by various tools such as presents, drugs, money, status, and affection, to have intercourse with them. Many young people believe they are involved in consensual relationships while in fact they are being exploited. This is known as grooming. Children may trust their abuser and without understanding that they are being abused (Ibid). When a person is made to engage in a commercial sex act (prostitution, for example) through the use of force, threats of force, or trickery, then that person has been made a victim of sexual exploitation. Approximately one fifth of sex trafficking victims were minors (Organization, Foundation, and Migration 2017).

The Institute of Medicine describes commercial sexual exploitation of kids and sex trafficking of minors as a variety of sexual crimes committed against children and adolescents(Varma, Gillespie, McCracken, & Greenbaum, 2015), which includes:

(1) the act of seeking to enlist, acquire, or provide, or the act of retaining a kid in order to allow for sexual exploitation.
(2) using a kid to perform sexual acts.
(3) using a minor for survival sex to take advantage of them (Providing sexual actions for money or something of value, such as food, housing or drugs).
(4) exploiting kids in pornographic content
(5) exploiting kids through sex tourism.
(6) exploitation of a kid by forcing her/him act in sexual settings (e.g.,strip clubs) (ibid).

SDG 5.2 calls for the abolition of all forms of violence against women and girls in both public and private sectors, such as human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and other forms of exploitation(Organization, 2017). A person is guilty of sex trafficking of an adult if they are involved in the recruitment, harbouring or enticement of, transporting, offering, procuring, sponsoring, procuring, or keeping of another person for this purpose. Sexual exploitation may also happen as a result of a specific type of “coercive power” in which individuals are pressured to proceed in prostitution through the use of illegal debt allegedly incurred through their transportation, recruitment, or even sale, that exploiters insist they should charge off before they can be free.

4.5 Migrants and refugee's vulnerability

As a result of a lack of resources, laws or simply negligence, migrants and refugees are at risk of abuse and exploitation in situations and places where the authorities of the state and society are unable to provide protection for them. Migrants, for instance, are extremely vulnerable while fleeing violence and conflict circumstances in which the state has essentially collapsed and social system is indeed in danger (Fiona David, 2019). Immigrants are also vulnerable in such labour situations that are either unknown, difficult to access, or simply not covered by existing legal measures. Gender plays a role in vulnerability, with females experiencing higher rates of modern slavery in "domestic work", "the sex industry", and "forced marriage", whereas men are more likely to be exploited in government forced labour and forced labour in the manufacturing and services sectors, as illustrated in Figure 5.

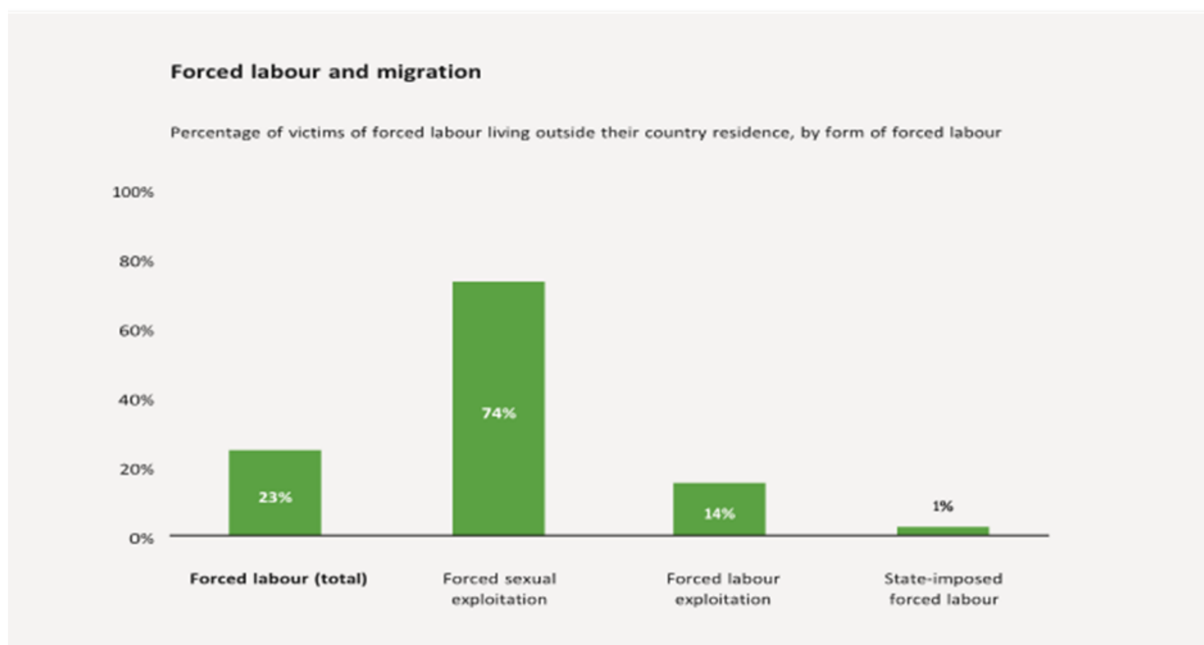

Figure 5: Forced labour and migration (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

Modern slavery is often linked to restrictive immigration laws (such as limits on certain visas or unilaterally modifying refuge processes for citizens from specific nations), as well as ineffective immigration management systems, particularly when low-wage migration is involved. Their vulnerability to modern slavery can be attributed to the discrimination they face from local populations. Due to discrimination, immigrants may have limited access to the legal and law enforcement systems which might shield them from harm. Migrants require the assistance of third parties due to their restricted access to networks, information, and resources. As long as verified information is not easily available through clear official routes, then local

agents, brokers and employers will be able to leverage their greater control of resources to exploit migrant workers with relatively low cost and risk. Migrants are supposed to be protected against exploitation by laws, regulations, and practices. However, there are many gaps in these processes that leave broad areas without protection. A fragile migrant's vulnerability can be used by unscrupulous recruiters, agents, employers, as well as others. However, protections are undermined even when official institutions and international organizations are in place because of corruption, a lack of control, and the presence the well "shadow systems".

4.5.1 Kafala and guardian system

Kafala is “system of managing foreigner workers and subordinating them to citizens.” (Auwal, 2010) In few countries, the refugees are also included by the kafala system to get the chance to stay or go out of the closed camps to the cities, for example in Jordan and Lebanon, the Syrian refugees need Kafeel to live, work, and move out of the refugee camps. Kafeel (sponsor) may take on little or great responsibility; “act within small-scale, person-to-person frameworks.” Additionally, the Kafeel is responsible for housing, employment conditions, and other advantages for sponsored migrants. Additionally, it is stated that the migrant's exit and ability as an employer are subject to the sponsor's approval. (Gardner, Pessoa, & Harkness, 2014). The migrants including the Syrian refugees in countries like GCC countries, Lebanon and Jordan, have to go through the kafala system by having Kafeel. Kafeel provides visas for entry, protection, and exit. Any foreigner admitted to the country must submit information about his or her sponsor in order to fulfill his or her commitments and to avoid deportation if the foreigner is obliged to depart the host country. Kafeel, who sponsors migrants, might incorporate them into his initiatives and job. Nonetheless, he can reap direct financial benefits from them, such as receiving monthly or annual payments. By selling his sponsorship rights, the individual citizen gets discretionary income. Indeed, this is a means for many citizens of the host country to supplement their income(Rahman, 2018). To sell sponsorship of migrants to another citizen is allowed by law, and this is known as a "kafala." This is done by transferring the obligation to another citizen, who is known as the migrant's Kafeel/sponsor/employer/recruiter, etc(Kanchana, 2018). Not only would the migrant's kafala be transferred to a new Kafeel under this arrangement, but his entire presence (residence, job and mobility) inside the host country will be transferred. In few cases, the guardian can be the abuser or exploiter.

As is the case with national, state, and local governments, the guardianship position is formally authorized, as is the case with police, judicial, and legal authorities. This position, however, can also be more informal, involving community or tribe elders, religious figures, and healthcare

and civil society providers. Migrants' vulnerability to modern slavery may be exacerbated by gaps in guardian comments in response, of such guardians' incapability to prevent exploitation, which may be exacerbated further by law and order violations caused by armed conflict or environmental catastrophes, poor governance, the impediments of addressing modern slavery, or competing government priorities(Fiona David, 2019).

4.6 COVID-19 the new challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic is setting the world under massive strain, impacting the lives of everyone. Enforced quarantine, curfews and lockdowns, travel restrictions, and restrictions on economic, social, and public life are among the unprecedented measures necessary to reduce the pandemic. The exploiters and criminals in modern slavery victims alter their business strategies to the “new normal” generated by the pandemic. The COVID-19 also affects the ability of government authorities and non-governmental organizations to provide crucial assistance to victims of exploitation Furthermore, the epidemic has intensified and highlighted structural and deeply entrenched social and economic disparities which are some of the main causes of human exploitation. As of 22 April 2020, around 1.1 billion informal economy workers including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, live and work in cities with full lockdown, with an additional 304 million in cities with partial lockdown (ILO, 2020). In all, 67% of the informal labor is represented by these employees. It is not an option for them to cease working or to work from home because that will be their only alternative. For many others, it also means losing their employment if they stay home; “To die from hunger or from the virus, is the real dilemma faced by many of those earning their living in the informal economy” (ILO, 2020).

Almost 1.6 billion informal workers or 76% of informal employment worldwide are significantly affected by the lockdown measures and restrictive regulations imposed due to the pandemic (see the data in Figure 6).

Many migrants and refugee groups that were not facing the risk of exploitation and vulnerability become a new group of victims due to the pandemic, while victims of modern slavery are worsened further. The imposed infection-control measures, combined with the economic crisis

and loss of work and self-sufficiency options, may have devastating consequences for displaced people (Cluster, 2020).

	Informal employment (millions)	Significantly Impacted Informal workers (millions)	Informal Significantly Impacted (%)
World	2 060	1 564	76
By region			
Africa	391	325	83
Americas	192	169	88
LAC	158	140	89
Arab States	31	27	89
Asia and Pacific	1 346	988	73
Europe and Central Asia	100	65	64
By income group			
High-income	117	86	73
Upper-middle-income	716	395	55
Lower-middle-income	971	914	94
Low-income	256	197	77

Note: Estimates based on the analysis of national household survey data from 129 countries representing 90 per cent of global employment. LAC=Latin America and the Caribbean.

Figure 6: Information economy workers significantly impacted by lockdown and physical distancing measures (2020) (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/briefingnote/wcms_743534.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

There is a risk that the pandemic would fuel more displacement, increasing the number of vulnerable internally displaced persons IDPs, in places where COVID-19 is obstructing access to adequate to food and necessary services. Additionally, the cessation of educational services or separation from caregivers leaves children unsupervised and increasingly vulnerable throughout the day, and/or may lead caregivers to commit children to traffickers who falsely offer work or education (ibid, p.2).

The lockdown and restrictions are source to create new forms of exploitation, such as women and children are sexually exploited by their traffickers involving them in online or service at private homes for sex. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, victims of exploitation may be

physically restricted to their place of exploitation and/or unable to leave a situation of exploitation, limiting their timely access to information, assistance, and resources. Furthermore, because exploiters are unable to benefit from them as a result of the pandemic's effects, abuse, exploitation and violence by exploiters may grow. Victims may not be able to isolate themselves or socially distance themselves from others, particularly if forced to perform sexual services or work. Undocumented, illegal migrants, and refugees, as well as people who have personal documents with the Kafeel and traffickers, may encounter significant challenges in receiving COVID-19-related healthcare and other public services.

Victims of modern slavery face barriers to healthcare services, information, protection, and assistance both during and after their exploitation. But the COVID-19 has made their situation worst. The pandemic already has resulted in, and may continue to resulting in, the shutdown of clinics, shelters, and service provider offices, as well as limits on in-person encounters, limiting the support resources accessible to vulnerable victims. The pandemic will raise the burden of law enforcement officials and/or diminish their capability and capabilities to react to reported cases of exploitation. It may also cause a delay in providing assistance to victims who are currently involved in the criminal system. Because of the pandemic budget deviation, fewer support services may be accessible to trafficking victims(Cluster, 2020).

In this chapter, we tried to highlight the forms of modern slavery and the difficulties and vulnerabilities if victims. This will help us to explore the vulnerable satiations of the Syrian refugees and define the forms of modern slavery by which Syrians are victimized.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Syrian Refugees' Vulnerability in Turkey:

5.1 Introduction

With an 800-kilometer boundary and open border policy toward Syrians, Turkey has become one of the most popular destinations for them. Furthermore, according to Turkish government, as of October 10, 2019, 3.7 million Syrian refugees had been registered in Turkey, with more than 170 000 Afghans, 142 000 Iraqis, 39 000 Iranians, 5 700 Somalis and 11 700 from other countries, thus having over 4 million registered refugees (Figure 7). This makes Turkey the largest refugee-hosting in the world (WFP, 2020) where the Syrian refugees are 5% of Turkey's population (Canefe, 2018).

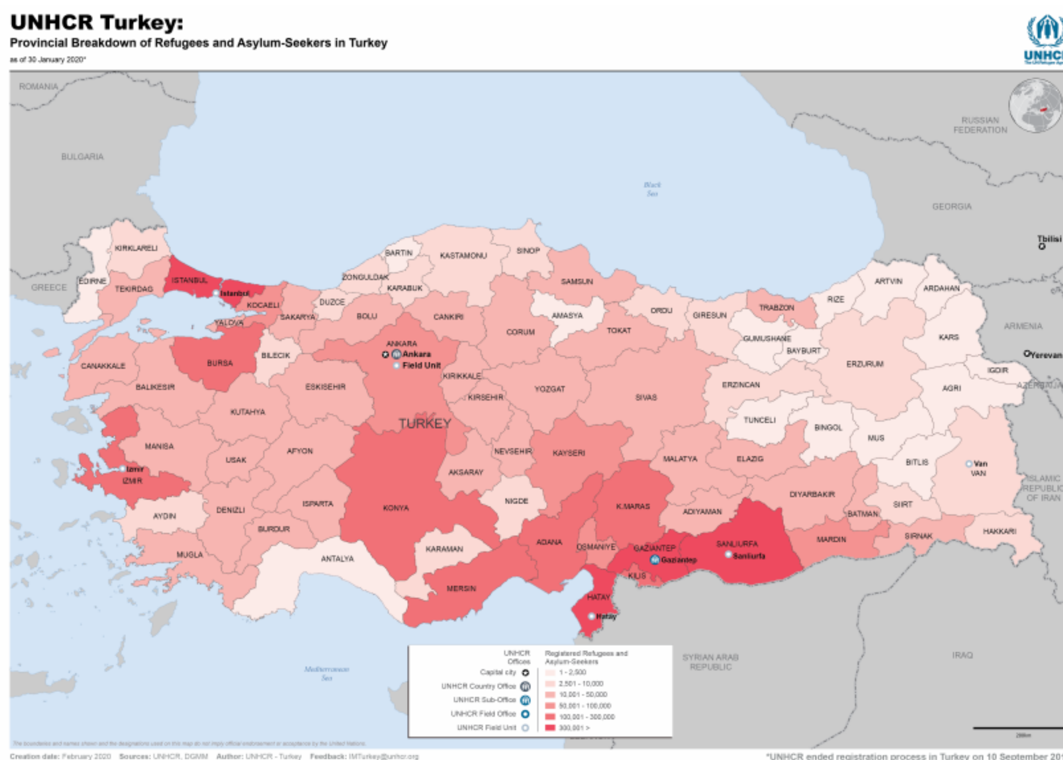

Figure 7: Refugees and Asylum seekers in Turkey (https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2024851/74105.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

5.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions

According to respondent number 3, a Syrian male from Idlib, working as a governmental employee in Syria, living in Turkey since 2012, stated about the fleeing and crossing the Turkish border:

"Since I did not have a passport and I was not safe to go to Syria because of battles and arrests, I had no choice but to flee to Turkey, which at the time had an open border policy towards Syria. I remember that Turkish soldier who helped me, even carried my bags to cross the Turkish border." (Respondent number 3).

The overwhelming majority of Syrian refugees do not live in camps, and they choosing to live in cities along the Syrian border; Gaziantep, Kilis, Sanlıurfa, Hatay (Akyuz & Tursun, 2019). As Syrian war victims and refugees do not want to return home, the Turkish government faces significant policy challenges (Merkezi, 2015).

In response to the challenges and difficulties of the massive number of Syrian refugees' impact, the Turkish government set out The Law on Foreigners and International Security as Turkey's first immigration law, which went into effect in April 2014. Respondent number 3 described how the new regulations affected him and other Syrians:

"Every Syrian in Turkey has the right to obtain (Kimlik) an ID and protection permit for Syrian refugees in Turkey. This allows them to receive free state services, such as schools, treatment in hospitals and health centres of the Turkish government. Moreover, this allows them to live and move within the city in which they are registered." (Respondent number 3).

Before 2014, the legal status and rights of migrants and refugees were controlled piecemeal by Regulation No. 1994/61692 and Under Regulation No. 1994/6169, which followed the Law on Foreigners and International Security. The UNHCR undertook the task of evaluating their claims and trying to re-establish them outside Turkey. These asylum seekers have been permitted to live temporarily in Turkey until they have relocated to a third country (Kirisci, 2001).

In accordance with Turkey's declaration to the UN Convention pertaining to the Status of Refugees, Article 61 of the new law grants refugee status to the following individuals:

"who as a result of events occurring in European countries and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his citizenship and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (Ibid).

Furthermore, the conditional refugees are allowed to remain in Turkey temporarily until they are resettled in a third country, according to Article 62. And Article 63 creates a “subsidiary protection” status for those seeking protection who are not considered refugees or conditional refugees but face the death penalty, torture, or cruel or degrading treatment, or a severe threat of violence in their country of origin.

Article 1 of the Temporary Regulation, which forbids all Syrians from applying for international protection for an indefinite duration, is in conflict with Turkey's international legal obligations under the UN Refugee Convention, and therefore violates Article 16 of the Turkish Constitution (Ibid). Furthermore, The Turkish government in 2016 agreed to serve as Europe's refugee gatekeeper. According to an agreement agreed between the European Union (EU) and Turkey in March 2016, any new irregular migrants, including Syrians, crossing from Turkey to Greek's area will be deported to Turkey.(Union, 2016).

As of July 2018, Istanbul and nine other provinces, including border regions, which housed the majority of Syrian refugees, are no longer accepting new Syrian refugees. Unregistered Syrian refugees in Istanbul and other provinces will leave and return to the areas in which they were first registered, the Ministry of Interior said in the summer of 2019 (Agency, 2015).

Following the announcement, a wave of Syrian refugees was detained and deported, especially in Istanbul, where Turkish police raided communities with large Syrian population, arresting and moving many refugees to detention centres, and in some cases, back to liberated areas in northern Syria. following opposition parties in Turkey pointing to the Syrian refugee problem as a key campaign issue, polling firms estimated that the refugee issue hurt the ruling AKP party in the recent election, revealed widespread public dissatisfaction with refugees, certain steps to minimize the number of refugees in Istanbul and other provinces were implemented. Respondent number 3, described the effect of breaking the residence and migration law from Syrians:

> *"Many Syrians do not abide by the laws that determine their movement. They travel and living in places other than those in which they are registered. This exposes them to exploitation, since they are living illegally in those cities and could lead to the risk of detention and deportation either to camps on the border with Syria or to Syria with five-year punishment for preventing entry into Turkey as a penalty for freaking out the law."* (Respondent number 3).

The governor of Istanbul declared in January 2020 that the police had moved up to 100,000 Syrian refugees from Istanbul to other provinces since July 2019, bringing the total number of Syrian refugees in Istanbul down from 580,000 to 480,000 since 2018 (DW, 2020). Moreover, Turkey deported about 60,000 Syrian refugees to Idlib in northern Syria in 2019, and another 16,000 Syrians are expected to be deported in 2020 (Centre, 2020).This was in line with perceptions of my informants. For example, according to respondent number 4, a Syrian mother from Homos who was a housewife in Syria. After fleeing to Turkey since 2012, she has been working in a textile factory. She assured that many Syrians deported to areas inside Syria:

> *"If a Syrian refugee is caught without his residence or protection permit, he will be deported outside Turkey to the areas controlled by the Syrian opposition in the city of Idlib."* (Respondent number 4).

Women and children make up 77% of Syrian refugees in Turkey who are confined under the temporary security regime. The Law of Foreigners and International Security, as well as the Temporary Protection Rule, ensure that women's dependence is recognized and reinforced by law. Because she is "pregnant", "alone with children", or a "victim of physical or sexual abuse". These two pieces of law regard a "woman" as a dependent individual as a "mother" or "wife" or portray her as weak or victimized under the category of "people with special needs." (Kivilcim, 2016).

According to an official survey, the largest age group of Syrian women is 19–54, a group deemed able to engage in the workforce (Authority, 2014). Official figures indicate that almost one-third of Syrian refugee's household in Turkey are led by women or children (ibid.). As a result, the burden of seeking paid work falls on women, as they are responsible for the financial needs of the family (Jessen, 2013). It is important to stress that these female refugees are also a significant resource for the Turkish economy (Kivilcim, 2016).

Article 35 of the Temporary Protection Regulation states that if those under temporary protection do not comply with the obligations set out in the Regulation 20, they may be barred from staying outside of the temporary accommodation centres (camps) for a period of time or permanently. In this way, the Regulation designates the camps as prisons for Syrian refugees. During 2015, Amnesty International researchers visited few shelter centres where hundreds of Syrian refugees, including women and children, were housed. "The people who were accommodated were those who were homeless or engaged in begging", Turkish authorities told

Amnesty International (Amnesty, 2015). Syrian refugees in Turkey live mostly in deep poverty (Authority, 2014).

