



**SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**“AD-HOCRACY IN LOCAL INTEGRATION
GOVERNANCE: A COMPARISON OF ALTINDAĞ AND
ÇANKAYA MUNICIPALITIES’ APPROACHES TO THE
LOCAL INTEGRATION OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN
ANKARA”**

MASTER THESIS

Mehmet YEĞİN

**POLITICAL SCIENCE
MASTER OF ARTS**

JUNE 2022



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PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this work. I declare that this thesis is written according to the writing rules of Social Sciences University of Ankara, Institute of Social Sciences.

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ABSTRACT

“Ad-hocracy in Local Integration Governance: A Comparison of Altındağ and Çankaya Municipalities’ Approaches to the Local Integration of Syrian Refugees in Ankara”

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June 2022, 146 pages

When the mass inflows started from Syria to Turkey in 2011, Turkey welcomed the Syrian refugees in the camps that were built in border cities in the first place. However, as the years passed, the number of Syrians who took refuge in Turkey increased, and most Syrians have started to mobilize towards the cities where job opportunities are high. So, the local governments at the forefront of the Syrian forced migration management had the responsibility to provide services for the newcomers without any legal authorization. In such a condition, it is quite important to investigate whether there is any congruence or interplay between the central government playing the steering role with its decision-making and regulatory bodies and the municipalities facing the challenges of integration at the city level. Since the Syrians in Turkey has the temporary protection status for an indefinite time period, the integration policy development has been characterized by the national policy ad-hocracy, which is also expected to be reflected in the responses of the municipalities. Hence, this study aims to analyze the extent that the approaches regarding the local integration of Syrians in Altındağ and Çankaya municipal districts in Ankara could be considered as part of the national policy ad-hocracy. This study revealed that

although there are great differences between the difficulties faced by Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities, political party policies are often decisive in terms of local integration efforts of municipalities.

Keywords: *Ad-hocracy, local integration, municipality, temporary protection, Syrian refugees.*



ÖZET

“Yerel Entegrasyon Yönetişiminde Adhokrasi: Ankara'daki Suriyeli Mültecilerin Yerel Entegrasyonuna Yönelik Altındağ ve Çankaya Belediyelerinin Yaklaşımlarının Karşılaştırılması”

Mehmet Yeğın

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Danışman: Dr. Öğretim Üyesi K. Onur Unutulmaz

Haziran 2022, 146 sayfa

2011 yılında Suriye'den Türkiye'ye kitlesel göç akını başladığında, Türkiye ilk etapta sınır illerinde kurulan kamplarda Suriyeli mültecileri karşıladı. Ancak yıllar geçtikçe Türkiye'ye sığınan Suriyelilerin sayısı artmış ve çoğu Suriyeli mülteci iş imkanlarının yüksek olduğu şehirlere doğru hareket etmeye başlamıştır. Böylece, Suriye zorunlu göç yönetiminin en ön saflarında yer alan belediyeler, herhangi bir yasal yetkilendirme olmaksızın yeni gelenlere hizmet verme yükümlülüğü ile karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Böyle bir durumda, karar alma ve düzenleyici organları ile yönlendirici rol oynayan merkezi hükümet ile kent düzeyinde entegrasyon zorluklarıyla karşı karşıya kalan belediyeler arasında herhangi bir uyum veya etkileşim olup olmadığını araştırmak oldukça önemlidir. Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler belirsiz bir süre ile geçici koruma statüsüne sahip olduklarından, entegrasyon politikası, belediyelerin yaklaşımlarına da yansıması beklenen ulusal politika adhokrasisi ile şekillenmiştir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma, Ankara'daki Altındağ ve Çankaya belediye bölgelerinde Suriyelilerin yerel entegrasyonuna ilişkin belediye yaklaşımlarının ne ölçüde ulusal politika adhokrasisinin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilebileceğini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Altındağ ve Çankaya belediyelerinin karşılaştıkları zorluklar arasında büyük farklılıklar

olsa da, belediyelerin yerel entegrasyon çabaları açısından siyasi parti politikalarının çoğu zaman belirleyici olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Adhokrasi, yerel entegrasyon, belediye, geçici koruma, Suriyeli mülteciler.*