According to the respondents on our study, the difficulties and challenges of vulnerability situation are not only from Turkish government and people, but they have also been exploited from other Syrians who have good knowledge of Turkish Language, law, job market and the life in Turkey. Respondent number 4 stating:

> *"My experience with exploitation in Turkey began from the very first days of living there, when I was searching for accommodation. I rented a house for 300 dollars, for which a Turkish person would only have paid 50 dollars. They exploited my need for a place to sleep and lack Turkish language. Moreover, the most painful thing is to know that a Syrian individual is a part in my exploitation, instead of helping and assisting me by explaining the reality"* (Respondent number 4).

5.3 Forced labour

Turkey was destination for Syrians refugees not only to flee not because of the location and border, many of them wanted to find a solution for their economic difficulties and to support their families in Syria. Respondent number 5, a Syrian male from Damascus was working as a real estate developer in Turkey, stated:

> *"I chose Turkey as a destination because the Turkish real estate market began to grow in 2014, and I wanted to invest my skills in it. However, I was surprised by the reality: I could not find work and no company wanted to hire me despite my extensive experience. I discovered that this area is reserved for Turks and a particular social class. Therefore, after a long job search, I now have to work as a worker."* (Respondent number 5).

Syrians who have finished the registration process are authorized by the Regulation on Work Permits for Refugees Under Temporary Protection, which was enacted in January 2016. According to Article 5, they will be entitled to apply for a work permit six months after receiving temporary protection status, however work permits are not required in part-time seasonal agricultural jobs. Article 8 imposes a limit, mandating that the number of immigrants with work permits not above 10% of the whole number of workers at any given workplace. (Kivilcim, 2016).

However, respondent number 3 also emphasised the challenges to stay and work in Turkey legally:

"You need a residence and a work permit to live in Turkey. A Syrian who has a valid Syrian passport will obtain his/her annual residence and work permit in coordination with his/her employer. However, the employer does not register his/her Syrian employees in such a way that he/she does not incur any financial obligations, taxes or compensation. As a result, most of the Syrians work illegally and without a work permit." (Respondent number 3).

The Temporary Protection Regulation is clearly liberal in its language and does not include 'rights,' but rather controls' access to services.' Regarding entry to the job market, Article 29 of the Regulation states that following a request from the Council of Ministers, the procedures and principles relating to the work of persons under temporary protection will be decided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, with special restrictions on the basis of geography and field. No decision on this matter was taken by the Council of Ministers until 2016; 'Regulation on work permits for refugees under temporary protection' was released on January 15 2016. This Regulation applies to Syrian persons who have completed their registration process and specifies that they will be able to apply for a work permit 6 months after obtaining a temporary security status (Ibid). We can say that the Turkish government's negligence secured Syrian refugees as mobile and exploitable labour for the Turkish market.

Respondent number 5, describes that how and why Syrians became victims of exploitation and their vulnerability increased:

"It is worth noting that many Syrians has led to a surplus of cheap Syrian labour, which has increased the vulnerability and exploitation of the Syrians. Therefore, you find that the rate of exploitation and vulnerability of the city that has inhabited by Syrians in abundance is very high. This has led to an increase in labour regulations being tightened and to the arrest of Syrian workers who have violated the law of residence and their detention and expulsion by the Turkish authorities, although this was not the case at the start of the civil war." (Respondent number 5).

One of Turkey's primary priorities, as stated in the National Economic Development Plan (Özbek, 2015) and the National Employment Strategy, is to ensure and increase labour market stability (Kivilcim, 2016).The uncertain legal status of Syrian refugees reacts perfectly to the demand for insecure and irregular workers; they are hired overwhelmingly informally (Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015). Since they do not have work permits, they are used as illegal and cheap labour (Kivilcim, 2016). Few commentators point out that "Syrians have become the new working class in Turkey" (Jessen, 2013). According to Respondent number 3,

“the miserable situation of Syrians in Turkey forced all Syrians to look for a job and accepts it. A Syrian in Turkey, whether a man, woman, or child, cannot survive unless he works. Every member of the family is required to work.” (Respondent number 3).

Respondent number 3 also described how Syrian workers were exploited in Turkey:

“There is no job contract between the Syrian worker and the Turkish employer allowing the exploitation and inequality to occur. The salary of the Syrian worker is 5 $ per day, while the Turkish worker is 10- 50 $, who is registered and has full rights.” (Respondent number 3).

In Turkey, the rate of female participation in the labour market is just 27%, and government policies to increase the job rate of women are mainly debated on the basis of 'flexibility' of the labour market (K. Platform, 2014). Migrant women are one of the most vulnerable groups to the threats of Turkey's worsening neoliberal restructuring and its flexible labour market. Both the economic and legal fronts generate a 'violence of uncertainty' for them (Eder, 2015). In the case of Syrians’ refugee women, language problems and gender-based discrimination further complicate matters, such that Syrian refugee women find jobs such as cleaning, housekeeping or childcare services and get extremely low payment. This combination increases the economic dependence and precariousness of Syrian women. Women who travelled with their children confront additional challenges since they cannot combine childcare and work when access to school for Syrian children is limited or non-existent, particularly in the early stages of the immigration (Bircan & Sunata, 2015). A large number of Syrian refugees and migrant women have now become family leaders and become significant players in forming Syrian communities, Turkey's economic and social life. Syria's women make up nearly half of the Syrians who refuge in Turkey, and the bulk of Syrian women residing in the country are between the ages of five to 18 and 19 and 30 (Canefe, 2018).

Respondent number 4, a Syrian mother, who started working since she came to Turkey stated:

“Working conditions were difficult, inequitable, and unreliable. There are no contracts or rights, in other words. My monthly wage was 1200 Turkish Lira, and the Turkish worker's monthly wage was 2000 Turkish Lira. Even though I was not subjected to any verbal or physical abuse, I face injustice.” (Respondent number 4).

Some sources estimate that the Regulation risks have detrimental effect on Syrian refugees. It is noted that there is space for employers to take advantage of Syrians' struggle by seeking non-official fees for job applications or by overcharging them, who are desperate enough not to complain about the infringement of the Regulation (Grisgraber & Hollingsworth, 2016).

There are particular notes that the regulation would not have any positive effect on Syrian refugees employed in small firms. Small firms will be less likely to sponsor work permits, and may continue to rely on informal workers, including Syrian refugees, as a result. (Ibid).

Respondent number 2 described the exploitation of Syrians in the job market:

> *"My experience with exploitation was in the labour market. Like many Syrians, I worked in difficult and hard jobs, long working hours, poor salaries, and even less than the Turkish worker's wages. I used to get 5 $ an hour, whereas a Turkish worker gets 12.5 $ an hour. I work 12 hours while a Turkish worker works 8 to 10 hours a day. I do not have a contract and rights or guarantees, whereas the Turkish worker is registered and has all rights and guarantees."* (Respondent number 2).

The Law states that the persons under temporary protection will not be paid below the minimum wage. In the meantime, they work in agriculture, textiles, tourism, domestic and sex services, but their job is unrecorded with extremely low wages (Kivilcim, 2016).

The definition of 'unfree labour' is often used to describe migrant workers who are not free to move across the country or between sectors of the labour market. Scholars have given attention to the fact that "unfree migrant workers" help to lowering working standards and help to introduce more flexible working practices (Barrientos, Kothari, & Phillips, 2013).

Respondent number 5 also he referred to the unfree moment of Syrians in Turkey to the security reason:

> *"The Syrian, who has a protection permit, is not allowed to move, live or work outside the city in which he is registered without the authorisation and prior permission of the Turkish authorities, which mentions his destination, the reason for his travel and how many days he will stay in that city. This is to control the distribution of the Syrians among Turkish cities and to track their activities."* (Respondent number 5).

5.4 Child labour and the responses to bagging

46 % of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are between the ages of 0 and 18 (Sahin, Dagli, Acarturk, & Dagli, 2020). Furthermore, according to the latest figures announced by the Turkish Ministry of Interior, 405,521 children of Syrian origin were born in Turkey since 2011(Sahin et al., 2020). Respondent number 5, stated about the Syrian children situation in Turkey:

> *"Even though Syrian children can go to government schools for free, they are clearly present in the labour market in Turkey due to the difficult economic conditions. Every person of the Syrian family is forced to work to earn enough income to live."* (Respondent number 5).

Moreover, respondent number 4 added:

> *"In Turkey, children have the right to join public schools, but due to language barrier particularly for newcomers, enrolment of Syrian children in schools has been limited. Even those who have enrolled find it difficult to progress through the educational process. Also, the family's financial difficulties prompted many families to send their children to work in order to cover the costs of living."* (Respondent number 4).

Most Syrian refugees work excessive hours and receive significantly lower wages than their Turkish counterparts, and their meagre salaries are often unfairly withheld (Amnesty, 2014). As a result, begging seems to be a more worthy 'job' for many Syrian refugees in their everyday struggles for survival. Thus, large number of Syrian refugees are engaged in begging in almost every city of Turkey.

Official authorities consider Syrian beggars to be a security issue, disrupting both Turkish people and tourists visiting the region. Starting in 2013, the Ministry of the Interior released a number of directives asking the governors of all provinces to take security steps to prevent the Syrians from begging in the streets and sending them to the camps by intimidation. Turkish nationals are still begging in the streets, but these orders only punish Syrian beggars, who are deemed by the Ministry to be a 'disturbance of public order '(Kivilcim, 2016). Respondent number 5 described the Syrian children's situation while begging:

> *"Begging is the most dangerous job where many Syrian children are engaged, which exposes them to exploitation, verbal and physical abuse, in addition to sexual assault."*

And respondent number 4 emphasized:

> *"Children, whether in the labour market or begging, received no support or aid either from the Turkish Government or from any humanitarian organizations in Turkey."* (Respondent number 4).

From 2014 to 2016, reports for detention and forced deportation to camps for Syrian refugees accused of begging appeared almost every day in local and national media, characterized as 'process' or 'struggle' against "Syrian beggars" (Ibid). The 'policy of placement of beggars in camps' is applauded by some scholars for its "evident results" (Erdoğan, 2014). Newspaper has not addressed the operations against Syrian beggars, and the vulnerability of Syrian beggars is mostly absent from literature (Peyroux, 2016). It seems like each governor carries out these 'operations' on its own discretion and through various means. Some governor's directives are accompanied by a formal notification document. The police first communicate this written notification, prepared in Turkish and Arabic, that should be signed by the Syrian refugees engaged in begging. This notification informs the refugee that begging is a misdemeanour under Turkish law and in case the concerned person continues to beg, necessary administrative steps will be taken. He/she will be transferred to the camp only after his/her second apprehension of begging (Kivilcim, 2016).

5.5 Child, forced and early marriage

In every province of Turkey, multiple marriages with Syrian women and girls are also common. According to NGO reports, brokers for the "selling" of Syrian women and young girls are easily spotted in and near the camps as well as on social media (Kivilcim, 2016). Respondent number 4 discussed the factors which lead Syrians families to marrying their girls:

> *"Marrying Syrian girls in Turkey is an important issue that occurs in abundance and for many reasons: firstly, it is part of the Syrian tradition and is also present and acceptable in Turkish society. Secondly, this form of marriage has increased due to the difficult situation of the Syrian families and their need to reduce the burden of family and the transition of the responsibility of one of their daughters to another family, i.e. to the husband and his family. Thirdly, apprehension of the Syrian family for their daughters from sexual abuse, so that the family finds that marrying a girl would shield her from harassment or sexual exploitation."* (Respondent number 4).

Although polygamy is legal in Syria, Syrian law gives judges the right to ban men from taking second (or subsequent) wife if they conclude that they are unable to provide ample financial support (House, 2010). According to a 2005 survey, approximately 9 % of urban and 16.3 % of rural men have at least two wives (UNIFEM, 2005). The lawful age of marriage in Syria is 17 for women and 18 for men, but judges may allow marriages to take place at a younger age, such as 13 for girls and 15 for boys (House, 2010).

Due to the uncertainty of their legal status in Turkey and the extreme poverty in which they live, As a survival strategy, Syrian women and girls are compelled to marry Turkish citizens (Osman Bahadır Dinçer, 2013). Marriage with Syrian women is considered as a trade practice. Particularly in Hatay, Urfa and Kilis, Syrian women are forced to accept second and sometimes third marriage (Haberler, 2014). The legal measures pertaining to early, forced, and polygamous marriages are developed within the immigration legislation to deal with the practice of these marriages among the refugees and migrant communities. The approach adopted is characterized by a concept of a 'clash' between Western and non-Western cultures and victimization of 'imperilled Muslim women' by their own backward culture (Razack, 2004). Feminist scholars have emphasized this approach, pointing out that forced, early, or polygamous marriages are based on gender and sexual imbalances rather than being a social phenomenon (Dauvergne & Millbank, 2010). The Civil Code of Turkey does not allow polygamy, and the legal minimum marriage age is 17 (Kivilcim, 2016).

Respondent number 4, explained how the child marriage in the Syrian community is different from one city to another and form family to another:

> *“Syrian child marriage is common among Syrian refugees in Turkey, and the main reason is the financial difficulties of girl's families. The family's and society's cultural backgrounds also play a role in child marriages. An educated family has a different understanding than an uneducated family, and a family coming from a big city, such as Damascus or Aleppo, has a different concept than a family from a small city or the countryside.”* (Respondent number 4).

In comparison to Turkish women, Syrian marriage rates below the age of 18 (17.7%) and teen pregnancy are very high (Çöl et al., 2020) (Kivilcim, 2016). Polygamy and child marriages are illegal, they are still socially acceptable in many parts of Turkey. According to government statistics, Turkey's polygamy rate is 3.5%, and 23% of women marry before the age of 18 (UNFPA, 2014; Yilmaz, Tamam, & Bal, 2015). Legal interventions are either unsuccessful or

not in force in many situations. The arrival of Syrian refugees in Turkey, with approximately 80% of them being children and women, has significantly expanded the already existing traditions of child, forced, and polygamous marriages (Kivilcim, 2016). Various articles discuss weddings between Syrian girls as young as 12 years old and Syrian women as the second or third wife of a Turkish person (Ibid). According to the NGO articles as well as news in the media, these marriages take place in exchange for money paid to the refugee family and in some situations, a woman or girl is paid for renting a room in which the refugee family stays (Cumhuriyet, 2015; Milliyet, 2014; Tu¨rkc¸e, 2013). According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, 19% of foreign women marrying Turkish citizens are Syrian and placed first among foreign brides in Turkey in 2015 (Kivilcim, 2016).

The official numbers of these marriages just represent the tip of the iceberg. Pursuant to the above provisions of the Civil Code under Turkish law, child marriages and polygamous marriages with Syrian girls and women are legally forbidden relationships that are religiously officiated by imams (Committee, 2017; Kivilcim, 2016). Child marriages were considered a significant problem in Turkey prior to the influx of Syrian refugees. (Ergöçmen, 2014; Gök, 2016). According to studies, the economic difficulties that Syrian refugees have faced in Turkey have led the families to accept child marriage which under normal circumstance they will not do (CARE, 2015).

According to respondent number 4, child marriage is an ethical dilemma, she said:

> *"The marriage of Syrian children in most cases is a means of selling a child for a sum of money, and it is an ethical dilemma for the family itself, not only because of the Syrian crisis or lack of money. Therefore, considering the challenging circumstances, you find that a lot of Syrian families do not support this form of marriage at all costs."* (Respondent number 4).

Cases of young Syrian children being sold by their own families or by catalogues are often covered in Turkish newspapers (Kivilcim, 2016). Hundreds of Syrian women have been taken as second or third wives in each town along Turkey's Syrian border zone, according to women's organizations (Ibid). However, it is indicated that the government employees in the camps are active in the "trading networks" of Syrian women and girls. Moreover the imams who hold religious marriage ceremonies are also government workers (GROUP, 2014) and the legal action taken by the government against these practices, which are considered crimes under Turkish law, is unclear (Kivilcim, 2016). As Deniz Kandiyoti argues, gender(ed) relations are

constructed in the Middle East, the traditional belt of patriarchy, through a combination of patriarchal culture and Islam, as well as local realities and political agendas (Kandiyoti, 1988).

In Turkey, 46% of Syrian refugees are women where 51.2% are of reproductive age (15–49 years old). They work in factories, farms and bars to help themselves and their families (Çöl et al., 2020). Moreover, it seems that these structures contribute to produce prejudices among local populations. Turkish women's think that Syrian women are “thieves” who are “stealing” Turkish men from them (HAPPANİ, 2014). Some Syrian women adapt to their new life in Turkey by marrying Turkish men as an escape strategy from miserable life (Akyuz & Tursun, 2019). Others did not want to be a financial burden on their families. These circumstances are significant motivator for them to accept a Turkish man as a husband (Ibid).

Respondent number 4 emphasized that forced labour for adult Syrian women, in some way, they accept it as a solution to her miserable life:

> *“It is a product of the family's financial and social circumstances. Many women have chosen to work in order to avoid being forced into marriage and to support themselves and their families. However, in light of the difficult living conditions of Syrian refugees in Turkey, this is being used by some families to shield their daughters' honour from any assault, as after marriage her husband will protect her. This marriage could be seen as a helping hand for few women and their families”.* (Respondent number 4).

5.6 Sexual exploitation

The problem of sexual abuse of Syrian women and girls has repeatedly been raised in the Turkish National Assembly. Several calls for a parliamentary investigation were made and written parliamentary questions asked for information on the steps taken by the ministries responsible for preventing the exploitation of Syrian female refugees and prosecuting the perpetrators (Kivilcim, 2016). All proposals for parliamentary enquiries on this subject have been rejected by the vote of the members of the ruling Justice and Development Party, and the parliamentary questions were rarely answered. The government's only response to a parliamentary question on the sexual harassment of Syrian female refugees has shown that the related ministries are totally unconcerned about this phenomenon. This response came from the Minister of Family and Social Policy to a parliamentary query concerning the steps taken by the Ministry to prevent the sale and trafficking of Syrian women and girls as sex slaves and domestic workers (Ibid). The Minister clarified that the only action taken by the ministry was the introduction of a joint project with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to

'educate' 400 Syrian women on the legal age of marriage in Turkey and the legal prohibition of polygamy. The Deputy Prime Minister also revealed this initiative to the press as a government move against systematic sexual abuse and the sale of Syrian female refugees (Bilgin, 2014).

Respondent number 5 shared with me his opinions on the sexual exploitation of Syrians in Turkey. He stated:

> *"Because the sex trade is legal in Turkey, it is treated similarly to any other career in which Syrians have engaged i.e., those who work in prostitution have the same working conditions as those who work in factories or farming. Working in prostitution, however, is an unacceptable job in Syrian society, thus working secretly. However, those who work in it will be more vulnerable to abuse because there will be no one standing beside them, no family or society to defend or protect them."* (Respondent number 5).

The temporary accommodation centres known publicly as camps in their present state are particularly dangerous places for women. Rape incidents were recorded in Turkish media in these camps, and camp officials were among those responsible (Milliyet, 2014); (Agos, 2014). In a parliamentary question to the Interior Minister, the issue of the sexual harassment of Syrians and girls in the camps and by camp officials was also addressed, but no response was received (Kivilcim, 2016).

5.7 COVID-19

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has driven Syrian refugees into an even more terrible situation in Turkey. The pandemic has had a huge effect on Syrians' access to work, as there are many jobs in low wages, such as factories or restaurants that do not have a health insurance. Studies have shown that Syrian refugees are twice as likely to be dismissed or left unpaid as Turkish residents. Moreover, many Syrian refugees remain unregistered or lack access to information about their laws and benefits because of the lack of State support packages (Akyıldız, 2020).

Although the COVID-19 pandemic was hard on everyone, the most needy members of society, including refugees, were among the first to lose their jobs and income. According to a UN representative in Turkey:

> *"As refugees were overwhelmingly employed informally before the pandemic, they were the first to lose their jobs and income without being eligible for short-term work allowance or other unemployment benefits,"* said Claudio Tomasi, a representative of the UN Development Program, in an exclusive interview with the Anadolu Agency.

A recent research by Kizilay [Turkish Red Crescent] found that 69% of refugee households registered job losses due to COVID-19.

Following the publication this July of a UN report prepared by the Atlantic Council entitled Turkey's Refugee Resilience, Tomasi stressed that problems that have already made refugee lives difficult have been compounded by the pandemic and referred to the suggestions made in the report on inclusive recovery (Hamit, 2020).

As per the Presidential Decree of April 13, 2020, released as part of the outbreak measure, any individual approaching the hospital with a suspected case of COVID-19, irrespective of their health coverage under the social security system, shall be granted free access to personal protective equipment, diagnostic tests and medical care.

Indeed, the list of forms of the exploitation of Syrians refugees in Turkey is very long, with types not found in other countries, as they are the refugees are used as political tool in the intern political conflicts between the political parties and the Turkish government, and also as a pressure tool from Turkey on European's countries. Moreover, they are also used t as part of the armed activities by Turkey in international armed conflict, As respondent number 3 emphasized:

> *"In recent years, new forms of exploitation of Syrians have emerged in Turkey: the Turkish government is using Syrian refugees in its local and international disputes; Turkey is using them as a tool of exerting pressure on its opponents, and the countries of European Union by opening its borders to Syrian refugees in the direction of Europe, or even by pressing them toward it. Also, in Libya and Azerbaijan, Turkey utilizing them as mercenaries in the ongoing military operations there, using the basic needs of the Syrian people and promising them good salaries of up to 2000 per month by throwing them into these armed conflicts."* (Respondent number 3).