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASAM	Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants
AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency
CLIP	Cities for Local Integration Policy
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
DGMM	Directorate General of Migration Management
EC	European Council
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
FRiT	European Union Facility for Refugees in Turkey
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
İGAM	Asylum and Migration Research Center
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JDP	Justice and Development Party
LFIP	Law on Foreigners and International Protection
MDSD	Most Different System Design
MMU	Marmara Municipalities Union
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoFSS	Ministry of Family and Social Services
MoLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NMP	Nationalist Movement Party
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PMM	Presidency of Migration Management

RPP	Republican People's Party
SuTP	Syrians under Temporary Protection
TP	Temporary Protection
TPR	Temporary Protection Regulation
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent
UMT	Union of Municipalities of Turkey
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
WWII	Second World War

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of this thesis is to understand to what extent the national policy ad-hocracy is reflected in the approaches and responses of Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities. As it will be described and discussed in detail below, ad-hocracy is a key concept for this thesis which can be defined as a state of play that provides flexibility and case-by-case arrangements in immigration and asylum policies of nation-states (Natter, 2021). In this respect, the policy ad-hocracy can be regarded such an intentional governance strategy especially for the countries faced with massive forced migrants. Recognizing the fact that Turkey hosts the highest number of refugee¹ population under temporary protection status, it can be argued that the lack of institutionalization of integration policy in Turkey could be regarded as result of the policy ad-hocracy at national level.

Considering the question why is there ad-hocracy in integration policy making at national level, it can be claimed that the central government preferred to manage the Syrian forced migration throughout Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR), which is easy to sort and adopt. Based on this flexibility it can be seen that the central government has been attained a political opportunity to have some maneuver areas both in domestic politics and foreign affairs, especially in the relationship with the EU to have a political leverage. In that regard, it can be argued that the instrumentalization of Syrians could be considered as a part of political pragmatism on the other hand.

Researching the case of local governments in Turkey on the ground of local integration of Syrians, this thesis will be comparing the approaches of Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities regarding their efforts of local integration of Syrians in their

¹ For this study, the term “refugee” is used inter-changeably with the term “Syrian forced migrants” to refer to the Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs, aforementioned Syrians) in Turkey.

districts. These municipalities have been used as case studies in this study because they have bold differences such as political party of the administrations, intensity of Syrians and the budget shares taken from the central government. Since this research have asked to what extent the approaches regarding local integration of Syrian urban refugees in two different municipal districts in Ankara could be considered as a part of national policy adhocacy, the bold differences are important to see the limits of the extent and which differences mostly affect their approaches. On the other hand, the researcher has been chosen the municipalities as a unit of analysis because some of the municipalities have been faced de-facto responsibilities in the field and it could be possible to see the limits of their approaches to the local integration of Syrians to a certain extent.

There are five main chapter in this thesis. In the first chapter, introduction, it is aimed to demonstrate an overview of the thesis by giving the main points of the research which are the analytical background, research question, the definitions of key concepts, the methodology, findings and analysis and the concluding remarks. The literature references would provide the interested reader a solid starting point to look deeper into themes that the researcher is unable to discuss at sufficient length in this thesis.

In the second chapter, the research methodology is explained. While doing so, the case selection justification has been provided and the logic behind comparative case study was explicated. Accordingly, the research question was presented and the research design, the Most Different System Design (MDSD), has been justified with selected variables on two cases. Then, a qualitative data collection method, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 people who are the representatives of both non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the municipalities. The constraints of the field research were also explained here. In this study, two different questionnaires used to collect data; one for the NGOs, one for the municipalities. Since these questionnaires are the primary data sources of this research, it can be found in the appendices. Regarding the secondary source reviews, the strategic plans of two municipalities, the Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan, and the 11th Development Plan have been the main sources for the researcher.

In the third chapter, the analytical background is provided. This chapter includes literature reviews on the forced migration and the international protection regime to

provide a ground to discuss the current asylum regime in Turkey. After that, the gravity of the situation in Turkey regarding the legal status of Syrians has been given for the purpose of elaborating on the legal framework and challenges posed by this legal framework in terms of developing an integration policy in the Turkish context. In that regard, it has been underlined that the combination of lack of burden-sharing mechanism at international level and the lack of refugee distribution mechanism in Turkey at national level paved the way for a spontaneous ad-hocratic integration governance especially in local governments. Additionally, the situation of local governments in the legislative documents was put aiming to show the limits of local governments regarding the local integration activities for Syrians settled in their districts.

Another angle that provided in the third chapter is different approaches to the integration. In this regard, firstly, the assimilation and multiculturalism approach defined to understand the canon of integration studies. Then, secondly, the term integration is defined and the local integration is reconceptualized at the city level. On the other hand, the forced migration management in Turkey has been explained by scrutinizing both the legal and institutional framework. In this regard, the capacity of the migration management body, the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM),² in the forced migration movements has been stated. In addition, the governance concept has been addressed in a way that, rather than government, governance has become a key concept in describing how certain processes are managed by several actors, referred to as stakeholders, with only rare or ad-hoc/flexible/intermittent interactions (Schiller, 2018).

In the fourth chapter, firstly, the research data is examined with the help of primary field resources and a qualitative analysis technique. In this regard, then, the analysis of the findings is aimed to contribute the literature through the semi-structured interviews with both the experts and practitioners from the municipalities and NGOs. The main focus of the findings of this research can be regarded that the politics of integration is based on firstly the political will, which have shapes the integration policy through the ad-hocracy that can be seen also as an administrative pathology. Regarding that analysis, it was discovered that to some extent the approaches of the Altındağ and Çankaya municipality

² Until the October 29, 2021 the organization of the institution was Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), and then revised as the Presidency of Migration Management (PMM). More information is available at the official journal: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2021/10/20211029-35.pdf> (Last access: 01.12.2021)

overlap, and also to a certain extent reflect the features of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy development process in order to politicize and/or instrumentalize the Syrian refugee issue both in domestic politics and foreign affairs. Additionally, the legal and institutional challenges of the better integration policy development are presented here via sub-sections.

The overall analysis of the findings were given in the fifth chapter. In that chapter, the policy ad-hocracy at national level in integration policy making was elaborated whether the current legal framework of the asylum system in Turkey has been contributed to the state of ad-hocracy. On the other hand, the reasons of the policy ad-hocracy were scrutinized, and it was also demonstrated that how the reflection of policy ad-hocracy in the approaches of the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities differs. Additionally, the local integration governance between the central government, local governments (municipalities) and the NGOs have been also investigated, and the roles and functions of those actors were briefly explained in a table.

Lastly, the concluding remarks and policy recommendations regarding the legislation and institutional capacity-building of the municipalities are given. These recommendations is supposed to offer the need of a comprehensive and solid integration policy development by the central government by taking account the challenges and bottlenecks the municipalities face at local level. Furthermore, it cannot be ignored that a fair refugee distribution between the districts could lighten the load of local integration of municipalities in the ground if legal framework for the budgetary issues revised.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, the main purpose is to present the necessary details that contributed to the realization of the research both in data collection and research design processes. In this regard, the research methodology as a comparative case study, case selection and justification, research questions, research design, and finally data collection and analysis methods will be explained. In addition, the constraints and challenges of the fieldwork during the pandemic will be shared.

2.1. Research Design

To achieve its below explained objectives, a comparative case study will be conducted. Such a research design is preferred because of the following reasons:

- In-depth understanding requires a good grasp of the context – case study
- To be able to compare and contrast to single out and better understand individual factors in different contexts – comparison
- Pragmatic and practical concerns- researcher is based in Ankara.

In urban and regional studies, comparative research has become a well-established study strategy (Krehl & Weck, 2020). That is because, comparative research is the "most fruitful research technique for identifying causal patterns of explanation" and it can contribute to the comprehension of distinct regions' or countries' pathways, as well as the detection of patterns of convergence and divergence between them (Nadin & Stead, 2013, p. 1543; Pierre, 2005). Comparative study is also required to inform policymakers about various policy approaches when confronted with similar societal issues. For this reason, there is a great deal of policy interest in comparative research as well as the benefits of deducing conclusions based on an awareness of commonalities and variations across different districts. Cross-national Joint Research Programs or Open Research Areas, such

as ESPON³ projects, or research inside the EC's Framework Programmes can be regarded as important signs of this interest (Krehl & Weck, 2020, p. 1860). As regards, in this research comparative case study research design is used to be able to address differing contexts and issues precisely so that for policy-makers some specific empirical findings are unveiled regarding the customized local integration policy development phases in two different local urban areas.