5.8 Summary

Turkey has the longest border with Syria, a large labour market and had in periods a welcoming policy toward Syrian refugees. The country is also the gateway for refugees to enter European countries. , All these factors were drivers of Syrian migrations to Turkey. Turkey provided initially substantial opportunities and facilities for Syrian refugees to work and live, as well as to benefit from governmental institutions and services as Turkish citizens by providing a protection situation. However, due to the large number of Syrian refugees who arrived in Turkey

and their effect on the country's economic, social, and security situation, the Turkish government decided to close the border to Syrian refugees and tighten restrictions on Syrians' mobility within Turkey. All of this adds to the vulnerability of Syrians in Turkey, and the most difficult situation is within the camps. Syrian refugees are victims of forced labour by undocumented workers in harsh conditions and for low pay.

Syrian females face the same work market challenges as Syrian males, including financial exploitation and physical and sexual abuse. Syrian children in Turkey are victims of modern slavery in the form of child labour, begging jobs as well as hard and hazardous labour in farms and factories. Syrian girls in Turkey are victims of child and early marriage due to their families' vulnerable circumstances, cultural norms in both Turkish and Syrian communities, and the lack of a role for the Turkish government, international community, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in monitoring, protecting, and preventing this phenomenon, especially within refugee camps. Syria's women are subjected to sexual abuse, prostitution, and forced marriage. Syrian women in vulnerable situations are more likely to embrace exploitation and abuse as a "survivor strategy" to help themselves and their families. This large number of refugees in Turkey are in a daily vulnerable situation that requires an urgent interface from the global community.

Try to add a paragraph that clarifies which theories you used in this chapter and how they helped you in your analysis. Use more often references to the theories while you discuss quotation of your informants. Do this also in other analytical chapters.

CHAPTER SIX

6. Syrian Refugees’ Vulnerability in Jordan

6.1 Introduction

Jordan has officially registered over 664,603 Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2021b), however, the estimates of unregistered refugees are over 1.3 million, accounting for nearly 15% of the country’s total population (see Figure 8). The largest influx to Jordan occurred in 2012 and 2013, when approximately half of the total present Syrian refugees arrived. According to a study published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace –a global network of policy research centers, Jordan had welcomed more than 2,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2011 due to ongoing social and political unrest in Syria. The vast majority of Syrian refugees (81%) live in cities across the country (ACAPS, 2021). The remaining people are settled in three major camps across Jordan: Zaatari (12%), Azraq (6%), and the Emirati Jordanian camp (1%) (UNHCR, 2021a).

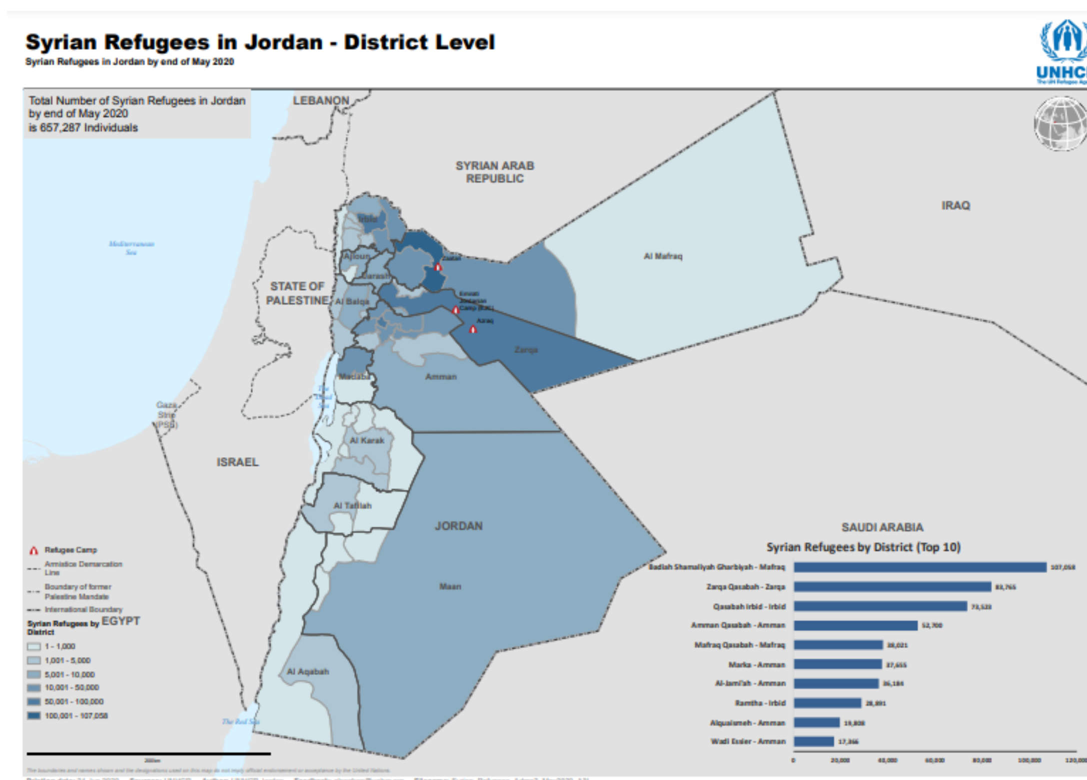

Figure 8: Syrian refugees in Jordan - District level (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/77390.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

6.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions

Many of these refugees came to Jordan with the expectation of returning home eventually. Respondent number 6, a Syrian male from Dara, working as a mechanic in Syria and living in Jordan since 2012, said that: "Jordan used to receive Syrians with passports routinely, and the Jordanian authorities and citizens welcomed them." Respondent number 6.

In the years that followed, however, the number of Syrians who came to Jordan increased significantly. Most of them remained in Jordan (Francis, 2015). Respondent number 7, a Syrian mother of 3 kids from Dara, who worked as a teacher in Syria, and currently also working as a teacher for Syrian children in Jordan, commented:

> *"I was in my ninth month of pregnancy, and as the fighting and siege on Daraa, where I was staying with my family, escalated. It became more difficult to access hospitals, therefore, we chose to migrate to a safer location where I will be able to find a hospital or health care on the date of delivery. Moreover, Daraa is close to the Jordanian border with a safer than to other Syrian towns, such as Damascus or Quneitra."* (Respondent number 7).

Jordan closed its border with Syria in 2015, and only a limited number of Syrians have entered since then (Tyldum, 2019). According to a study presented by the Jordanian Forum of INGOs, the number of Syrian refugees has stayed constant since three years as a result of Jordan's increased entry restrictions (Forum, 2018).

Respondent number 6 stated:

> *"A Syrian refugee in Jordan is not allowed to move out of the country and return. You lose the right to residency or return to country once you leave Jordan. Syrians feel to be in prison, from where they cannot escape. There is no other country who will accept them, and the situation in Syria is dangerous enough for us to return."* (Respondent number 6).

Even after its non-signatory status to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Jordan has not ratified any international convention or agreement on refugee policy, and hence does not take any responsibility. This gives the government more control on responding to refugee's influx (Francis, 2015). Jordan has historically received refugees. including nearly 2 million Palestinian refugees, 10,000 of which comes from Syria (UNRWA, 2021).

After the influx of refugees, Jordan has faced significant challenges to its development and socioeconomic growth, resulting in a 56% rise in the unemployment rate between 2012 and

2019, significant water and electricity shortages, as well as intensified pollution and energy consumption (Jordan, 2020). These demographic challenges have real-world implications, such as increased tensions between host communities and refugee population across the country, posing a long-term threat to social stability as well as well-being of refugees. However, refuges experience that they are used as scapegoats in the local public debates. For example, respondent number 7 stated:

> *"Jordan exaggerates the negative effects of the Syrians' involvement in order to secure further international assistance. This has influenced Jordanians' attitudes toward Syrians, resulting in an increase in hate speech and prejudice, as well as the abuse and vulnerability of Syrians."* (Respondent number 7).

And she also commented:

> *"However, if time were to return, I would not leave my house and would not travel to Jordan in particular, preferring to stay in my fate of bombardment and death over the insults, abuse, and exploitation I experienced in Jordan by everyone from governmental institutions, humanitarian workers and Jordanians themselves."* (Respondent number 7).

Increased pressure on infrastructure has resulted in increased restrictions on refugees entering the country over the years. For example, the suspension of Asylum Seeker Certificates (ASCs) issued by UNHCR to refugees seeking asylum, which are required for accessing UNHCR services (Achilli, 2015), the suspension of the Ministry of Interior service card, which allows refugees living in Jordan to access legal jobs, schooling, the right to live outside of refugee camps and travel freely across Jordan (Diana Rayes, 2020). According to respondent number 6:

> *"By law, one has complete freedom of movement within Jordan by having residency permit, with the exception of entering Aqaba close to Israel. However, in reality, you are limited due to fear of harassment and verbal and physical attacks."* (Respondent number 7).

Further modifications, such as the 2015 suspension of the "bailout" process, which enabled registered Syrian refugees to seek to left the camps for urban areas across Jordan, continue to enforce other changes on especially vulnerable refugee populations living in camp settings within Jordan (Ibid).

In 2017, Human Rights Watch estimated that Jordanian officials deported approximately 400 registered Syrian refugees each month (Watch, 2017). More recent, In August 2020, 16 Syrian refugees, including children, were forcibly transferred from Azraq camp to Rukban camp after

being arbitrarily arrested (Amnesty, 2020b). Nearly 10,000 people live in Rukban, an informal camp located between the Syrian and Jordanian borders (Amnesty, 2020a). At its height, the camp housed approximately 60,000 people, many of whom relocated to government-controlled areas due to a shortage of food and livelihoods, as well as Jordan's suspension of aid provision in 2016 (Sennett, 2020). Jordan has received substantial assistance from humanitarian organizations and neighbouring host countries in order to respond to the Syrian Regional Crisis situation, which refers to the larger humanitarian initiative assisting Syrian refugees throughout the country. Respondent number 8 commented:

> *"Prostitution, as well as other negative Jordanian trends like begging, extortion, and rising food and housing prices, have become linked to Syrian refugees. However, this is not the reality. Jordan is dealing with its own internal problems at the detriment of Syrians."* (Respondent number 8).

Donors prefer Jordan because of its relative stability in contrast to other countries in the region, as well as its constructive relationships with regional and foreign stakeholders. Jordan earned over 2.2 billion dollars in aid for the Syrian Regional Response initiative last year. Jordan's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation also published a detailed Jordan Response Plan (JRP) for the Syrian Crisis (2020-22), detailing its strategy to resolve the refugee crisis in the coming years and suggesting a renewed commitment to responding to the Syrian refugee crisis. The JRP does not explicitly discuss return to Syria but does state that it will endorse "voluntary returns in safety and dignity" (Jordan, 2020).

The population of Syrian refugees in Jordan is relatively young, with 48% under the age of 15. 1 out of 5 Syrian refugee children living in Jordan was born in the country. Prior to the war, Syria and Jordan had strong relations marked by extensive trade, Syrian workers in Jordanian agriculture, and intermarriages in border regions. However, only 2% of all Syrian refugees currently residing in Jordan report having lived there prior to the war (Tyldum, 2019). In Jordan, Syrian refugees are primarily from the neighbouring town of Dara'a. Even if the people of Daraa make up only 5% of the people of Syria before the war, 48% of all the Syrian refugees in Jordan are refugees from Daraa'a (Ibid). While the majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan settle in host communities, the country now hosts the world's second-largest refugee camp, Zaatari. The camp, which is less than 10 miles from the Syrian border, first opened in 2012 and has since developed to become Jordan's fourth-largest "city". Approximately 77,000 Syrian refugees currently reside there in rows of prefabricated shelters run by international relief

organizations (WFPUSA, 2020). According to a 2013 study by Mackenzie on the coping strategies of Syrian refugees in Jordan, those staying in the Al-Zaatari Camp face significant challenges. Syrian refugees reported low water supply, inadequate food, poor sanitation, insufficient educational and health facilities, the spread of infectious diseases (such as tuberculosis and measles), financial difficulties, and a lack of protection (Mackenzie, 2013). The only legal way for refugees to leave the camp is to find a Jordanian citizen to sponsor them. Several refugees, however, pay up to $500 to live outside of the camps through a middleman (Crisp et al., 2013).

All registered Syrian refugees in Jordan receive monthly cash or food voucher from the United Nations World Food Program, which they can use to buy food at any of the UN's partner shops around the region. Fresh bread is also provided to families in refugee camps by the UN. Nearly 500,000 refugees in Jordan are receiving food aid from the United Nations World Food Program (ibid).

6.3 Forced labour

Legal insecurity, lack of mobility, closed employment and quotas, and negative perceptions are all issues that refugees face in Jordan. The challenges to accessing economic opportunities do exist in Jordan, however, it is relatively easier by access to language and residency permits compared to other countries (i.e., Turkey and Egypt). Jordan has given over 150,000 work permits to refugees as of 2020 (similar to over 132,000 work permits issued by Turkey) (UNHCR, 2020). These are, however, restricted to low-wage jobs in construction, agriculture, and service industries (Edwards, 2019). According to Jordan's 2019 Vulnerability Assessment Framework, approximately 40% of Syrians interviewed have debts of more than 100 Jordanian dinars (over $140), and 76% of household spend lesser than the minimum to meet basic needs.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 34,000 Syrian refugees have fled to Syria from Jordan since October 2018, mostly due to a shortage of economic opportunities and a "dead-end job market" (Ibid). Despite concerns about personal protection and allegations of detention and interrogation, Syrian refugees could be enticed to return to Syria due to the increasingly difficult circumstances in their host countries (Loveluck, 2019). Male unemployment has fallen dramatically from 57% in 2014 to 23% today and is now almost identical to the national average. Despite the fact that unemployment is two times higher for Syrian refugee women, it has decreased by 50% since 2014. It should be noted that some of the jobs held by Syrian refugees are "artificial," in the sense that they are not provided by the

economy, but rather by donor money and relief by so-called "cash-for-work" programs run by non-governmental organizations. Within the camps, such positions are more readily available than outside. During the previous year, 44% of all Syrian camp refugees worked on a cash-for-work program, compared to just 12% outside camps. Furthermore, women (34%) were more likely than men (19%) to work for cash in the previous 12 months (Tyldum, 2019). Although the number of Syrian refugees working in Jordan is no longer substantially different from that of the host population, but their wages are usually lower as respondent number 7 conveyed:

> *"I worked for 190 dinars per month in a school without a contract, without any rights, guarantees, or holidays. I have to pay for my own transportation, which costs 90 dinars per month. On the other hand, my Jordanian colleagues receive 280 dinars per month with job contracts and rights, and the school pays for their transportation."* (Respondent number 7).

Syrian refugees were not granted access to formal employment in all sectors when they first arrived in Jordan. The Jordanian government has gradually given work permits to Syrians in a few industries, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and construction, where 8%, 20%, and 23% Syrians are working, respectively. Other significant industries include wholesale, distribution, and auto repair (19%), as well as lodging and food services (9%) (ibid). Syrians are barred from all technical positions, including taxi driving. While one-third of all working people have a work permit, very few have work contracts, and most jobs are unstructured. Work is always intermittent, with just one-third of respondents working continuously and one-third working for less than six months in the previous year. Respondent number 6 commented:

> *"To work legally in Jordan, you must have a work permit, which costs 600 dinars, and most Syrians cannot pay this amount. Even employers do not want to pay and hence Syrians' work remains unregistered and vulnerable, and they continue to exploit Syrian workers through injustice in salaries between the Syrian and Jordanian workers and the inequality in working conditions."* (Respondent number 6).

The average monthly salary for full-time workers — described as those who work at least 35 hours per week — is 250 dinars (USD 352). Non-pay benefits are common, with only 1% having access to a pension plan and 5% having access to paid sick leave. Furthermore, many refugees claim to have been duped by their employers; 16% have not been paid for their work. Syrian refugees often complain about being denied the right to own and drive a vehicle. This

limits their ability to start and operate their own business, and commuting to work (and school) is difficult, in such a country with a weak public transportation system (Tyldum, 2019).

6.4 Child labour

There are many reasons for the incidence of child labour exploitation in Jordan, including children's lack of access to education, cultural norms in some situations, and some Jordanian employers' "desire" to hire children for cheap labour (Azzeh, 2015). Syrian refugees in Jordan have significantly lower educational attainment than the pre-war Syrian population. And most of all, they are less likely to have completed higher education, with just half as many as the pre-war Syrian average and a quarter as many as the host population. Enrolment rates for refugee children aged 6 to 11 are nearly 100%, however, children begin to drop out of school at the age of 12, and only four out of ten children remain in school by the age of 15-16. Nonetheless, the situation had increased slightly since 2014, when just 22% of 15-year-olds were enrolled in primary education (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). Since 2014, enrollment in secondary and higher education has increased slightly. Despite this, only 25% of Syrian refugees between the ages of 18 and 22 attend postsecondary school, contrary to 24-46% of Jordanians in the same age group. Although the majority of Syrians' primary education is provided by the government (95%), Syrian refugees can only attend private universities, and scholarship programs are rare.

For Syrian refugees in Jordan, affordability is thus a significant barrier to higher education. Jordan reintroduced two-shift schools with the arrival of Syrian refugees, with girls attending the morning shift and boys attending the afternoon shift. Both girls and boys in the camps attend such a scheme, while seven out of ten children outside the camps attend two-shift schools. Shorter school days are one of the effects of two-shift classes. This may be one of the reasons why one out of every ten Syrian refugee children enrolled in basic education has been repeated through at least one year of study. The introduction of two shift educational system had a negative effect on Jordanian children's educational efficiency (Tyldum, 2019). Respondent number 7 commented:

> *"They initially accepted our children into Jordanian public schools, but as the number of Syrian refugees increased, the United Nations Organization established a school for Syrians."* (Respondent number 7).

Usually, children join the workforce to support their family's meager income (Azzeh, 2015). Syrian refugee children have been seen working in cafes, selling drinks or flowers on the street, and doing manual labour both within and outside of refugee camps (IOM, 2014). The service

industry hires the refugee children mainly in the age group of 5 to 18, who are forced to work because of their families' negative conditions. Despite the fact that the legal working age in Jordan is 16, many of these children have jobs that are prohibited for minors.

Child labour hires more boys than girls, but refugee girls are put in more dangerous jobs (Aid, 2015). There have also been cases of children being forced to beg (McCormack, Larsen, & Husn, 2015). Young girls and women are often recruited for work in Jordan under the illusion of working in a restaurant or nightclub, but they are often abused (Buchan, 2016). Children have been subjected to forced labour on a large scale. According to one study, children are often the "family's sole breadwinner" (Lee Harper, 2013). In other words, Syrian refugees are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking in Jordan. Syrian boys, in particular, often operate in Jordan's economy illegally and informally, placing them at risk of human trafficking. NGOs have noticed a rise in child labour, including possible forced child labour, among Syrian children working alongside their families in the agricultural and service industries, and also peddling products and begging. Children employed in Jordan's agricultural sector may be open to exploitation due to the country's lack of regulation (Idris, 2019). Respondent number 6 reported:

> *"Due to poverty, especially among Syrian families in the camps, and the lack of help provided by international organizations, many families in Jordan have been forced to send their children to work in factories and farms, and working as beggers. As a result, they are at risk of verbal and physical assault, as well as sexual harassment."* (Respondent number 6).

When asking about the differences in behaviors for Syrian and Jordanian children, the NGO representative claimed, "The Jordanians are more concerned about the issue. In Syria, it seems like it is too normal to have child labour." The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) representative acknowledged that Syrian families need additional income due to the deteriorating economic conditions in urban host communities, but clarified that, from his viewpoint:

> *"The first thing is their culture…the culture of Syrian families is different from Jordanian customs - their culture is that every child has to train on any job or in crafts but our kids (Jordanian kids), they have to complete their studies. There are no Jordanian families here that do that – just the poor people that allow their kids to work without completing their studies"*. The MSD representative. (Karim, 2018).

When asked what steps should be taken to reduce the high prevalence of child labour, the Tamkeen representative addressed the challenges raised by inherent cultural values in Syrian refugee communities, saying:

> *"It is their culture and really hard to change the whole perspective. This was the situation in Syria and continued after moving to Jordan. The problem is the family's perspective as they see it to be normal thing for them"* (Karim, 2018).

6.5 Child, forced and early marriage

Forced marriage is a significant trend in the trafficking of Syrian refugees in Jordan. Several studies suggest that the Zaatari refugee camp is a hotbed for modern slavery. According to reports from 2013 and 2014, there is a "marriage mafia" in the camp, where men join and buy girls to marry under the guise of providing for them (Harper, 2014). According to Syrian refugees and local aid workers, there is an organized trade for young girls in Jordan. They prey on refugee families who are struggling to make ends meet and live in rented houses. According to local reports, the rate for a bride is between 2,000 and 10,000 Jordanian dinars ($2,800/£1,635 to $14,000/£8,180), with additional 1,000 ($1,400/£818) for broker (Yıldız, 2017). Even though it was also popular in Syria, the number of girls married under the age of 18 has risen in the camp in recent years, according to a study published by Jordan's Higher Population Council (Hikmat, 2017). According to respondent number 8, a Syrian female form Damascus, she was a university student in Syria and now she is a wife a Jordanian man:

> *"Child marriage is more common in the camps, and it is exacerbated by the family's poverty, difficult living conditions, and everyday needs, as well as the family's cultural and social background. However, we must not forget the role of exploiters who come to the camps, which are a giant prison for Syrians and offer to change the family's circumstances in return for marrying their young daughters. Therefore, although seen as a helping hands and getting them out of the camp, they exploit the circumstances of Syrian refugees."* (Respondent number 8).

The same survey has reported that in Zaatari, 73.3% of women between the ages of 15 and 18 are married. Additionally, the percentage of married teenage girls who have spent over a year in Zaatari is notably larger than the number of married teenage girls who have spent six months or less in Zaatari (Ibid).

> *"The reasons for the marriage of female Syrian refugees in the camp are security in the absence of educational opportunities, family insecurity, lack of parents, the desire of parents, residence with relatives or brothers [and] acquiring a better standard of living"* according to the same report (Ibid).

Furthermore, "customs and traditions [also] promote their marriage before they reach the age of 18," according to refugee girls (Velasco Regulez, 2019). "In 2014, 15% of all Syrian marriages in Jordan included a child bride, but now the figure has risen to 36%," according to figures released by Al Jazeera (Aljazeera, 2018). This trend has become widespread due to the low cost of purchasing girls and obtaining a "permanent marriage." In reality, a girl can be purchased for $100-$200 in Amman, Arid, Ramtha, or Karak. Jordanian religious clerks and Sheiks have documented such marriages being complicit in human trafficking (Jones, 2017). There have also been several accounts of young girls marrying unauthorized Sheikhs in unregistered marriages. They are required to sign contracts that strip them for much of their civil rights, leaving them vulnerable to coercion by their new husbands (Rubin, 2013). Jordan's minimum marriage age has been increased to 18, but the law currently states that "a judge may permit girls and boys as young as 15 to marry if it is deemed to be in their interest (Musawah, 2017)." Men search the homes of Syrian refugee girls in Mafraq, and they even employ matchmakers to do so (Harper, 2014). My informants also commented these problems. For example, respondent number 7 stated:

> *"Syrian men are exploited in Jordan's labour market, but Syrian women are oppressed and exploited everywhere, including the workplace, the street, and within their homes, especially if a woman is alone and without a man or family to protect and provide for her."* (Respondent number 7).

It is important to note that Syrian girls are not necessarily 'forced' to marry. Early marriage has become "an economic coping mechanism by Syrian refugee families," according to a 2013 study (IOM, 2014). However, when cases involving family members are reviewed further, the distinction between forcefully and willingly blurs. Many Syrian refugee families have been known to marry off their daughters to Jordanian relatives and friends out of concern for the refugee camp's deplorable conditions. These are known as "cover marriages," in which refugees marry their young daughters off to the first man who asks in order to "cover" their honor (Zarzar, 2012). A 12-year-old Syrian refugee girl married a 70-year-old Jordanian man in one particularly shocking situation (Ibid). However, despite the dire circumstances, not all Syrian

refugee families are able to do so, according to interviews conducted in 2013. In fact, many parents expressed their desire to shield their daughters from the abuse and violence associated with cover marriages (Margolis, 2013).

The case of a Syrian girl who was coerced into marriage nearly twenty times is particularly troubling (Hasnah, 2016). This was an exceptional case in terms of the number of times this girl was abused, but not at all unusual in terms of the sort of exploitation she was involved in. According to reports, this case was labeled as human trafficking because the parents were looking for financial benefit from the marriages (Ibid). Forcing Syrian refugees in Jordan to marry is obviously a common form of exploitation. So, why is this such a common occurrence? Most of the time, it is to fulfill the economic needs. Many Jordanian men searching for a wife took advantage of desperate Syrian refugees as the situation in Syria worsened. Marriage to a Syrian girl is significantly less expensive than marriage to a Jordanian girl.

In October 2015, a media organization conducted an independent study with 51 married refugee couples in northern Jordan discovered that nearly half of the couples had not officially registered their marriage in either Syria or Jordan (Franck, 2017). One of the critical reasons for unregistered marriages among Syrians is the burdensome and unmet legal criteria for marriage in Jordan, such as the minimum legal age (Ibid). Such a lack of official tracking complicates the Jordanian authorities' who are already facing difficulties during this critical humanitarian crisis. As marriages are not registered, Syrian women risk losing their legal rights in the event of divorce. Moreover, there is no way to affix kinship to children under Jordanian law, and therefore children of these marriages are assumed to be born out of wedlock, according to Jordanian law (Ibid).

6.6 Sexual Exploitation

Early forced marriages, sex trafficking to prostitution, and being second/clandestine wives to local men in the host community are all life-changing events for Syrian women (Sami et al., 2014).

Syrian refugee women and girls have been sold into forced marriages, according to reports. Moreover, Some Syrian and Jordanian girls are forced to leave compulsory school to work in their families' homes as domestic servants; some of these girls are vulnerable to exploitation. Fergal Keane from Jordan reported for BBC that, "the conflict in Syria is brutal within its borders but once outside, those that flee often find they have no way of earning a living" (KEANE, 2016). And he said, "Syrian women, often without a male guardian or breadwinner,

struggle to make ends meet, and some are forced to take desperate measures such as forced marriage or prostitution" (Ibid). Furthermore. He stated, "The Jordanian government said it would help anybody affected by exploitation and urged people with knowledge of abuse to report it to the authorities" (Ibid). Respondent number 7 commented:

> *"Being a female without a husband puts me in greater danger because I am more vulnerable to abuse from men (you are a Syrian woman, you are available) and also from Jordanian women, who claim that Syrians steal their husbands. Even if I am a man, I will be vulnerable due to tribalism, regionalism, and lawlessness."* (Respondent number 7).

Not only Syrian women, but also Lebanese, North African, and Eastern European women who migrated to work in restaurants and nightclubs may be forced into prostitution. This can even happen to Jordanian or Egyptian women by their Jordanian husbands, according to a 2016 study by an NGO. After fleeing their jobs, some domestic workers from Indonesia, Philippine, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka have reportedly been forced into prostitution (Idris, 2019). Due to stigmatization and fear of retribution by families and community members, humanitarian organizations have discovered that sexual assault cases are substantially under-reported. Due to a pervasive culture of shame, women, children, teenagers, and men who have been victims of sexual harassment face significant barriers in finding help. A respondent number 7 commented:

> *"Prostitution is not acceptable in Syrian or Jordanian society, and it is illegal. As a result, working in this profession is regarded as a shame. It may result in the death of the female by her family under the guise of defending honour. Alternatively, Jordanian authorities can detain and imprison you. Syrian women who work in prostitution are voiceless victims who work in an open environment where exploitation and violence are widespread."* (Respondent number 7).

The Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Sub Working Group recorded 8.4% of all GBV cases in Jordan as sexual harassment. While the majority of survivors of sexual abuse said they were assaulted in Jordan (56.6%), a large number also said they were assaulted in Iraq (20%), Syria (16%), and other nations. The long duration of the migration is exacerbated by limitations on refugees' entry to the formal labour market. Furthermore, since female heads of households have fewer access to job opportunities than male heads of households, they are more likely to be harassed and exploited by individuals in positions of authority or power (UNHCR, 2015) or

by those providing humanitarian aid, potentially leading to survival sex. Respondent number 7 stated:

> *"Women are harassed by their colleagues or by their bosses. However, they are forced to make sacrifices in order to keep their jobs. The main reason for this is that many Syrian women are single mothers as a result of the war, they are responsible to secure the costs of daily life for themselves, their families, and their children."* (Respondent number 7).

6.7 COVID-19

Throughout 630,000 cases of COVID-19 were registered in Jordan (Jordan, 2021), In February 2021, the regular number of COVID-19 cases in Jordan began to increase again, but cases among refugees in camps did not follow suit and stayed well below the national average, with just 2% of the refugee population in camps testing positive compared to 4.6 percent of Jordan's total population. As of March 16, there were 2,482 (COVID-19) cases in refugee camps, with 92 active cases (76 in Zaatari, 8 in Azraq, 7 in EJC, and 1 in KAP), 2,370 recovered (95.5%), and 20 refugees having died. UNHCR is aware of 183 refugees in urban areas who have tested positive for COVID-19(UNHCR, 2021). the Jordanian government continues to impose increasingly stringent measures to stop the virus's spread, often at the risk of the most vulnerable. The arrival of COVID-19 has exacerbated conditions in Jordan that had previously imposed severe constraints on the Syrian refugee community. The Jordanian government-imposed temporary restrictions on refugee camps throughout the country in March 2020, restricting movement in and out of the camps. As a result, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of Syrian refugees, especially those living outside of camps, who spend more than two-thirds of their monthly household finances on shelter (Siegfried, 2020). In Jordan, nearly six out of ten Syrian refugees of working age are unemployed, and the country's stringent COVID-19 rules have made it even more difficult for them to find jobs or earn a living. There are growing fears that further deportations from Jordan to Rukban could occur, raising the possibility that COVID-19 could enter the camp, where bad conditions and a lack of access to healthcare may be disastrous for the communities living there (Rogin, 2020).

The prevalence of chronic health loss is higher in the Syrian refugee community than in the host population, as predicted. Twenty percent of those who crossed the border from Syria into Jordan after March 15, 2011, have a long-term health condition that can be traced back to the war or flight (Tyldum, 2019). Nearly 80% of refugees with chronic health issues need medical follow-up, which one-fifth of them do not obtain (Ibid). For chronic illnesses as well as an acute

disease, refugees turn to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as public and private service providers. In the camps and in the country's north, the NGO sector is the main provider of health services. Private doctors see a higher proportion of Syrian refugee patients in Amman, but public hospitals are the most significant provider of healthcare services overall, treating 40% of the acutely ill (Ibid). As of March 16, over 1,000 refugees had received at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as part of Jordan's ongoing COVID-19 vaccination program. Although refugees were being vaccinated at local health clinics in their governorates, in-camp vaccination centers opened in Zaatari and Azraq on February 15 and March 15, respectively, and have been receiving refugees who have received an appointment via the government registration website since then. The portal has been updated to enable refugees to register using the numbers on their UNHCR asylum certificates (UNHCR, 2021).

6.8 Summary

In this chapter, I explored how Jordan's open border and welcoming policy toward Syrian refugees, as well as the geographic location of Syrian cities such as Damascus, Dara, Al-Qunitera, and Rif-Dimashq, which host battles between the Syrian governmental army and rebel armed groups, lead Syrians to choose Jordan as a refugee destination. I found that Syrian refugees in Jordan may become victims of modern slavery, with the majority vulnerable to forced labour, insecurity, lack of mobility, and poor working conditions. I found that both men and women may be victims of the insecure condition in the workplace. Syrian children are victims of child labour, child marriage, and early marriage as a result of their parents' vulnerable situation, and the riskiest conditions are in the refugee camp, where there is a lot of social control, poverty, and because of the isolating from Jordanian governmental authorities. Women in Jordan may become victims of modern slavery in the workplaces, community (both within and outside of refugee camps), and within their families, as a result of forced marriage, verbal and physical abuses, and sexual exploitation. Because of a lack of social and economic supports, as well as a lack of hope for a quick resolution to the crisis, a large number of refugees have arrived in Jordan. Previous studies and my informats' stories suggest that Syrian refugees in Jordan need substantial and immediate assistance from the international community to alleviate the daily suffering of Syrians in Jordan, especially those living in refugee camps.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. Syrian Refugees' Vulnerability in Lebanon:

7.1 Introduction

Lebanon's government reported that 1.5 million Syrian refugees were being sheltered there as of 2020. As a result, Lebanon has been one of the most affected countries since the Syrian Crisis began in 2011. More than 1,200 Syrian refugees are already being sheltered in Lebanon.

7.2 Migration drivers and mobility restrictions

At the beginning of the Syrian conflict, Lebanon decided to respond by opening the border, 394 km of which was totally opened. Syrians entered Lebanon through legal or illegal gates and bathes (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016) Respondent number 1, Syrian male from Rif-Dimashq, a governmental employee living in Lebanon (since 2012) described his motivation to choose Lebanon as a destination for his refugee trip:

> *"I was forced to flee Syria with my family because of war and military operations between armed groups and the Syrian army in my city, which is located west of Damascus and close to the Lebanese and Israeli borders I wanted to find a place where my family will be safe and I could work and support my family. Lebanon was the only destination since Israel did not receive Syrian refugees*". Respondent number 1

Respondent number 2, a Syrian female from Aleppo who worked as a hairdresser, was a refugee in Lebanon (2011-2018), and now living in Norway, commented:

> *"Lebanon's borders were open to Syrians legally through official crossings for individuals with personal documents who did not need a sponsor or a visa, which was later enforced on Syrians wishing to enter and stay in Lebanon after 2014. Those lacking documents crossed borders illegally and settled in areas along Lebanon Syrian border, where the camps were eventually established for the people unable to work or move freely within Lebanon".* Respondent number 2.

According to the most recent UNHCR estimates, Beqaa and northern Lebanon host the "largest number of refugees", with 361,104 in Beqaa and 252,369 in the northern Lebanon, respectively. In the meantime, 280,170 of them are located in the region of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, while

117,723 live in the South (see Figure 9) (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). Respondent number 2, who she was living in a camp, she noted:

> *"The Syrian inhabitants of the camps in Lebanon are people who do not have the ability to continue to live in the cities due to the difficult economic conditions. Many of these families consist of a large number of individuals, thus increasing the economic pressures. In addition, it is difficult for them to obtain a residence permit due to their inability to pay the costs of this process. For example, a family of five people needs $ 1,500 in fees to obtain a residence permit in addition to a home rental contract and a sponsor."* Respondent number 2.

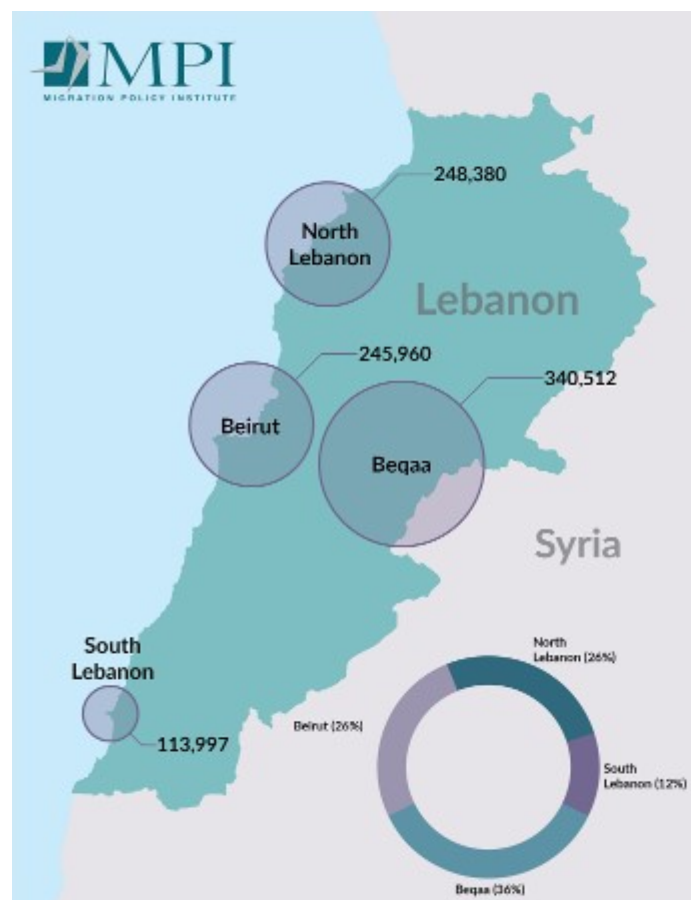

Figure 9: Registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon by location (https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/syrian-refugee-swell-push-lebanon-over-edge) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

According to the UNHCR assessment, 70% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon fall below the poverty line and depend on survival aid, while almost 90% are caught in a vicious cycle of debt. Respondent number 2 commented:

> *"The second category of camp residents are Syrians who have entered Lebanon legally and have a valid residency permit, but because of their difficult economic circumstances and their inability to defend the cost of living in towns, such as rent, food, power, water and telephone bills, etc., they are forced to move and live in the camps, as surviving in camps is cheaper. A tent, for example, can be rented up to $50 a year, while a house rent is up to $300 a month in cities."* Respondent number 2.

Lebanon, like many other Middle Eastern governments , has not ratified the "1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees" or its "1967 Protocol" (Watch, 2016). The key argument for Lebanon's prolonged reluctance to sign those conventions is the old but still ongoing "Palestinian problem" in the region (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). "We are not creating an alternate home," an official staffer stated. "Lebanon will not be the comfortable option". (S. R. Initiative, 2013). The Lebanese authorities treated the Syrians as displaced people instead of refugees as refugees have more rights than displaced people"(Zucconi, 2017). According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998):

> *IDP'S are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced to flee or leave, their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, and habitual violations of human rights, as well as natural or man-made disasters involving one or more of these elements, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border" (Representative of the Secretary-General, 1998).*

While Lebanon adopted Law "164 Punishment for the Crime of Trafficking in Persons" in 2011, several NGO and human rights activists have noted that the legislation does not completely comply with the 2000 UN Palermo Protocol. Furthermore, U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons placed the country in "Tier 2" in 2017 (inst, 2017). While 17 convictions were reported last year, despite sufficient evidence of forced labour, the Lebanese government did not prosecute or punish anyone for trafficking crimes. In addition, the Government has continued to neglect victim care programs or a structured mechanism to ensure that victims are not prosecuted (Affairs, 2008). In particular, victims of trafficking who do not have residency papers are sent to the General Protection for "prosecution for breach of immigration law". This states that victims of trafficking may be prosecuted and detained for crimes connected with being trafficked; the legal responsibility in court is on victims to show by testimony that they are victims of trafficking, rather than on the suspected suspect to prove that he/she is not guilty (Human Rights and Gender Justice (HRGJ) Clinic,

2016). In the following section, the focus will be on the regulation and policies which impacted the situation of Syrian refugees' vulnerability in Lebanon.

7.2.1 Security attitudes

The Ministry of the Interior and local municipalities initiated and authorized the submission of the "Policy Paper on the Displacement of Syrian Refugees" in October 2013. This paper sets out three explicit aims for Syria's "displacement" in Lebanon (CLDH, 2016):

1. Decreasing the number of Syrian refugees in the country by restricting entry to the area and pushing Syrian nationals to return home.
2. Increasing control over the Syrian community in Lebanon, providing greater resources to municipal police, and mandating towns to do daily statistical surveys to ensure protection.
3. Reducing the pressure on "its economy, infrastructure and security," but also restricting the informal structure of jobs (Younes, 2016).

The head office of the Syrian National Socialist Party in Tripoli reported that,

> *"in Tripoli, there are 10,000 refugees, 3,000 to 4,000 of whom are exploited by Islamist organizations to cause trouble in the region and to come together as major Islamic political forces. these forces have come from calm regions such as Tall Kalakh and Hama to create troubles, they are armed, and sometimes they members of secret services. They are charged with crimes, flee justice and in few cases they move to Lebanon as poor refugees. Those refugees are marginalised in Tripoli, but those who work for the secret services obtain aid from the political parties and the Islamist forces present in the area"* (Naufal, 2012).

When the official stance on the Syrian Crisis was brought up during a meeting with the newly appointed State Minister for Refugee Affairs in March 2017, the governing body stated unequivocally that Lebanon's primary objective in relation to the situation of Syrian refugees was to "ensure national security". As the Lebanese population and the country's sovereignty are considered to be at risk due to the presence of refugees, the goal of the new administration, formed in December 2016, will be the counterterrorism and to enact a series of new steps intended to stop the radicalisation phenomenon (Zucconi, 2017). Systematically, the authorities dealt with Syrian refugees, calling them temporary travellers and tourists. Since its implementation, to make sure that the Syrians back to their country or go on to other destinations, the policy has imposed "category-based restrictions" on entrance and travel within Lebanon. Although different ministries have different perceptions of the scheme, the secret motive appears to be to increase the suffering of refugees and facilitate their departure from the

country (ALEF, 2016). The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), the General Security Office (GSO), Internal Security Forces (ISF) and other security forces, along with political groups and parties, both operate at checkpoints to restrict movement in some areas and to verify the legal status of Syrian refugees passing through (Watch, 2016). Fear of arrest or incarceration prevent Syrian refugees who have lost or never had legal status to roam throughout the country and Respondent number 2 commented:

> *"By implementing strict rules to enter Lebanon and the requirements for getting a residence, Syrians would be required to pay a residence fee of $200-300 dollars, as well as having a house lease agreement. The most challenging requirement is to have a Lebanese sponsor. Many Syrians lack the financial resources to pay these fees, and as a result, they are breaking the terms of their residency in Lebanon."* (Respondent number 2).

Men are subject to arrest and problems at checkpoints considerably more than women, As a result, it is not uncommon for men to stay at home while women and children move around to work or complete the necessary tasks to assist their escape from the country (Janmyr, 2016). As Nizar Saghieh proposes in her study, the Lebanese authorities have pursued a strategy that can rightly be called "manufacturing vulnerability". The purpose of this strategy, which aims to "minimize the number of refugees", is to deprive different groups of their fundamental rights in order to deny their existence and promote their exploitation (Saghieh, 2015).

Based on security concerns, the municipal police repressed Syrian refugees while local authorities enforced curfews and limited movement. As Human Rights Watch and the Norwegian Refugee Council have pointed out, "he implementation of forced curfews by the municipalities violates not only human rights but also Lebanese domestic law" (HRW, 2014). Municipal law stipulates that the municipal police are responsible for "maintaining stability" in their respective jurisdictions with the assistance of the Internal Security Forces. However, the legislation does not properly describe the respective functions of the Ministry of the Interior and the Municipalities (MOIM). According to the Minister of the Interior, municipalities lack the legal right to implement "security measures" without the cooperation and consent of the MOIM, especially when these procedures violate the authority of the internal security forces (ISF) (Fleming-Farrell, 2013). Despite Lebanon officially adheres to the principle of "non-refoulement", it has been suggested that the country violates this principle by engaging in what is known as "legal deportation". This consists of issuing deportation orders and telling refugees that they must leave Lebanon immediately (Frangieh, 2015).