Additionally, there have been earlier studies focusing on the ideological affinity with the national government as the decisive factor while trying to explain the variation at the local level, as is the case with the comparative literature on immigrant/refugee integration. Nonetheless, the diversity of policy actions at the local level demonstrates that there is more to integration policy than national-level considerations (Memişoğlu & Yavcan, 2020, p. 2). Building on that conceptual ground, the researcher prefers to use the MDSD. This is because, through that design developed by Przeworski and Teune (1970), it is possible to choose units of research that are as different as possible with regard to extraneous variables. Also, as Anckar (2008) indicated, in that design the task of the researcher is to test and attempt to confirm, as much as possible, one particular finding within a wide variety of systems (Anckar, 2008, p. 390).

In this research, with the design of the most different systems, it is aimed to be able to better analyze the situation in two dimensions: i) in which policy areas any convergence or divergence happens between national and local level integration policy implementation, and ii) how any convergence or divergence happens in responses of Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities which have very different characteristics. Thereby, the flourishing literature on 'the local turn' in integration studies, Zapata-Barrero et al. (2017) could have a ground to grasp localized integration indicators comprehensively and to have a future agenda for the best actor-intervention match discussion. Recognizing the growing literature on the local turn in integration studies which has a great potential to make public policy making process more participatory, and to better understand the different variables' effect on the implementation of integration policy at the local level,

³ ESPON is a European Union (EU) funded programme that pursues the territorial cooperation among the 27 EU members states, the United Kingdom and the 4 partner states of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Regarding the framework of cooperation and publications please see the website at: <https://www.espon.eu/> (Last access: 28.10.2021)

the researcher focused on below presented variables more to put in the MDSD. The selected variables can be seen in the table below (See Table 1).

It should not be forgotten that as social scientists, for us, it is not possible to control all the independent variables since we are not conducting our research in lab conditions. Of course, the best is done by the researcher in terms of digging into each variable to grasp the current situation and varied areas as much as possible. However, there is not a chance to identify one specific variable as the root cause of the variation of two municipalities' approaches to local integration of Syrian refugees in Ankara. That is because, at the end of the day, it is qualitative research and aims to understand two different contexts around local integration approaches.

Table 1: Detailed information on the selected variables of the comparative case study inquiry

Selected Variables*	Altındağ Municipality	Çankaya Municipality
Institutional Framework	District Municipality	District Municipality
Specific Unit on Refugees	No	No
Governing Party	JDP-The Ruling Party	RPP-The Main Opposition Party
Number of Syrians in the district**	50.000	4.000
Local Population	396.165	925.828
Ratio of Syrians to Local Population	%12.62	%0.43
Share from the central budget***	103.246.465,01 ₺ ****	410.348.350,54 ₺ *****

* These variables are included here to inform the readers on the basis on which the dark differences between the two municipalities are justified.

** Both these numbers are the estimations of related municipality experts as of 20.02.2021. The researcher had to use the estimated numbers in that table because it was not possible to get the exact numbers of Syrian urban refugees at district level from the PMM.

*** This share is calculated by the central government in accordance with the local population numbers. The distribution is made over the collected revenues, not the accrued tax revenues. Additionally, the tax revenues are the regular income for any municipality in Turkey, but does not constitute the whole budget of the municipalities. Detailed information on how to calculate is available at: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2008/07/20080715-1.htm> (Last access: 29.10.2021).

**** These data are taken from the Court of Account's evaluation report of 2020, and they are categorized as the tax revenues which is the regular income for any municipality in Turkey. More information for the Altındağ municipality report is available at: <https://www.sayistay.gov.tr/reports/download/3762-ankara-altindag-belediyesi> p.6 (Last access: 27.04.2022),

***** These data are taken from the Court of Account's evaluation report of 2020, and they are categorized as the tax revenues which is the regular income for any municipality in Turkey. More information for the Çankaya municipality report is available at: <https://www.sayistay.gov.tr/reports/download/3765-ankara-cankaya-belediyesi#:~:text=%C3%87ankaya%20Belediyesinin%202020%20mali%20y%C4%B1%C4%B1,20%20TL%20%C3%B6denek%20iptal%20edilmi%C5%9Ftir.> p.5 (Last access: 27.04.2022).

2.2. Case Selection and Justification

Starting from 2011, Turkey has begun to accept Syrian asylum seekers fleeing from the war. With the effect of the long land borders between Turkey and Syria and its 'Open Door Policy', Turkey has become the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world in a short time. According to the PMM, there are more than 3.7 million Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey as of April 2022. Also, the statistics of PMM show that a vast majority of Syrians today live in urban areas (see Figure 1).⁴

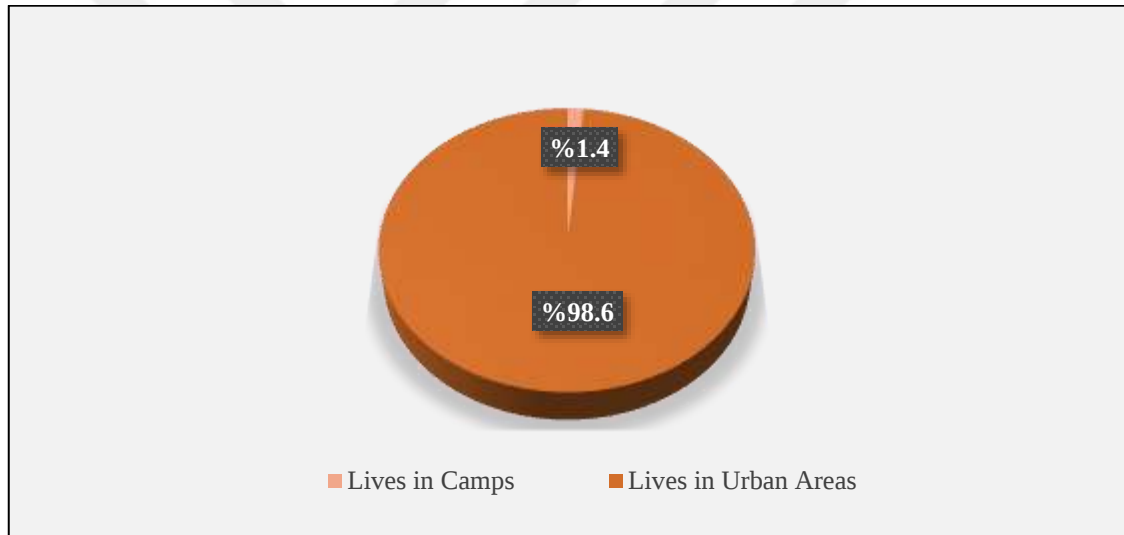


Figure 1: The share of registered Syrians in Turkey by place of living

Source: PMM (2022) Official Website (<https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638>, Last access: 27.04.2022)

Since the populations of Syrians in cities were growing alongside with their effects on social life, the governance of Syrian forced migrants and their impact on the local people are worth to research and understand to have local context-based integration indicators. Considering the fact that more than 98.6% of registered Syrians in Turkey live in urban areas, the municipalities are one of the most important actors as a unit of analysis

⁴ More information is available at PMM's official website. Please see: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 27.04.2022)

in local governance of forced migration in Turkey. That is because the municipalities are located as the closest actor to the local people, having the opportunity to implement activities aiming local integration in their localities.

Ankara is the capital city of Turkey and hence the center of the state. As such, it provides the best opportunity to observe any cooperation between the central and local levels of government in forced migration governance. In addition, Ankara also hosts the Turkey country offices of some important international organizations and national NGOs that work in the field closely with central government. In this regard, Ankara can offer a ground to have a comprehensive analysis on forced migration governance characteristics of Turkey, and particularly on local integration efforts of different stakeholders. As of April 2022, 100.577 registered Syrian urban refugees live in Ankara. Even if the proportion of Syrians in local population is relatively small in Ankara, which is %1.75 as of April 2022⁵, there are some neighborhoods mostly inhabited by Syrians.

The researches on Ankara conducted by Erman (2017), and Kavas et al. et al. (2019) show that the main district in this regard is Altındağ where there are several neighborhoods inhabited mostly by Syrians. The research findings also remark that ghetto areas were created in Önder neighborhood of Altındağ district by Syrians because of the following factors discovered in a fieldwork in 2016: cheap rents, closeness to the Sıtlar area where unqualified and unregistered refugees can easily find daily jobs, and distribution of aids by a local foundation (Erman, 2017). Based on these findings and ethnographic visits of the researcher, it is possible to say that the lack of comprehensive policy-making regarding the local integration of Syrians, and fair, systematic distribution of refugees in other districts of the city will have always the potential of creating isolated ghetto areas in other neighborhoods of Altındağ district.