7.2.2 The protection space

Prime Minister Mikati resigned in March 2013, and a new government was established in February 2014. Not long after that, the new government closed 18 illegal border crossing points that had previously been accepted. Following this a significant decision was taken in May 2014, when the Lebanese Government agreed to collaborate with UN agencies such as UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN-OCHA, UNOPS, UN-RCO, UNRWA, URDA and several other local and international actors (S. R. Initiative, 2013) to assist Lebanon in coping with the refugee crisis and to stabilize the country during this difficult period. The goal of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP)concentrated on providing humanitarian aid to Syrian displaced persons as well as to the most vulnerable Lebanese and Palestinian communities, while expanding its plans to invest in Lebanon's programs, economies, and institutions. Respondent number 2 described about refugees and their reasons to live in camps:

> *"As a camp resident, there is a great chance to get foreign organisations' monthly food, material and cash help. There is a note that many of the inhabitants of the camp are Bedouins who do not prefer to live in towns and concrete houses and prefer to work on farms and grazing."* (Respondent number 2).

For many Syrian refugees, living in Lebanon is the most uncertain legal situation. And, they are denied the same rights as legal residents of Lebanon, including as admittance to public schools, the opening of a bank account and the acquisition of legal jobs. Obtaining civil papers, such as birth certificates, also necessitates a necessary legal identification, yet the majority of Syrian people in the country lack one (Amnesty, 2015). As Respondent number 2 said:

> *"Every Syrian who has entered Lebanon before 2017 shall have the right to register with the United Nations and to obtain a protection certificate shielding him from deportation. He/She shall be entitled to receive a monthly allowance of 20 dollars per month in the form of food from specific locations contracted with the United Nations."* (Respondent number 2).

Humanitarian requirements would only apply in serious humanitarian situations (Rreliefweb, 2015), which are essentially referred to as: unaccompanied or separated children with a parent who is already registered in Lebanon, people with disabilities who have a family who is already registered in Lebanon, people with acute healthcare issues who cannot receive treatment in Syria, and people to be placed in third countries (Ibid). According to Respondent number 2, the

Syrian refugees also experience many kinds of harassment and exploitations while reserving aid and help from the NGO's and their contractors:

> *"Syrians are subjected to exploitation and harassment in aid distribution centres, and Syrian women are subjected to harassment by the owners of such centres and shops, as well as by some staff and volunteers of foreign workers' organizations in Lebanon".* (Respondent number 2).

7.2.3 Kafala system

Starting in April 2015, Entry and stay in Lebanon are wholly reliant on the status of Kafala (sponsor). In all cases of "entry to work" and "entry not for work", the applicant must sign a commitment of duty at the General Security Office and pay a fee of $200 per person over the age of 15 for a 6-month residence permit for individuals and their families. If required, the Kafeel may apply for a work permit from the Ministry of Labour (Zucconi, 2017). Respondent number 2 reported:

> *"It is a real challenge to get a sponsor, which they forceing you to pay for their sponsorship an annual amount of around $500 to the Lebanese person in exchange for sponsorship in order for him to recognize your sponsorship with the authorities of Lebanon."* (Respondent number 2).

Syrian refugees already residing in the country and registered with the UNHCR before 5 January can renew their residence permit without the need to obtain a Lebanese kafeel. They are obligated to pay a fee of $200 per person over 15 years of age and to provide specified documents such as identification, previous entry cards, a declaration not to work, an accommodation commitment signed by the homeowner or leaseholder, a rental contract stamped by a Mukhtar declaring that the homeowner or leaseholder is the signatory to the housing pledge, a copy of the homeowner or leaseholder's identification document, three photographs, and three copies of the above documents. Those that have not registered with the UNHCR before 5 January 2015 will only be eligible to renew their residency if they find a Lebanese kafeel and pay a $200 annual renewal fee. Many Syrians have confirmed to a local NGO that they are often the Suffers of exploitation by their kafeels, who used to confiscate their ID papers, pledge to pay for their sponsoring, and ultimately refuse to do so, or change their minds without any explanation. In addition, the cost of the Sponsoring (kafala) is currently stated by the Syrian refugees interviewed: "in fact, the total cost for the renewal of the legal permit per person, including the $200 charges, the cost of the required documentation and the

sponsor, is between $600 and $1400" (CLDH, 2016). The legal connection between employer and employee in this Kafala or sponsorship scheme appears to be most comparable to that of parent and kid, or, alternately, master and slave or servant. (Kagan, 2011). The sponsorship system is coercive and raises the abuse of Syrian refugees due to their vulnerability and lack of legal options. Threatening or using pressured or other forms of exploitation, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving or receiving money or advantages in order to obtain the consent of a person who has control over another person, describes precisely the dynamic that has elapsed between sponsors and Syrian refugees.

As the NRC has recently stated, the General Security has carried out another discriminatory practice, informally known as the "hand-checking" practice. This consist of refusing to renew the documents to the Syrian citizens who are young enough to work. Clearly, it is not clear what "young enough" means, but Syrian refugees have indicated to the NRC that persons between the ranges of 15 and 35 are frequently refused to renew their documents. This refusal is based on the belief of the GS that these Syrians are young, strong and capable enough to work and thus do not have to renew their documents but should instead be supported by a sponsorship system. This activity explicitly breaches every international and national law and leaves Syrians at the hands of GS personnel. Refugees are a particularly vulnerable segment in social structure, and they are more likely to engage in illicit activity. "Syrians become ideal victims because they have been subjected to the war, had to leave their country" and are weakened because "they have hungry families and require money so their capture is easy" (Zucconi, 2017). Since there is nobody responsible for evaluating the relationship between the Syrian people and their sponsors, there is no oversight of these ties and transactions (Ibid).

7.2.4 Freedom of movement

As a result of the lack of legal residence permits, refugees are unable to live legally in Lebanon due to a lack of protection, restricted travel, and increased financial restrictions. More than 73 percent of the 1,256 refugees interviewed by the NRC in the most recent evaluation said that mobility was their largest hurdle to obtaining "legal status" (Zucconi, 2017). The landlords, the Shawish (the chief of the refugees inside the camps), and the Kafeel (sponsor) were the three main figures of "authority". In addition to mistreating and exploitation of Syrian refugees, these authorities pose a threat to their safety and security (Ibid).

7.5.5 Bond dept

Recently, The Freedom Fund released a report that indicated that approximately 80 percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon were indebted, with 40 percent owing more than $600. With increasing debt, the likelihood of exploitation and vulnerability increases (Fund, 2016).

> *"Depending on the criteria, registered families with UNHCR get around US$105 from UNHCR for five kids which is given to only 40% refugees. Each child gets a voucher for US$21 which is not even enough for renting a tent in a camp. They lack food and other needs of life, thus children are forced to do labour"* Lebanese NGO based in Bekaa (Ibid).

7.3 Forced labour

Syrian workers were typically working in the informal agricultural and industrial sectors, primarily in rural areas of the Beqaa Valley, Akkar and southern Lebanon. According to Lebanese economic analysts, the Syrian population was divided in 2001 into the following sectors: building (39 percent), farm labor (33 percent), utilities, comprising street sellers and taxi drivers (8 percent), municipal and sanitation work (20 percent), and manufacturing (2 percent)(Gambill, 2001). A work will act as a motivator for Syrian refugees to settle in their hosting countries following the conclusion of the war in Syria (Errighi & Griesse, 2016). Increasing irregularities and informal employment are a result of the abundance of "low-wage Syrian jobs", which puts downward pressure on pay and deteriorates working conditions. Indeed, this has a detrimental effect on Lebanon's host communities and refugees (ILO, 2014). Syrian refugees have relatively low educational levels, and competitive pressures focus on low-skilled sectors. The concentration of competition in this sector was intensified further by policies on the labour market that made it much more difficult for refugees to join higher-quality jobs (Errighi & Griesse, 2016). Nearly half of Lebanon's economy runs on an informal work. The Syrian refugee population in working-age easily ends up being hired informally, as informality is "an intrinsic part of low-level and labour-intensive sectors in Lebanon". Respondent number 1 commented:

> *"You need a work permit in order to work legally in Lebanon; otherwise, you are in breach of the law, and this is the situation of most Syrian workers in factories, restaurants, farms, and night clubs. Therefore, they work unlawfully and do not have a contract of employment that guarantees or safeguards their security from any sort of abuse and harassment" (Respondent number 1).*

The Labour Minister's memo about labour restrictions on Syrians, the restrections contributed to the irregular jobs for Syrians which has further affected working conditions and increased exploitation (Zucconi, 2017). Along with being restricted owing to a lack of freedom of movement, Syrians' employment options are confined to tasks deemed unsuitable for Lebanese, like sanitation, agricultural, building, and guarding jobs (Ibid). The majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon labor on an informal basis, with nine out of 10 working without a legal contract. One in every two refugee staff members in Lebanon has experienced severe weariness, back and joint problems, as well as exposure to extreme cold or heat. Almost two-thirds of Syrian migrants have reported occupational dust and fumes exposure (ILO, 2014). The political, economic and security pressures of Syrians in Lebanon have intensified, impairing major economic factors (Gambill, 2001), like corruption, banking, trade, tourism and unemployment. According to estimates from 2015 (Zucconi, 2017), one-third of young Lebanese workers were unable to find work due to a particularly robust informal sector that accounts for more than 56% of total employment. Thus, it is more difficult to get low-wage jobs, significantly affecting labour market conditions (Ibid). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has reported (Plotner, 2014) that: only roughly 2000 Syrians living in Lebanon have legal work authorization. , while 95% are working illegally, primarily in the agricultural (and construction) market (Zucconi, 2017). International Labour Organization interviews have revealed that forced labour is most often performed by Syrian refugees who are expected to labor for little or no money in exchange for shelter. For example, refugees are often forced to work in the surrounding farms owned by the landowners order to reside there. In addition, in exchange for living in a building, owners of apartments, garages and warehouses can require Syrian refugees to work for little or no pay (Fund, 2016). “The Shawish and the landlord will ask the whole family to work. The child gets paid US$3.33, woman US$5, man US$12-15” stated by a Syrian refugee woman living in the Beqaa Valley to The Freedom Fund (Fund, 2016).

These examples illustrate, in cases of trafficking, there are often many individuals that play a role; one individual may be the main perpetrator, and the other may simply be complicit. In addition, some act as the primary transporter, exploiter, or the recruiter. For instance, the 'Shawish' as a recruiter is the family giving permission to exploit their children, and the farmers or business owners hiring children to work are featured in the above case. This is important for the discussion of exploiter profiles, as these operations are so complex that there is probably not only one person involved as exploiter. This indicates that cases of exploitation occur over a period of time, involving multiple actors, which ultimately identify an unfortunate occurrence

as a human trafficking case (S. A. Jones, 2017). A Shawish who is commonly a Syrian refugee who serves as a mediator between landowners, refugees, NGOs and security services(Jagarnathsingh, 2016). He is also in charge of the tents, which are 6 by 8 metres and can accommodate one to two families. He charges between $60 and $100 per tent. There are two families in one tent in 33% of tents where the average number of children per family are five. So, Shawish rents the site from the landowner for about US$330 and goes on to become a wealthy businessman. CEO of a Lebanese NGO that provides services and support to camps in the Bekaa Valley (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). Syrians, including women and kids, are regularly forced to labor in refugee camps, mainly in the area, but also in stores or farms, by the Shawish. Shawish also protects many Syrians from being fired or not being compensated, and he is responsible for the distribution of help from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Because the Shawish is "one of them" and is capable of dealing with the authorities, Syrians do not feel forced to work all the time (Jagarnathsingh, 2016).

7.4 Child labour

The 2015 International Labour Organization (ILO) study (Janmyr, 2016) revealed that many Syrian refugee children are involved under the harshest types of child labour, such as "bonded labour" in farms or street work in cities, to support their families (Zucconi, 2017). According to respondent number1:

> *"The lack of appropriate place for Syrian children in Lebanon's schools and the challenging economic circumstances faced by their families have forced parents to send their children to work in factories and fields, as well as working as beggars."* (Respondent number 1).

According to a 2012 Government of Lebanon Decree; worst kinds of child labour in Lebanon are employment in car dealerships, construction, soldering, and pumping gas cylinders, as well as streets labour (Fund, 2016). Children are forced directly by the 'Shawish' to work for little to no money. He lines up the children in the fields and chose the nature of work for them, i.e., in the field of a farmer, in the city at a restaurant or auto repair shop. When we checked if Syrian children going to schools in Lebanon, respondent number 2 stated:

> *"Syrian children have the right to go to public schools in Lebanon. But there is no available places, which is the reason for many Syrians to leave school. Few of them go to private schools or go to schools far from their place of residence, forcing parents to deliver their children at their own expense to these schools*". (Respondent number 2).

It is noted that when parents are asked to send their children to work, They find it incredibly hard to resist(T. R. Foundation, 2016). According to an interviewee with the International Labour Organization, the Shawish would collect the children's pay from the employer before giving a little portion to the children. In other words, work in fields is a requirement of living on that land, therefore the refugee has no choice but to engage (Zucconi, 2017). Another explanation for the increasingly serious problem of forced labour among kids is the huge competition among businesses due to the low cost of child labour and their relative enforcement (T. R. Foundation, 2016). This is particularly true in Bekaa Valley, where nearly all refugee children work in the fields, markets, or different factories. Another study mentioned that children are employed as beggars on the streets and even being sold under the pretence of 'adoption' to traffickers (Ibid)). Respondent number 1 commented:

> *"There are cases of abuse and violence against Syrian children, but not a lot of them. Such abuse is the product of certain individual behaviour who are depressed or racist Lebanese. Or this also happen because of the negligence of parents in protecting or caring their children and sending them to work or areas that are dangerous, such as staying out of the house late in the day."* (Respondent number 1)

7.5 Child, forced and early marriage

Syrian refugee females are increasingly marrying young, particularly in (north Lebanon) Akkar and the Bekaa Valley (Ghazzaoui, 2016). Respondent number 2 commented:

> *"In the camps, child marriage is common among the Syrians themselves, , and between Syrian refugees and Lebanese or Arabs in return for cash and promises to improve the circumstances of family and girl's life."* (Respondent number 2).

While credible data on the number of child marriages is not accessible, national and international organizations working in Lebanon acknowledged the rising problem. An increase in early marriages is acknowledged to be a big issue in humanitarian emergencies (Barides, 2021). Respondent number 2 stated:

> *"The motives for child marriage are because of the difficult economic conditions of girl's family. In addition, defending the honour and integrity of their daughter, parents find marrying their daughter to be an opportunity to get rid of the responsibility of caring for her and everyday needs."* (Respondent number 2).

Typically, refugee families make the decision to safeguard their young girls from sexual harassment and abuse, to offer “future economic security”, and to alleviate the family's “economic burden”. The reseches showed that child marriage is a “survival strategy among Syrian refugees” (Fund, 2016). It is also influenced by hierarchical and restrictive gender roles. It's possible that young girls were not told, gave their complete agreement to the marriage, or were unable to reject it. They might become unable to manage what occurs within the marriage, such as “sexual intercourse” or “domestic duties”. Moreover, girls who marry young are more likely to be subjected to “domestic violence” (Barides, 2021). Several Lebanese and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are attempting to eliminate child marriage through a variety of approaches. They're talking to religious leaders, educating families through peer education, creating “positive community-based role models”, promoting “experimental learning activities”, and spreading public awareness of the dangers of child marriage (Astudillo Poggi, 2017). According to a research, 18 percent of Syrian teenage females (15–18 years old) in Lebanon were married (UN Population Fund, 2014). Another survey found that “the rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees in Lebanon was 23%” (Mourtada, Schlecht, & DeJong, 2017) who is hosting more than 500,000 displaced Syrian children (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Additional gendered risks have been documented for displaced Syrian girls including harassment and gender-based violence (GBV). The recent reports have raised concern over increased rate of child marriage within the Syrian Crisis (Bilgin, 2014; Committee, 2014);(Çöl et al., 2020; Spencer, 2015; UNICEF, 2014); (Femi, 2013).

Although child marriage used to happen in pre-war Syria, forced displacement appears to have increased its prevalence (UNICEF, 2014). Around 35% of Syrian refugee females in Lebanon were reportedly married before the age of 18, compared to 13% of female married before the age of 18 in Syria in 2006. (Ibid).

UNICEF defines child marriage as “any formal or informal union where one or both parties are below the age of 18” (S. R. Initiative, 2013). Some parents feared that because their daughters were Syrian, they were more likely to be harassed and abused, and current research confirms that these fears are “well-founded” (Dionigi, 2016). In many cases, this was due to the host communities' view of Syrian women and girls' fragility, and the fact that they were often unable to report it. Desperate to protect their daughters, some Syrian parents married them off at an "earlier age". As a result of relocation and conflict, child and early marriage is believed to be common among Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan (Mourtada et al., 2017; UN Population Fund, 2014; UNICEF, 2014). Respondent number 1 commented:

> *"In my view, it is the customs and traditions that are the most important reason. Child marriage is a tradition that existed before the outbreak of the war among some Syrian communities, but if it was in a smaller percentage and in specific regions and for specific religious and social contexts, and not in all of Syria in general."* (Respondent number 1)

At 17.3% in 2009 the marriage cases for people under 18 in the nationally representative Syria Family Health Survey (GHDX, 2009). Most religious groups in Syria allow girls under the age of 18 to marry with the approval of a legal guardian, and marriage is registered by religious courts in Syria (UNICEF, 2014) as well as a minimum marriage age of thirteen years (Human Rights and Gender Justice (HRGJ) Clinic, 2016).

7.6 Sexual exploitation

A research conducted by the International Rescue Committee and the ABAAD– Resource Center for Gender Equality in 2012 claimed that rape and sexual assault were the most common activities experienced by girls and women while living as Syrian refugees in Lebanon. (Astudillo Poggi, 2017). Syrian refugee women have been labelled as "vulnerable", which is a wide and ambiguous term. Yet, limited research has comprehensively defined the vulnerabilities based on the nature of the "destination country", throughout this example, Lebanon. This was corroborated by Maeva Breau from KAFA, she stated, "in the case of the landlords sometimes they ask for sexual favours if the women cannot pay, and it is less likely to happen if they have a man around them" (Ibid). Furthermore, ABAAD's Roula Masri commented on the status of Syrian women refugees in Lebanon, saying:

> *"In 2016, the women that were rescued from the mafia were all Syrians. According to our qualitative study, the Syrians are more vulnerable to be harassed and suffer sexual violence and it takes place in camps, for example. In relation to early marriage, there are cases, although we don't have exact numbers. I have to say that one of the factors is the awareness in the communities and the violence against women and the media has started to play its role as more information about these practices is being published."* (Roula Masri) (Ibid).

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Centre for Migrant Policy Development, other international NGOs, and the KAFA NGO at the national level have regularly documented on sex trafficking that occurred during the Syrian crisis of 2011 and the plight of females who became victims of sexual exploitation. Moreover, Omar Ouahmane, Radio France correspondent in Beirut, said that he got the chance to report on a 16-year-old Syrian girl who was orphaned in Syria and then forced to marry a man who subsequently sold

her to criminals and is now sexually abused in one of the “super night clubs” in Junieh, Mont Lebanon (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). Several studies indicate that Syrian refugee women have been exposed to all forms of sexual assault, such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation. In 2014, it has been reported that trafficking for sexual exploitation was the “second most prevalent” form of human trafficking, after child trafficking for labour exploitation (ICMPD, 2016). These kind of violations and exploitations must be linked to the general sense of violence against women in Lebanon and to the status of society (Astudillo Poggi, 2017).

Furthermore, the extreme financial situations facing Syrian refugee women caused some of them to engage in "survival sex" to earn money for themselves and their families, according to leaders from international organizations and international NGOs. These women might earn anything from US$13 to US$450 each client, depending on their working circumstances (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). According to respondent number 2, when asked about Syrians prostitutes in Lebanon, she Commented:

> *“Many who work in this profession are mainly people who had worked as prostitutes before the war, and few of them are forced to work in prostitution as there are limited job opportunities. But those who work in this profession (prostitution) are also abused like any Syrian worker in other jobs, and there is no justice for wages, no rights or guarantees.”* (Respondent number 2).

Thus, Syrian refugee women may be forced to perform “sexual favours” in exchange for rent, food, or job. The abuser in these incidents is often the woman's landowner or Shawish, who may break a “contract” or be the recipient himself. The most disturbing situation is ‘deals’ which may involve the coercion and exploitation of children (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). In 2016, 50% of Syrian refugees experienced at least one kind of violence (harassment, evictions, raids, insults, among others) (Alsharabati & Nammour, 2017), but 72% did not reported to the authorities (Ibid). It's a lack of access to justice made worse by refugees' fear of being deported or jailed if they report their situation to authorities. As a consequence, violations and an inaccessibility to justice have put Syrian refugee women who are being victims of sexual harassment in terms of their vulnerable circumstances (Astudillo Poggi, 2017). Lebanon's “high end” sex business, which comprises over 130 “super night clubs”, has already been such a magnet for migrant women from Eastern Europe, Russia, and Ukraine who enter the country on a “artist visa”. Many immigrant employees are victimized, including being misled about the

status of the employment and getting their passports seized upon arrival by the club owner (K. Jones & Ksaifi, 2016). According to a study in 2013, survival sex among refugees has been extremely widespread in the conservative Shia region of Akabih (Kullab, 2013). The system by which Syrian refugees were sexually exploited consisted of coordinated roadside pick-ups of women (Ibid).

7.7 COVID-19 impact

The pandemic has increased the Syrian refugee's vulnerability, as Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, stated:

> *"In Lebanon, seven out of 10 refugees have lost their livelihoods, and are barely surviving. They are more afraid of hunger than coronavirus. Women and children are especially exposed. Mounting economic pressures generate tensions and undermine social cohesion" (Siegfried, 2020).*

Syrian refugees, on the other hand, have told Human Rights Watch (HRW) and aid organizations that COVID-19 would lead to more discrimination and stigmatization. Some Syrian refugees have also reported concerns of deportation if they have signs of COVID-19. They use these doubts as a disincentive to seek medical attention, even though they have symptoms (Aya Majzoub, 2020).

7.8 Summary

Lebanon with an open border policy, the historical neighbouring ties, the ability to find jobs, financial help offered by UN agencies and a good chance of being resettled were the most important factors encouraging Syrian refugees to flee. However, following the increase in the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the negative effects on the Lebanese such as economy and security, as well as the concerns that jihadist groups could use refugee movements and camps as cover for their activities, Lebanon decided to close the border and restrict the rules of visa, resident, and work in Lebanon. This increased the vulnerability and weakness of Syrian refugees. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are victims of modern slavery in various forms, including male, female, and child victims, and they need an effective initiative to improve the situation of Syrians in Lebanon, especially in refugee camps. Because of their families' difficult circumstances, Syrian children are victims of child labour, working in begging, fields, and factories. Because of their parents' situation, cultural and religious values, and negative social influence, Syrian girls are victims of child and early marriage. Syrian women are victims of

modernslavery in the form of forced labour like Syrian men, and the forms of forced marriage, sex exploitation, and verbal and physical violence. Syrian women are expected to accept their precarious condition in order to help themselves and their families. Syrian refugees in Lebanon have found it more difficult in the last year as a result of COVID-19 rules, Lebanese economic difficulties, a rise in the exchange rate of the US dollar against the Lebanese pound, and port explosions in Beirut. All of these factors have exacerbated the precarious condition of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, necessitating global and urgent assistance to assist them.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8. Syrian's Vulnerability and Exploitation in Iraq:

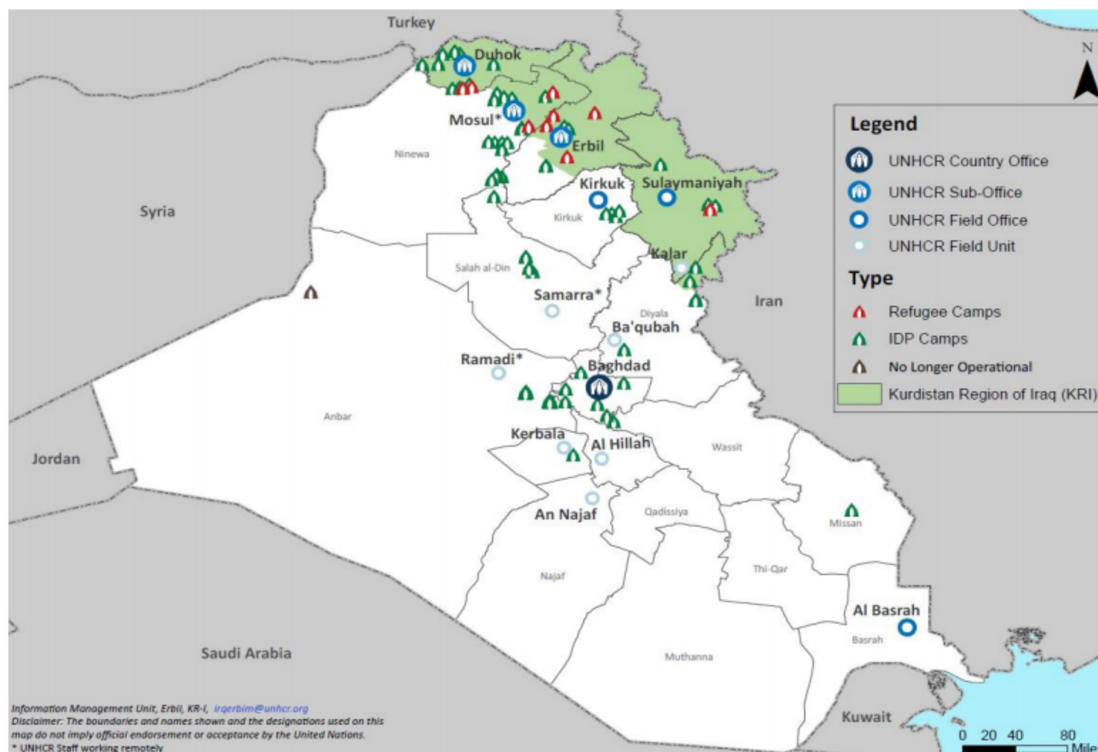

Figure 10: UNHCR Presence (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20Iraq%20Factsheet%20%20July%202020.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

8.1 Introduction

The border of Iraq spans 599 km across Upper Mesopotamia and the Syrian desert, from the Jordanian tripoint in the south to the Turkish tripoint in the north.

In comparison to the Syria neighbouring countries, refugee movements to Iraq started far later, about a year after the Syrian crisis erupted. According to UNHCR (IOM, 2014)the total number of Syrian refugees in Iraq was just 180 by the beginning of March 2012, while there were 10,658 refugees in Turkey, 7,058 in Lebanon, and more than 3,000 in Jordan when the Syrian crisis began in March 2011(PİRİNÇÇİ, 2018). 248,382 Syrians fled to Iraq, according to UNHCR recent data (IOM, 2014). As seen in Graph (Figure 11) 48.9% of Syrians chose to settle in and around Erbil, 35.1% in Dohuk and its rural areas, and 12.08% in Sulaymaniyah and its surrounding. In other words, 96.8% of Syrians who fled to Iraq settled in KRG-controlled territory. Around 37% of these Syrians live in refugee camps and temporary settlement areas,

while the remaining 63% live in towns. Other than Syrian refugees, the Kurdistan region of Iraq shelters other fully registered refugees from Turkey (9,080), Iran (13,710), and Palestine (752). The Kurdistan region of Iraq - KRI also hosts 1123 177 Iraqi internally displaced (IDPs) fleeing the occupied areas of the Islamic State (IS) (Yassen, 2017). Due to the presence of refugees, there is 28% increase in the population of the region. As a result of the KRG's flexible strategy, Syrian migration to Iraq has primarily focused on the KRG region. Aside from the geographical proximity, demographic, social, and cultural similarities between Syrian refugees and Iraqi Kurds played a significant role in the refugees' decision to relocate to the KRG territories (Ibid). In this context, despite the fact that the UNHCR (2015) does not categorize Syrian refugees in Iraq according to ethnicity, it is estimated that Syrian migration to Iraq has primarily come from Kurdish-populated areas in Syria. According to the estimates, more than 57% of Syrian refugees in Iraq came from Hasakah, 25% from Aleppo, 9.36% from Damascus, and just 7.86% from the rest of the country (PİRİNÇÇİ, 2018).

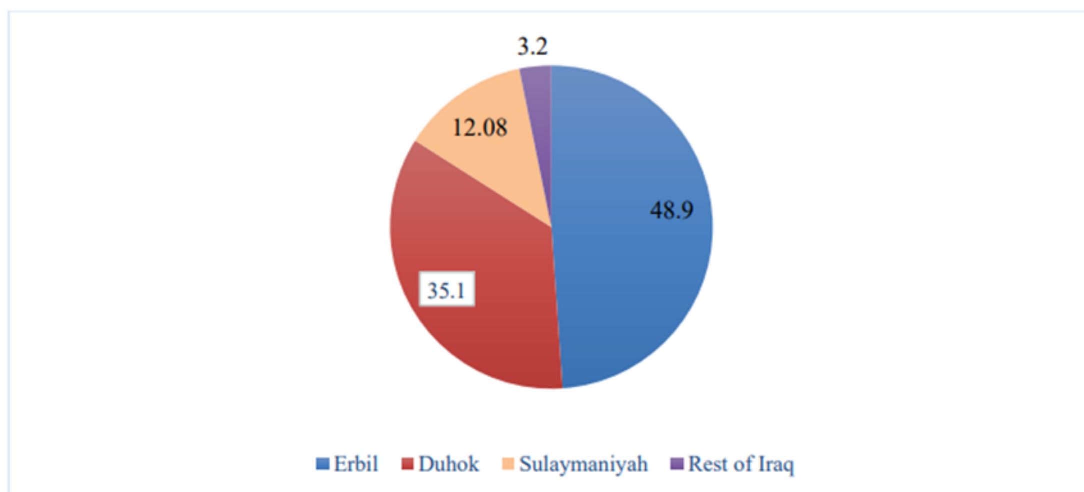

Figure 11: The Syrian Refugees distribution in Iraq (Source: UNHCR, Registration Trends for Syrian Persons of Concern https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/5) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

So far, one-quarter of the population in the KRI have been refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs), a higher proportion than in Lebanon (1/6), Jordan (1/11), and Turkey (1/28). This has resulted in a significant shift in the demographics of the KRI, as well as major hurdles for the "local integration" of "long-term refugees" (Yassen, 2017).

8.2. Migration drivers and mobility restrictions

Due to its internal turmoil, the Iraqi government, unlike Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, did not adopt an open-door policy for Syrian refugees, it is worth noting that the Iraqi central

government and the Kurdistan Regional Government followed contrasting approaches to the Syrian refugees. Even though Baghdad agreed in July 2012 to open the Rabia and al-Qaim border gates to the Syrian refugees, and settling them in refugee camps. However, the number of the Syrian refugees were increasing day by day, and their policy did not last long. It was agreed to close the border crossing for Syrian refugees after a month, except for a few special cases. Syrians can apply for a visa to visit Iraq and the Iraqi territories controlled by the central government's authority (PİRİNÇÇİ, 2018). Respondent number 9, a Syrian male from Aleppo, was working as a businessman in Syria, and he is living in Iraq since 2013, explained to us how and why he chose Iraq as a destination to his flee trip:

> *"Because of the war and its effect on my job, I chose to travel from Syria. I lost my factory, which had been destroyed by military operations. There was no way to restart due to instability, a shortage of utilities (electricity and transportation), and the depreciation of the Syrian currency. I realized that I needed to look for another safe country where I could work and provide a decent living for my family. Actually, I stayed in Turkey for a year, but I could not stand the exploitation conditions. I decided to go to another country and came to Iraq through a friend who helped me getting visa and job here. I believed that it would be a temporary period before the war in Syria ends, which unfortunately continues to this day."* (Respondent number 9).

Furthermore, refugees resettled in the areas outside the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan government (KRG) were denied the right to work and mobility beyond the camps where very basic needs were fulfilled. As Respondent number 9 expressed his thoughts on the situation and challenges faced by the Syrians living in Iraqi-controlled territory:

> *"The majority of Syrians entered Iraq on a one-month tourist visa. Their residency will be illegal and in violation of residency laws after one month. Due to the inability to renew it, Syrians' movement is limited. As a result, they live in the place of work, which leads to their abuse as they have no other choice. They are unable to travel freely or even leave their places of residence / work due to the fear of being arrested, deported, and banned from entering Iraq for a period of five years."* (Respondent number 9).

In contrast to the Baghdad administration, the KRG have more flexible policies, avoiding the central government's strategy of pressuring Syrian refugees to live only in specified areas (see Figure 10). The KRG has followed an open-door policy with few exceptions and allows Syrian refugees to access essential services (PİRİNÇÇİ, 2018). The KRI is home to 249,293 Syrian

refugees, accounting for 97 percent of all Syrians in Iraq. Syrian refugees consist of 81,000 families, 53 percent males, 47 percent females, and 34 percent of the total are children (Authority, 2014).

The sudden arrival of a huge number of Iraqi' IDPs changed the donor countries' attention from Syrian refugees to them. Indeed, states' practice and the response of international humanitarian organizations indicate that the situation of Syrian refugees in the KRI is no more seen as an urgency (Ibid).

Because of their own regional control of refugee camps, the KRI authorities have retained a locally developed response to Syrian refugee crises to some extent. While the KRI authorities obtained foreign support and oversight at first, the funding have been drastically reduced. Filippo Grandi, the UNHCR's High Commissioner, noted; "his deep concern that funding commitments made by the international community are being forgotten", and He noted that international financial support for Syrian refugees falls well short of real humanitarian needs; for example, just 39% of the funds needed were raised by host countries in 2017, While the KRI authorities initially received foreign assistance and monitoring, these monies have been drastically reduced. Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner for Refugees, has urged the global community not to overlook the Syrian refugee problem. (Ibid).

Kurdistan has been praised by the international community for its compassion toward refugees and internally displaced persons, and it now has the world's largest population of refugees and IDPs in relation to its population size. The Committee on Enforced Disappearances CED, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination CERD, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Human Rights Committee OHCHR and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women are among the United Nations Treaty Bodies. They have repeatedly "[commended] the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) for its support and provision of a safe heaven for displaced communities".

As a result of the reported surge of refugees and IDPs from conflict zone areas, the population in the Kurdistan Region has greatly increased. The significant pressure generated by this inflow, on the other hand, has a negative effect on various sectors such as health, education, and employment. Administrative, fiscal, and housing problems are among the challenges faced by people. While Syrian refugees were initially accepted by locals because of their ethnicity (most of the locals are Kurds) and treated them as "family", tensions are emerging as a result of the

Region's economic downturn and insecurity. Indeed, tensions have been documented between locals and refugee groups in some of KRI's cities, with locals claiming that refugees and IDPs are to blame for higher house rent.

Aside from the massive influx of displaced people into the KRI, the Region is facing a financial crisis because of the tremendous expense of fighting ISIS, the humanitarian crisis, the decline in oil prices and a lack of budgetary transfers from the federal government in Baghdad. Since 2014, the decision to withhold Kurdistan's part of the Iraqi national budget has resulted in salary delays, cuts to benefits and pensions for KRG civil servants, adversely affecting both refugees and host communities. Indeed, the Region's unemployment rate has increased nearly fivefold from grown from 3% in 2013 to 14% in 2016, whereas the poverty rate has also increased significantly from 6% to 14%. As a result, it is understandable that the local populace, which has kindly embraced refugee families and initiated fund-raising efforts to support them, is now experiencing poverty.

In April 2018, the KRI's Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCCC) released a statement pleading with the UN and international organizations to help the KRG in assisting Syrian refugees and other displaced persons in the area. The KRI has provided services and opportunities to Syrian refugees since 2011, when the civil war in Syria broke out, and has given them free movement, residence, and work permits, as well as accessibility to “health care, education, and a means of subsistence”. Although international organizations provide assistance, the Region is responsible for registering refugees, offering temporary shelters and sanitation services, as well as comprehensive essential public services an, electricity and water; it is also responsible for the construction of schools and health-care centers. The KRI had expand its commitment, and it did so by investing an extra $20 million in the Department of Immigration and Immigrants as a result of the economic effects on the area. In reality, the KRG set aside 90 million dollars from its budget for humanitarian aid and essential services to refugees between 2012 and 2014.

The JCCC, on the other hand, clearly recognizes that the KRG cannot provide such critical assistance to displaced Syrians without desperately needed additional support from the international community. In 2018, for example, “2018, the partners appealed for 226.8 million USD for the Syrian refugees in Iraq. However, only 11.3% ($25.7 million) of the appealed amount was provided by the international community. This amounts to only $17 per refugee yearly”. Underfunding has clearly effects on the programs and assistance provided to refugees, and several humanitarian organizations have already had to delay significant projects planned

for 2018. Naturally, this also has disastrous effects for the host societies, which have been bearing the burden of the refugees for the past ten years.

The Iraqi government has not ratified the 1951 Convention. Relating to the Status of Refugees or the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (31. January 1967, entered into force 4. October 1967) 606 UNTS 267, the internationally recognized legal structure for the security of refugees. Consequently, the Refugee Convention and its legal provisions do not apply to Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Iraq in their totality. There have been two national statutory instruments passed in the context of refugees, on the other hand, The first is Iraq's 1971 Political Refugee Statute, which defines refugees as people who seek shelter in Iraq for political or military reasons, according to the Iraqi government. This provides them with the same rights as Iraqis, including the right to work and the ability to access health and educational facilities. The second is Iraq's Ministry of Migration and Displacement's Law No. 21 of 2009, which, in accordance with the Refugee Convention, broadened the definition of a refugee to include those fleeing persecution. Nonetheless, the defense provided by these statutes is contradictory in terms of rights and entitlements.

The UNHCR and Iraq signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October 2016 to improve refugee and asylum seeker security. The Iraqi government is responsible for providing identification and identity papers to refugees and asylum seekers under the terms of the agreement, while the UNHCR advises and assists the Permanent Committee for Refugees at the Ministry of Interior in managing refugee affairs in Iraq. “This Memorandum marks a milestone for protection and respect for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Iraq”, said UNHCR Iraq Representative Bruno Geddo. The MOU's complete material, however, has not been made public. Similarly, the KRI has not provided any legislative provisions to govern the status of refugees in its domestic legislation. In Articles 17 and 19 of the Kurdistan Region's Draft Constitution (2004 and 2008), extensive references to asylum law and refugees were made (19). However, considering the significant increase in refugees in the KRI, these references were omitted from the 2009 draft of the Constitution. Respondent number 11 commented on the Syrians legal situation in Kurdistan:

> *“I am legally residing in Erbil because I obtained a work visa from one of the companies for a fee, but I am not obliged to work for them. Within Kurdistan, I have complete freedom of movement. I also have UNHCR refugee status, which I received from the organization's Erbil office, which protects me from deportation outside of Iraq as I await resettlement in*

one of the European countries. I receive $500 and household items every three months; a fan in the summer, and a heater in the winter by the UN and other international organizations." (Respondent number 11).

Syrian refugees are distributed to various camps in the governorates of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok based on their economic and social ability after crossing the KRI's borders. After their arrival, the refugees are registered and allocated tents. The KRG, foreign organizations, and local non-governmental organization (NGO) collaborators provide essential services, and the camps are closely monitored. The refugees are given official identification cards and a one-year temporary residency permit that can be renewed annually. The UNHCR issues an asylum seeker certificate to camp residents. Syrians can legally live in the area after registering, and their identification card provides people with fundamental rights such as freedom of movement, the ability to live and work, health-care access, and educational opportunities.

A foreign person's naturalization can be authorized by the Iraqi Minister of Interior, according to Article 6 of the Iraqi Nationality Law of 2006, if the foreign national entered Iraq legally, have been in permanent residence for at least ten years, have not done any criminal offences, are self-sufficient, and have no serious health issues. Article 7 of the Constitution allows the Minister to authorize the naturalization of foreign nationals who are married to an Iraqi person and meet the requirements of Article 6. After five years, refugees may apply for permanent residence if they continue marriage. Syrian refugees who fulfill the above-mentioned criteria will apply for Iraqi citizenship under these provisions (Yassen, 2017).

8.2.1 Resettlement and protection

Respondent number11, is a Syrian man from Tartous, who was working as a salesman in Syria. He lived in Iraq from 2014 to 2017, and resettled in Norway by the UN. He said:

> *"Because of the war and the constant threat of takfiri attacks on Christians in Syria, as well as the poor economic conditions and the fear of being compelled to serve in the military, my friend advised me to move to Erbil. Erbil was considered to be safe, and one can apply for protection from the United Nations Organization, which has offices in Erbil and supports refugees in their migration to Europe and America. In addition, I am able to work until I am resettled by the United Nations."* (Respondent number 11).

The UN Refugee Convention addresses resettlement, but only in the sense of allowing refugees' properties to be transferred after they are admitted to a third country. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries, which drafted the Refugee Convention, did include a request in

Recommendation D that "Governments continue to receive refugees in their territories in a true spirit of international cooperation in order to provide asylum and the possibility of resettlement to refugees". This approach is unusual in that it is the only long-term solution that entails relocating refugees from asylum countries to third-country destinations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines resettlement as:

> *"The selection and transfer of refugees from a state in which they have sought protection to a third state which has agreed to admit them – as refugees – with permanent residence status. The status provided ensures protection against refoulement and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependents with access to rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Resettlement also carries with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country."*

UNHCR is obligated by its regulations and resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly to pursue resettlement as one of the three long-term solutions. To accomplish this, the UNHCR in cooperation with the Member States, advocates for and makes deals with the implementation of resettlement in third countries. However, the situation in the Iraqi government is different; Syrians do not have the opportunity to apply for UN protection or to be resettled in another country, according to respondent number 9:

> *"There are no United Nations offices in Baghdad that grant the right to protection or asylum, protect refugees from deportation, and provide material and moral assistance. The United Nations offices are only in Erbil, and I am unable to visit because like many Syrians, I do not have a residence permit that allows us to pass and travel freely in Kurdistan."* (Respondent number 9).

8.3 Forced labour

Respondent number 9 is a Syrian male from Aleppo. He was working as a businessman in Syria, and he is living in Iraq since 2013. He said:

> *"Owing to a lack of options, the Syrians in Iraq are prisoners or slaves. Syrian's conditions are extreme, and there are no other countries willing to accept Syrian refugees. As a result, I am forced to remain here and accept the conditions of exploitation. Before coming here, it was agreed that I would work 10 hours daily; now, I work 16 hours, and my salary is lower than that of Iraqi employees and workers of other nationalities. My salary is $1,000 per month for 16 hours per day of work, while the Lebanese employee is paid $ 1700 per*

month for 12 hours per day and The Iraqi worker salary is $1,000 for 8 hours per day of work…I cannot start looking for another job because if I quit my current job, I risk being arrested and deported, as well as losing the job, given the large supply of cheap Syrian labour." (Respondent number 9).

While Syrian refugees are permitted to work and have been given the freedom to seek employment, some occupations, such as dentistry, pharmacy, law, and taxi driving, face legal obstacles. This is due to the fact that refugees lack the required identification cards and professional certificates.

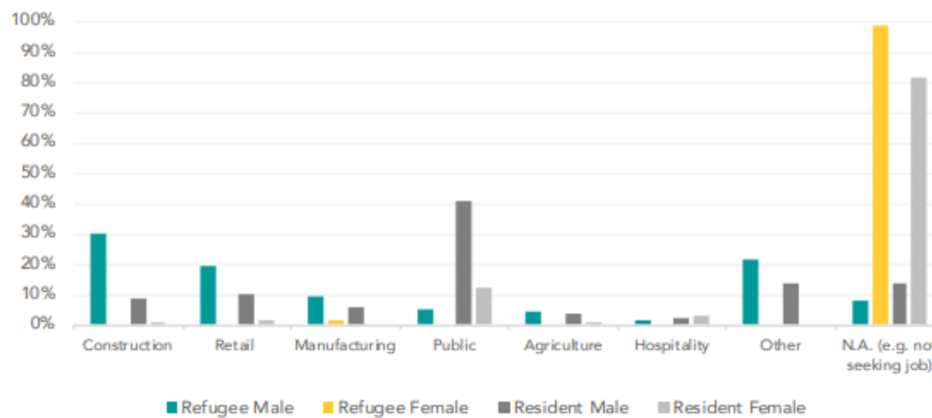

Figure 12: Employment sectors, by population group and gender (https://drc.ngo/media/aatg3dkd/far-from-home-future-prospects-for-syrian-refugees-in-iraq-january2019.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

According to the household survey, as shown in Figure 12, 41% of male citizens over the age of 18 work in the public sector, compared to 5% of male refugees. Furthermore, 30% of male refugees over the age of 18 work in the construction sector, compared to 9% of male citizens. Acting as a guard, driver, instructor, electrician, and in restaurants, bakeries, and the military were among the responses for 'other' for refugee and citizen males(DRC, 2019).

The Refugee Convention has reported this as a well-known problem. The status of refugees in international law is particularly precarious, according to Article 31(1) of this Convention, and To address their needs, the international community should be more responsive.

Due to the current financial, defence, and humanitarian crises, finding work in the KRI is extremely difficult. According to a World Bank survey, these issues have put a strain on resources and the job market, resulting in a lower wage. It also states that the KRI's poverty rate has risen from 3.5 to 8.1% since 2011.

Respondent number 11 commented on the difficulties in the Iraqi's labour market:

"Because of the plentiful supply of Syrian labour, this situation resulted in the exploitation of Syrian workers. They were paid less and subjected to verbal violence and harassment. Furthermore, because they do not have a contact person, are not registered and do not have a work contract indicating their rights, they work without any rights or assurances. The Syrians have accepted this state of abuse and vulnerability due to a number of factors. Firstly, it is difficult to find work for Syrians due to the difference in language, as they speak Arabic instead of Kurdish in Iraqi Kurdistan. Even if they get a job, they will stick with it regardless of the conditions or the salary, and they will agree to work without a contract. Within the Kurdistan region, job opportunities are scarce, and the Syrians are unable to pursue employment in other Iraqi cities, such as Baghdad, due to their residency status. He is unable to leave Iraq because he will lose his right to UN security and resettlement if he does so." (Respondent number 11).

Those refugees whose families are still in Syria and who are unable to leave due to age or disability are under tremendous pressure to earn money and send it to Syria.

Working more hours at lower salaries than the local population is another problem for Syrian refugees. Employers seem to have taken advantage of their vulnerable status by paying them less than minimum wage and requiring them to work longer hours than are legally acceptable. Respondent number 10, a Syrian female from Homs, who was a university student in Syria, and has been living in Iraq since 2015, shared us how the Syrians are exploited in Iraq:

"Many employers in Kurdistan hold the first three months' pay as an assurance that the employee would not quit his job without first talking with the employer. Many Syrians are forced to accept exploitation conditions in order to maintain their financial rights." (Respondent number 10).

Syrians are victims of numerous forms of exploitation in areas controlled by Iraqi government, based on the legislation's violent actions of Syrians. As stated by respondent number 9:

"Many employers keep Syrian workers' passports under the pretext that they will not be needed and that you will be unable to leave the workplace and travel freely, in order to avoid any trouble and to ensure their continued jobs, effectively turning Syrian workers into prisoners or hostages with the employer". (Respondent number 9).

Since there is no other option for finding a decent job, and there is no possibility of peace returning to Syria anytime soon, and for a variety of reasons originating with Iraqi authorities,

such as the ongoing political and military conflict between Iraqis, terrorism, and corruption, the vulnerability of Syrians within Iraq has increased. Respondent number 9 commented:

> *"When you want to express your dissatisfaction with job conditions such as salary, tasks, working hours, rest periods, and holidays, you will face a negative response often repeated by employers; there are many of you. This reflects the abundance and low cost of the Syrian labour force in Iraq. I will tell you about an incident that happened at my workplace: one day, more than thirty young Syrians came in within two hours to ask about a job opportunity, and they offered their services for half of what I and my colleagues were getting. These issues exacerbate Syrian workers' vulnerability and exploitation."* (Respondent number 9).

The overwhelming majority of females over the age of 18, including 98% of female refugees and 81% of female residents, addressed 'not applicable,' suggesting that they were not in paid jobs or that they did not live in a household with women over the age of 18. According to a KI, women's domestic obligations (such as child care) made it impossible for them to work for a living (DRC, 2019).

Respondent number 9 defined the situation of Syrian women in the Iraqi labour market as follows:

> *"Syrian women are exploited and handled unfairly in terms of wages and working hours, as well as being harassed at the workplace. Many of them recognize their poor conditions because they have no other choice but to deport to Syria. There are no bodies or organizations to which they may look for protection. Going to the police station would subject them to prosecution for violating the residency rules, which will result in expulsion and a five-year ban from entering Iraq."* (Respondent number 9).

8.4 Child labour

Based on a study done by the World Bank and the KRG Ministry of Planning, 48% of Syrian refugees have not attended school, with the main reason being the lack of education system abilities in the KRI. Imad Alhajj, who works for the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), claims:

> *"Although primary schools are available in camps, there are very few available to refugees in the urban areas. In addition, constant changes in curriculum and languages and delay with education space for high school by UNESCO mean that a generation has lost access to the right to education. Additionally, the economic depression has deprived a big*

percentage of children from continuing studies as they need to support families". (Imad Alhajj).

After the start of the ISIS-related security crisis in 2011, the KRI authorities allowed Syrian refugees to enrol in public schools in the region. Primary and secondary schools were sponsored and operated by UNESCO and UNICEF in all four camps, with classes taught in Arabic and 95% teachers being Syrian.

School attendance in the camps is much higher, 71% compared to 46% outside of camps. Due to the fact that their children were only able to attend second-shift schools with substandard curricula and limited hours, Syrians who did not live in camps (39 percent of the total) perceived themselves to be more vulnerable and ignored by the international humanitarian assistance program. Some refugees claim that foreign aid is almost exclusively concentrated to the camps, leaving those who are self-settling in neighbourhoods, towns, and villages to fend for themselves. Respondent number 10 noted:

"Syrian children have the right to attend public schools where the language of instruction is Kurdish, forcing parents to send their children to private international schools that teach in Arabic and English. However, these schools are very expensive, forcing many families to take their children out of school and send them to work." (Respondent number 10).

In 2017, approximately 4,300 Syrian families were on waiting lists to join refugee camps, but capacity was limited due to a shortage of infrastructure, including land distribution. Due to the overcrowding in the camps, more than half of those displaced reside outside in substandard housing, such as derelict buildings and tents spread around the area.

During the interviews with the respondents, it became clear that the majority of Syrian refugees send money to siblings and relatives in Syria who have not fled but are financially dependent on them. A circumstance like this has put a lot of pressure on young men to find jobs. Respondent number 9 said that:

"Many Syrian children are present in the labour market in Iraq to provide for their needs and the daily needs of their families. Moreover, there are several Syrian children who live alone and without their families, which exposes them to physical and psychological abuse. Syrian children, like adults, are staying illegally and without a residence permit. There are no bodies or organizations that protect them or provide support to them, which increases their vulnerability to the exploiters." (Respondent number 10).

Syrians in Iraq, as well as those in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, have fallen into abject poverty. Kids in especially have been victimized by the conflict and denied the opportunity to continue their education. Certain individuals have been compelled to beg or labour on the streets. Respondent number 10 said:

> *"Syrian children work in Iraqi Kurdistan in a variety of jobs, but many of them are engaged in begging or disguised begging by selling low-cost items around traffic signals and main squares, exposing them to harassment and violence. In Iraq, the cost of living is high, forcing all family members, men, women, and children, to work and are thus exposed to exploitation."* (Respondent number 10).

8.5 Child marriage

In Iraq, Syrian refugees are forced to marry. Forced marriages for their young daughters are often encouraged by family members. Respondent number 10 noted:

> *"Girls marry at a young age; it is part of the culture of Iraqi and Syrian communities, and it is popular in Kurdistan. However, this is more widespread in the environment of Syrian refugees, since Syrian families are struggling financially and want their sons and daughters to have a secure future. Moreover, marrying an Iraqi man ensures that their daughter is safe with a man who will look after her. Furthermore, the Iraqis want to marry Syrian women, especially young girls. Syrian women share the same cultural background, customs, and values as Iraqi women, making them attractive to Iraqi men. Furthermore, marrying a Syrian girl is significantly cheaper than marrying an Iraqi girl."* (Respondent number 9).

According to several studies, while refugee families are unable to make ends meet, they decide to marry off their daughters so that they will have less burden, their daughter will be fed, and the family will receive money from the husband's family. In the Arbat refugee camp, for example, one Syrian refugee woman was forced by her father to marry a violent and aggressive man. She was finally able to flee to an Iraqi women's shelter (S. A. Jones, 2017).

These economic issues worsened the discrepancy in school attendance. While males leave school to work, females marry at an early age, frequently before the age of 18, because their parents cannot afford them, and they benefit financially from an endowment. According to previous reports, 21% females aged 15 to 19 are wedded in Iraq, and child marriage is particularly prevalent among refugees and internally displaced persons, further impairing their educational opportunities. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) expressed great concern in its Concluding Observation on Iraq stating, "Refugee and internally displaced girls

are particularly exposed to domestic violence, forced, temporary (Muta'a) and early marriages and 'sexual exploitation". Respondent number 9 reported:

> *"I know many Syrian families married their daughters to Iraqi men older than them for money (2 million Iraqi dinars = less than 2000 US dollars), which is a huge amount if you compare it to the Syrian currency. This marriage constitutes a guarantee for her and her family to remain in Iraq and not to be deported. It relieves the family's financial burdens to secure the daily needs of this girl. The groom is usually older than the bride, who often has children from previous wife, and the bride being the same age as one of his children."* (Respondent number 9).

Furthermore, some sources claim that in their home culture, early marriage is acceptable (UNICEF, 2017).

8.6 Sexual exploitation

It is clear that systemic sexual assault, harassment, and the threat (perceived or actual) of sexual abuse heightened women's vulnerability and fear. Sexual abuse is prevalent in private and public spaces for women and girls in both camp and non-camp environments, according to evidence gathered from survey data and Syrian refugees. 68% of women said they knew someone who had been victimized, and 82% said they were afraid of violence or hostility on a daily basis. Because of the threat of aggression, 35% said they were not able to leave their homes. Respondent number 10 reported:

> *"Syrian women face the same challenges as Syrian men in the labour market, such as exploitation and abuse (low wages, long working hours and no work contract or guarantee). There are two groups of Syrian women who work as prostitutes: The first group are women who were forced to work in this field due to poverty, a lack of employment prospects, and a lack of other opportunities. She has to save money in order to achieve the everyday needs of herself and her family. Since many men have died as a result of the war, many women are single mothers with children. The second group includes those who considered prostitution as a profession prior to the war and before emigrating from Syria. I want to point out that I know a woman who works in prostitution and makes more money than I do."* (Respondent number 10).

Sexual harassment was the most common type of sexual violence reported to the research team, in which men, both Syrian and non-Syrian, target Syrian women while they are alone in public

places, taxis, and places of work. They allegedly make unwanted remarks about their bodies and physical appearance while constantly demanding inappropriate relationships, sexual favours, and their phone numbers. Non-Syrian men approached several Syrian women in non-camp environments, saying for example, “we know you are Syrian, we have money”. Women stated they “accidentally” entered their tents in camps, hoping to catch them alone or undressed. Women have been forced to adjust their attitudes and habits as a result of these problems, restricting where they go and how much time they spend alone. When their fathers, husbands, or brothers found out about the abuse, the women were blamed. Respondent number 9 reported about sexual exploitation for Syrian women in Iraq:

> *“In Iraq, there are Syrian women and men who work in prostitution, which is illegal in Iraq, but it occurs under cover of massage therapists, bar and café workers, and cabaret dancers.”*

And she added:

> *“With the exception of a few isolated cases of people working on their own dime on a small scale, prostitution is operated by underground networks run by people with links to the Iraqi government and political parties. As a part of this criminal activity, children between the ages of 14 and 17 are involved.”* (Respondent number 9).

According to a UN women survey, when women and girls were asked where they felt most insecure, they named locations outside of their homes. Taxis, the highway, and workplaces were among the most common targets (Figure 13).

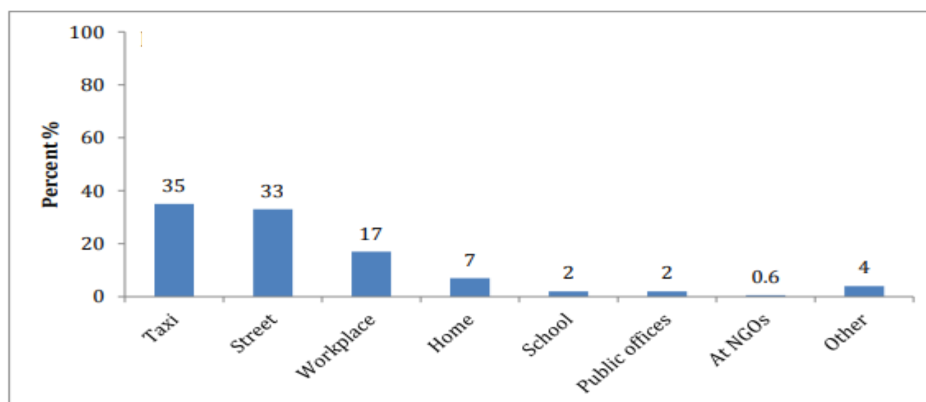

Figure 13: Locations perceived by women as most risky for Syrian women and girls (https://uniraq.org/images/documents/We%20Just%20Keep%20Silent%20final%20English.pdf) [Accessed: 6 August 2021].

According to UN woman research, pressure for sex was listed by a number of women. One in every five women polled said she had been specifically offered money in exchange for sexual services. More alarmingly, one in ten women said they had been forced to participate in sexual relationships by government officials, organized gangs, police and other security forces, NGOs, and members of both the Syrian and non-Syrian communities. Moreover, sexual assault was widespread among women. Non-Syrian men reportedly subjected women to sexual assault, according to 27% of female informants. Twenty-four percent said they had similar experiences with Syrian men(Authority, 2014).

8.7 The Covid-19 impact

Iraq has a high ranking in a variety of economic, political, societal, environmental, and security fragility indicators(Humanitarian, 2020). Well before the COVD-19 crisis, Iraq was confronted with a series of serious challenges for which it was unprepared(Bank, 2020). Indeed, prior to the pandemic, some observers argued that Iraq had all the characteristics of a failed state, not just a weak one(Cordesman & Molot, 2019). "Iraq is on the verge of catastrophe," according to a World Bank report published in September 2020; "Almost two decades after the Iraq war began, the country remains caught in a fragility trap and faces increasing political instability and fragmentation, geopolitical risks, growing social unrest, and a deepening division between the state and its citizens"(Bank, 2020). To cope with the pandemic and its second-order consequences, the Iraqi authorities have taken a range of preventative and remedial steps. COVID instances have grown dramatically since early June 2020, while the national poverty rate has also risen owing to job losses and price increases. The public health and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 have been particularly harsh on three overlapping segments of the Iraqi population: the forcibly displaced, women, and children. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Iraq began, vulnerable displaced families, especially Syrian refugees, were amongst those who are most affected by the virus. Iraq registered the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in February 2020, and the World Health Organization (WHO) reported 590,779 cases across the country as of 27. December 2020. The regional government's quarantine measures impacted all people, including Syrian refugees in camps and towns (R. Initiative, 2021).

All refugee laborers, both within and outside the camps, were ordered to stop their work. According to preliminary estimates from the Syrian Civil Platform, two-thirds of refugees living outside the camps are tenants, and they were the first to be impacted by the quarantine, which effectively halted economic activity. Access to medical care is limited for all refugees, including those with pre-existing ailments and sicknesses (S. C. Platform, 2020).

There was a direct impact on the refugees' access to food aid, especially for workers who were unable to earn their livelihood. Food baskets were provided by a limited number of organisations and some individual efforts in relation to assistance in general and the camps in particular. This assistance, however, was inadequate because it was not extensive and continuous (S. C. Platform, 2020).

Respondent number 9 reported:

> *"When the Corona virus spread in Iraq, I witnessed a problem with my Syrian friends in Baghdad. 15 Syrian workers were detained inside the restaurant where they worked for four months without pay. Their passports had been taken by the restaurant's owner, and were forced to remain inside the restaurant due to the fear of getting arrested and deported to Syria."* (Respondent number 9).
>
> *comment*

8.8 Summary

In this chapter, I explored how Iraq's border policy and visa regulations towards Syrians led to a lower number of Syrian refugees in Iraq than in other Syria-neighbouring countries. Broken resident laws, as well as the lack of a valid visa and passport, created the foundation for Syrian refugees in Iraq to be exploited in the job market, with no freedom of movement, no access to health care, no good engagement in the schooling and education process, and isolation from the justice system and other governmental services.

My founding suggest that the situation of Syrian refugees differs between areas ruled by the Iraqi government and areas controlled by the Kurdistan government. According to the respondents' statements, the situation in Kurdistan is better because of opportunities to get assistance and support from United Nations agencies and other foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are based in and working in Kurdistan. In addition, Syrian refugees in Kurdistan can apply for UNHCR protection and resettlement in a new country with better living conditions.

I also discussed the drivers that lead Syrians to choose Iraq as a destination. They could with ease obtain a visa. They also the shared language and cultural background with people in North Iraq. They had relatively the good opportunities to find work, and the opportunity to apply for UNHCR security, which could help them resettle in a new country.

I investigated the fact that Syrians are victims of forced labour forms in Iraq, due to the fact that they do not have a visa, and that there is no justice in employment conditions, working hours, and vacations. There is no job contract, so there are no protections or insurance in the workplace. All of these challenges face Syrians in the Iraqi labour market, both men and women. However, Syrian women remain the most vulnerable due to cultural norms and their vulnerable status, especially if they are alone without husbands or parents, and their vulnerability is exacerbated when they are single mothers with children to care for.

Syrian children are victims of child labour due to their parents' precarious condition, with no real assistance from public agencies or non-governmental organizations. Syrian children are victims of early marriage because of their families' financial difficulties, as well as cultural norms in Iraq and Syria that embrace and allow child and early marriage, and families want to protect their daughters by marrying them to Iraqi males who can protect the girls' honour while also providing a good and stable life situation. Syrian girls may become victims of forced marriage and sexual explanations and violations in the workplace, culture, and inside their homes.

Previous research and the stories of my informants suggest therefore that Syrians in Iraq need assistance in judicial, social, and ecumenical matters from the international community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local governments and communities in order to provide for and improve their situation.

CHAPTER NINE

9. Israel and Syrian Refugees: The No Welcome Policy

9.1 Introduction

Following the United Nations partition resolution 181 passed on November 29, 1947, the State of Israel was officially declared on May 14, 1948 (UN, 1948). This was the legal and political foundation for the establishment of two states "for two peoples". It was accepted by the Israeli state but denied by the whole Arab world and most Muslim countries then and until this day. Israel was immediately surrounded by five regular Arab armies, where Syrian army was one of them, with the aim of strangling the new state from the start. On July 29 1949, an armistice was concluded with Syria, which was notable for being the last agreement to be signed and illustrative of the fact that Syrian government had long been Israel's most ferocious and inflexible adversary (Luder, 2019). After the 1967's Six-Day War and the 1973's War, Israel's prestige was cemented. Furthermore, even though Egypt and Jordan signed peace agreements with Israel in 1979 and 1994, respectively, Syria has refused numerous peace feelers sent out over the years, see Figure 14.

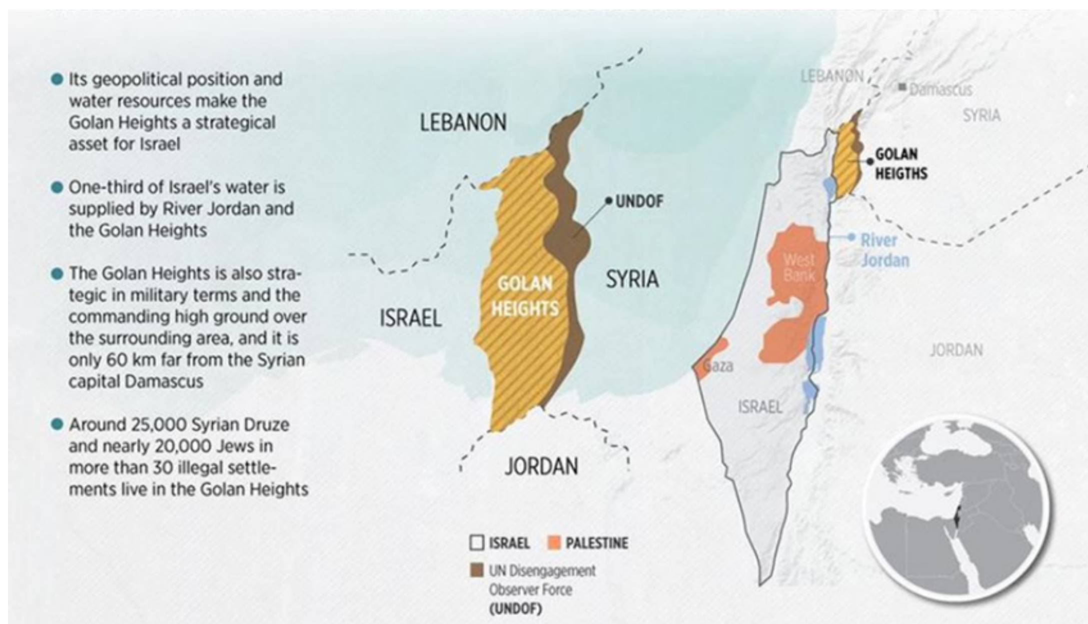

Figure 14: What's behind Israel's ambitions for Golan heights (https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/the-israeli-occupied-golan-heights-a-timeline/1426268).

The Syrian border with Israel is a particularly sensitive region. Since 1974, a special UN force, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), has patrolled the border, which

has remained quiet and peaceful for the most part (Peacekeeping, 2021). In the years prior to the Syrian crises, the Syrian government started to employ new strategies aimed at upsetting this balance, largely through the creation of armed groups, the most prominent of which was the Front for the Liberation of the Golan. This was merely a front for Hezbollah, a Lebanese armed group that later became Assad's primary backed by Iran partner in the war. Various groups controlled the border region during the war years, including Syrian Democratic Forces in the centre, the Druze in the north around the village of Hader, and a small ISIL enclave in the south. Israel, for its part, has declared its neutrality in the Syrian conflict (Luder, 2019).

9.2 Solidarity and the security: the Israeli dilemma

As the Syrian conflict enters its tenth year, Israel remains Syria's only neighbour that has yet to recognize displaced people and refugees fleeing the armed conflict. Human rights organizations from around the world and Israel were increasingly urging Israel to expand its eastern border for humanitarian reasons (Rosner, 2015). Israeli citizens and government officials assert a moral obligation to aid Syrian refugees. Ayoub Kara, Israel's Deputy Minister for Regional Affairs, called on Israel to accept thousands of Syrian refugees fleeing persecution, saying that the Jewish state had a moral obligation to do so considering what happened during Holocaust (STERMAN, 2015). Isaac Herzog, an opposition leader, also said that Israel was obligated to take in Syrian refugees, a claim criticized by Yisrael Katz, the transportation minister. “What a lack of political wisdom and a lack of national responsibility”, wrote Katz a Facebook post, referring to Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipila's widely publicized offer to house refugees in his spare house. “At least he [Herzog] should suggest, as did the prime minister of Finland, to take them into his house”, twitted Katz (Read, 2015).

Likud Tourism Minister Yariv Levin also spoke out against the idea of Israel accepting refugees from Syria, and called "an enemy country". Moreover, while addressing Army Radio he said, “I suggest we stop with this custom of trying to find favour all the time. We must not take in people from an enemy state who could act against us from within Israel” (STAFF, 2015).

At the beginning of the Syrian refugees fleeing crisis, the Israeli government's preferred solution was to provide humanitarian aid to refugee camps, especially Jordan, because Israel has strained to non-existent relationships with Syria and the other surrounding countries sheltering Syrian refugees were strained to non-existence. While indirect support is greatly appreciated, Israel, which has frequently asserted its neutrality in the Syrian war, is capable of providing greater direct assistance (Plotner, 2014).

Israeli authorities declared early in 2012 that they were preparing to receive Syrian refugees in the Golan Heights in anticipation of the Syrian regime's eventual collapse. However, Israel's Defense Minister declared six months later that any refugees attempting to enter the Golan Heights would be halted. It is also important to remember the Israel's actions to reinforce its claim to the Golan Heights in light of the Syrian civil war. In January 2014, leaked notes from an Israeli security cabinet meeting detailed discussions about using Syria's current terrible global perception by pressuring the international community to accept Israel's rule over the occupied Syrian Golan. The Israeli government also gave its approval to proposals for a $100 million investment in the Golan Heights to build 750 new farms for settlers in the same month. As a result, Israel has made it very clear that Syrian refugees will not be allowed into the Golan, and that it completely intends to maintain control over the territory. Moreover, Israel's Defense Minister clearly said:

> *"Israel is a very small country having no demographic depth and has no geographic breadth. We must protect our borders against illegal immigrants and against the perpetrators of terrorism. We cannot allow Israel to be flooded with infiltrators", Netanyahu said (Rosner, 2015).*

In response, Israel has taken swift and comprehensive steps to re-fortify the eight-meter-high, 90-kilometer-long fence separating the occupied Golan from Syria. Additionally, a UN peacekeeping mission oversees this area, citing serious security concerns. Results of the failure of past landmines to detonate during protests in 2011, the Israeli military has announced that it would place new minefields along the Syrian border.

Despite this, Israel accepts a few Syrians who crossed the border as medical patients, not as refugees. Wounded "Syrian revolution soldiers" who reach the armistice line fence wanting medical help at a field hospital in the Golan Heights have been treated by the Israeli military. According to reports, they treated an average of 100 Syrians each month, with those in more extreme situations being moved to Israeli hospitals. "Israel is not indifferent to human tragedy, we conscientiously handle a thousand (people) who were wounded in the fighting in Syria and help them to rebuild their lives", stated by Netanyahu during the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem (STERMAN, 2015). Israel violated the principle of non-refoulement as After getting medical care, Syrian patients should be permitted to apply for asylum, as opposed to becoming forced to return to a war zone, Physicians for Human Rights Israel Reported (Israel, 2016).

According to Israeli officials, Syrian patients are willingly returning to their homes and the deportation is therefore voluntary. Human rights organizations, on the other side, claim that injured Syrians receiving treatment in Israel are not notified of their right to seek refuge in Israel. As a second point, the Israeli government asserts even if it is practiced, Syrians would refuse to seek asylum in Israel because they would face stigmatization as traitors in Syria. However, Reports show that they would gladly accept asylum if it was offered (Plotner, 2014).

While Israel cites security threats from Takfiri groups as a reason to refuse the entry of Syrians. Thousands of Palestinians who were displaced by the Arab Israeli war in 1948 found refuge in Syria, and are now experiencing even worst situation as a result of the Syrian conflict. In 1948, a number of Palestinians were resettled as refugees in the Syrian Golan (BBC, 2015), but were subsequently ejected during the 1967 war, and are now facing further displacement from Syrian refugee camps.

9.3 The closed border

In 2018, Since the Syrian government launched an attack to retake an area bordering Jordan and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights from rebels, more than 120,000 people in southwestern Syria have been forced to flee who fled to Israeli territories. On Twitter, Lieberman reaffirmed Israel's position that the refugees would not be allowed in.

> *"We are closely monitoring events in southern Syria. We will guard Israel's security interests. As always, we will be ready to provide humanitarian aid to civilians, women and children, but we will not accept any Syrian refugee to our territory"* Lieberman wrote. He tweeted just hours after the military announced that the assistance had been delivered to southern Syria (Lewis, 2018).

The ongoing Syrian refugees' crisis has brought Israel's struggle to consolidate its ideals as a democratic state to the forefront once more. Despite being a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Israel has never attempted to set up a functioning refugee system. Moreover, in the same year that Israel ratified the Refugee Convention, it also passed the Prevention of Infiltration Law. According to this rule, all illegal border crossers are considered infiltrators, and the Ministry of Defense has the authority to deport them even before they are convicted. While the provisions of the law were intended to deter armed fighters from infiltrating Israel, they are also used to prevent Palestinians from entering or returning to Israel. According to Article 1(3) of the constitution, an infiltrator is "a Palestinian citizen or a Palestinian resident

without nationality or citizenship or whose nationality or citizenship was doubtful" (Khalil, 2010).

The background of the time may clarify Israel's unwillingness to integrate the Refugee Convention into its laws. The vast majority of people who came to Israel in the 1950s were displaced European Jews, many of whom were Holocaust survivors, as well as Jewish refugees fleeing Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa. Since the idea that Israel belongs to Jews is fundamental to Israel's identity, Israel's immigration laws automatically grant citizenship to the Jewish diaspora. As a result, Israel has never treated the Jewish refugee people as refugees because they are already regarded as integral members of the Jewish government (Swissa, 2015). According to the state's own statistics, only about 1% of Sudanese asylum seekers have received a response and over 2,000 are still waiting (Lior, 2015). Between mid-2009 and mid-2015, 17,778 refugees from various countries applied for asylum in Israel, and it responded to 69% (12,220) of these applications. A third of the respondents (5,558) were overlooked. Moreover, the government refused or withdrawn 99.6% (12,175) of the requests it received. Furthermore, refugee status was given to 0.25% (45) of all asylum seekers (NORTON, 2015).

9.4 The safe path and destination, just for allies

In a brief video statement on July 21, 2018, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he assisted in the evacuation of the white helmet's members at the behest of US President Donald Trump and other leaders, as there were concerns that the workers' lives were in danger. The organisation, officially known as Syria Civil Defence, has been widely praised in the West and is credited with saving thousands of civilians during the armed conflict in rebel-held areas. Its members, who known as white helmets, claim to be neutral. However, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his supporters, including Russia, have dismissed them as Western-backed propaganda instruments and agents for Islamist-led jihadists.

According to a Jordanian government source, 422 people were carried from Syria across the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights border and into Jordan, down from the 800 reported earlier by Amman's foreign ministry (Dan Williams, 2018).

Despite the fact that the original aim was to transport 800 Syrian Civil Defense volunteers and their families directly to Jordan, only 98 White Helmet rescue workers and 324 of their family members crossed into Israel on 21 July 2018 and were then sent to Jordan.

One of the organization's representatives, Raed Salah, spoke with Canada's Istanbul-based special envoy to Syria, Robin Wettlaufer, and pleaded to organize a rescue mission to save them before it was too late, according to the Globe and Mail. After Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland addressed her NATO counterparts during the NATO summit in Brussels on July 11 2018, an unprecedented operation was planned for two weeks. Both Israel and Jordan were "approached right away", according to Hinton, and neither hesitated to participate in the mission, which lasted several hours in the dark of the night. When Israel's ambassador to Ottawa, Nimrod Barkan, was confronted by Freeland, he told the newspaper that "there was no dispute. We were on the same page" (AHRONHEIM, 2018). Moreover, with this process and to-date, Israel have closed the door permanently in the face of the Syrian refugees.

CHAPTER TEN

10 Concluding Remarks

This thesis studied the vulnerable situation of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries; Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq which host the majority of the global Syrian refugees. I also included Israel which represents a neighbouring country which denies access to Syrians. The modern slavery concept is an umbrella term referring to "the exploitation in the labour market and social activities for men, women, and children". Moreover, the global initiative of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, like the SDG.8.7 aims to end the forced labour and human trafficking as well as child forced marriage and labour. In addition, the SDG10.7 aims to plan and implement migrants' policy to provide safe movements and activities for migrant and refugees. The following research questions were explored and analysed:

- Which forms of modern slavery, exploitations and vulnerability are Syrians victims to in the neighbouring countries?
- Which drivers which lead Syrians to flee from their country to the specific destinations in Syria's neighbouring countries?

In this thesis, the types of modern slavery that Syrian refugees are subjected to are identified. It is asserted that Syrian refugees are subjected to forced labour as a result of legal instability, a lack of mobility, closed employment and quotas, and negative perceptions. The huge number of refugees in these countries lead to a significant difficulty in the development and socioeconomic growth and increased the rate of the unemployment.

My findings show that the most Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries do not have access to the formal employment sectors, and they are engaged to the informal and undocumented works in factories, farms and construction works. I investigated that how Syrian refugees became the new working class in these countries, being cheap, surplus, and vulnerable. Furthermore, Syrian refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries, both males and females, experience unfair working conditions and verbal and physical abuse. Females are also harassed by sexual exploitation from employers and colleagues, while Syrian children in Syria's neighboring countries are victims of child labor and early and child marriage.

The factors causing Syrian children to be victims of child labor in Syria's neighboring countries were identified to be: parents' economic difficulties, a lack of access to education, employers' ability to use cheap and vulnerable labor, and, in some cases, cultural norms. Governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities have played a limited or non-existent role in stopping this phenomenon, especially for children in refugee camps. The problematic condition (socially, educationally, and economically) of the young girls' parents is one of the key factors contributing to child and early marriage. Moreover, it was found that the norms of the host society play an encouraging role in this situation. Additionally, the lack of legislation and the establishment of powerful platforms for monitoring, analyzing, and stopping this violence, as well as tracking down the offenders (Parents, brokers, traffickers and imams) has also contributed to this phenomenon.

It is maintained that Syrian men, women and children are victims of modern slavery in different ways. I found that child marriage in Syria's neighboring countries is a well-organized business that takes advantage of the Syrians' miserable and helpless conditions. The child marriage is more prevalent in refugees' camps due to the precarious condition of Syrians in camps. Moreover, females in neighboring countries are responsible for their parents' and family members' everyday needs. Syrian females in Syria's neighboring countries are victims of various types of sexual abuse. They are victims at work, on the streets, in NGO offices and with their partners, and in camps. Syrian females are victims of sexual assaults, sex favors, and prostitution that take advantage of the Syrian refugee's vulnerability, fear, and weakness. Therefore, my general impression is that Syrian females are the most oppressed and abused in Syria's neighboring countries.

Furthermore, it seems that that the camps in Syria's neighbouring countries are dangerous places to house people and provide necessities. The authorities of the host countries use camps to detain violators of residency laws and labour rules, as well as to isolate criminals and terrorists. All of this contributes to a more dangerous situation for the people living in these camps. For Syrians who are unable to get their daily needs such as jobs, housing, education, and health care, camps are their only choice of refuge. The camps house the most vulnerable groups of Syrian refugees, who do not have any options for fleeing their wretched lives. Therefore, modern slavery rates are significantly higher in camps than other places.

I also explored and compared the neighbouring countries hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees who are non-signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention (Turkey is committed to only

the European Refugees through UN refugees convention), thus having higher chances of vulnerable situation for Syrian refugees. Here, Israel is the only signatory country included in this study, but is not accepting, hosting, or offering asylum to Syrian refugees.

Furthermore, I also analyzed the factors that lead Syrian refugees fleeing the dangers of war, life difficulties, and poverty in Syria to migrate to a particular destination. The short distance between the dangerous cities in Syria and the safe place in the destination countries is found to be a significant factor. People from Dara selected Jordan, people from Damascus selected Lebanon, and people from Idlib selected Turkey. I found that, in addition to a safe location, having a job was one of the factors that are driving Syrians to move to other countries. The host countries' border and visa policies against Syrian refugees played an important role in motivating Syrians to select their destinations. Countries that followed an open border strategy such as Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon received the greatest number of Syrian refugees. On the other hand, Iraq was able to control the number of Syrian refugees due to its visa and entry regulations, although with some exceptions. Israel which completely closed its border, did not receive any Syrian refugees with a few exceptions such as wounded rebel fighters whom Israel hosted for treatment before returning them to Syria. Furthermore, Syrians with valid passports and IDs crossed the borders legally, while those who did not have them did so illegally.

My study also suggests that Syrian refugees are victims of strict rules and regulations imposed by host governments which were implemented in order to monitor the economic, social, and security challenges posed by the presence of large numbers of refugees in their countries, as well as to prevent the spread of violence and terrorism from Syria to their countries. Host countries took several steps and adopted many new rules in response to Syrian refugees. This includes closed borders policies, adopting new and restrictive visa and entry rules, implementing the kafala system for refugees entering the country. Various mobility restrictionwere also imposed such as, non-free movement when Syrian refugees want to move from city to city, and curfew rule against the Syrian Refugees for specific days and times like evening and weekend are also among the strict measures adapted by the host countries. These forms of legislation contribute to an insecure situation that is more likely to be abused by tenants, employers, official workers, and neighbors.

It seems that the COVID-19 increased the vulnerability of Syrian refugees in Syria's neighboring countries due to quarantine regulations, which increased the economic difficulties

for Syrian refugees. Because of the lockdown and severe regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19, as well as lack of aid and access to health, education, and social services, the pandemic had a huge impact on Syrian refugees and host communities in Syria's neighboring countries. The economic situation deteriorated, as people were losing their jobs which increased their struggle to meet daily needs. All this has significantly increased Syrians' vulnerability. The lockdown and pandemic regulations have also isolated Syrians from monitoring and support from governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who were assisting Syrians and trying to prevent violence, exploitation, and abuse of Syrian refugees.

Overall, this study suggest that Syrian refugees are exposed to modern slavery in its different forms in their neighbouring countries. Therefore, my findings are in line with other previous research that suggest that Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries require urgent and considerable support from the global community to end their daily suffering, by establishing projects, rules, and sanctions aimed to reduce and prevent their exploitation.

10.1 Future Research Implications

Since 2015, the plight of Syrian refugees has had a significant influence on the global world in a variety of ways; economically, socially, and in terms of security. Syrian refugees are disproportionately affected by concerns of exploitation, vulnerability, and human trafficking. This thesis sought to shed light on cases of exploitation and vulnerability directed against and among Syrian refugees living in Syria's neighbouring countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Israel. However, owing to limited resources and the pandemic's global impact through lockdowns and travel restrictions, I have been unable to travel to these countries to conduct field work and observe the daily struggles of Syrian refugees inside the largest camps and host cities.

Syrian vulnerability is not limited to Syria's neighbouring countries; therefore, I propose that additional research be conducted on the vulnerability, exploitation, and daily struggles of Syrian refugees in developed host countries, such as EU-countries such as Germany or Sweden, which have hosted a large number of Syrian refugees since 2015. And I propose researching the Syrians' plight within Syria, which is a result of the country's ongoing conflict since 2011. And its consequences for the Syrian society's economic, social, and health conditions, which result in Syrians becoming victims of modern slavery in the form of forced labour, child labour, early and forced marriage, and sexual exploitation.

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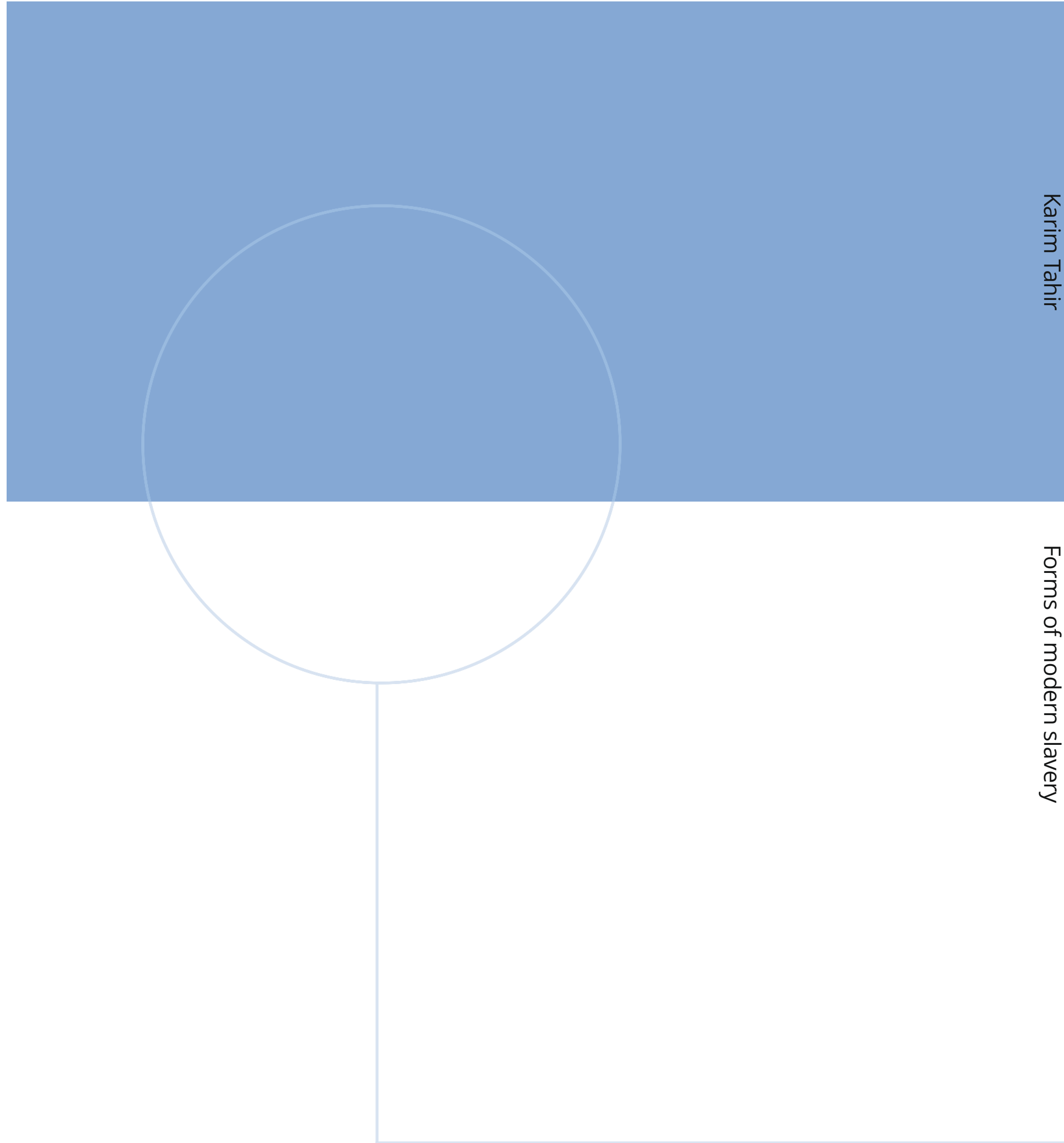

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Forms of modern slavery

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