Until now, different refugee hosting municipalities have been examined on the ground that if their activities and services were aiming the local integration of Syrians (Memişoğlu & Yavçan, 2020); (Betts et al., 2020); Erdoğan, 2017; Genç, 2018). Nevertheless, empirical studies aimed at researching and examining the responses and/or approaches to the provision of municipal services and organizing local integration

⁵ Please see PMM's official website at: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 27.04.2022)

activities of municipalities for refugees is limited in Ankara. The existing studies mainly aimed to understand if there is any potential of ghettoization and responses of local residents regarding Syrians in Altındağ (Kavas et. al., 2019), and the spatial clustering processes of Syrians in different neighborhoods of Altındağ district (Erman, 2017).

On the other hand, the context bound nature of local integration necessitates the investigation of different localities and different actor intervention match. The approaches and responses of Altındağ municipality is quite important in terms of both the approach to local integration and any initiative to provide municipal services because the ghettoization in Altındağ district still continuing to be formed and most of the Syrians in Ankara live in Altındağ because of affordability of accommodation in that district. For these reasons, Altındağ municipality was chosen as one of the cases.

The municipality of Çankaya was selected as another case to compare with the Altındağ municipality. Çankaya district is a crowded and large service area with relatively very low numbers of Syrians in Ankara. That is mostly because housing in Çankaya is more expensive than Altındağ district. In addition to these, while Altındağ municipality is being governed by the ruling JDP, Çankaya municipality is being governed by the main opposition RPP. So, the researcher aims to justify the case selection that might be suitable to show the extent of national policy ad-hocracy reflected in two different municipalities' approaches to the local integration of Syrian urban refugees in Ankara.

There has been significant variation in responses across the key refugee-hosting states on criteria such as admittance to territory and the given legal status. Many of these differences can be explained by politics, but local dynamics such as ideological orientation of the local governments as service providers on the ground and socio-economic structures of different local districts also have a major impact on the variation of policies developed at local levels. Due to the multidimensional, complex, and ever-changing nature of integration issues, there is no single national integration policy, nor is there a local integration policy (Entzinger & Scholten, 2014). So, it can be argued that the integration policies are not only changing among countries (Stephen Castles et al., 2002), but also changing among cities in the same country, and even among districts in the same city.

2.3. Research Question

The main research question is the following:

- To what extent the approaches regarding local integration of Syrian urban refugees in two different municipal districts in Ankara could be considered as a part of national policy adhocacy?

In this regard, this research aims to explore the different approaches of two different district municipalities in terms of social cohesion activities and social aid distribution as well as their understanding of local integration of Syrian urban refugees in Ankara. In doing so, the main focus of the researcher was to examine the reflection of national policy ad-hocracy in two districts with very different dynamics to analyze the most possible extent of national policy ad-hocracy in two different contexts.

Therefore, this study compares the approaches and responses of Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities toward the local integration of Syrians living in these districts. While making a comparison between the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities' approaches regarding the local integration of Syrian urban refugees, it was also aimed to find out, if there are any, specific areas that could be regarded as an overlapped areas in the approaches of the two municipalities.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

In this thesis, the primary data usage was prioritized. That's why, via the semi-structured interviews, the researcher intends to have insider information from both the expert and practitioners from departments that play a role in forced migration governance at the municipality level. Additionally, to better grasp the situation in Ankara, especially in Altındağ and Çankaya districts, some active civil society organizations were also included in the interviews.

Since the focused actors in this research are the municipalities, the semi-structured interviews with the municipalities were arranged in a way to interview with at least one expert who are running the department that deals with refugees in the municipality firsthand, and if possible, with a practitioner from each department in order to examine the institutional approaches in depth. The semi-structured interviews with the civil society

organizations were designed more flexibly as to include at least one expert to better grasp situation in Ankara comprehensively, and to be able to understand the cooperation areas with other stakeholders such as municipalities and public institutions. In doing so it is planned to reveal that the convergence and/or divergence, if any, between the approaches of two municipalities operating under the same legal obligations and exposed to different field realities.

Due to the conditions of the pandemic and the fact that some relevant public institutions such as PMM and the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) were irresponsive to interview requests, open-access strategic plans and other related documents were used. Moreover, the strategic plans of both municipalities were used to collect data on their future agendas, specifically as to whether they include the Syrian refugees in their plans. This is an informative indicator in terms of, firstly, understanding how the municipalities address the issue? Whether they are ignoring or accepting of the responsibility? And secondly, to examine how the municipalities address the issue in the future. As a result, this study benefits from both primary data and secondary sources as relevant, convenient, and/or necessary.

2.4.1. Interview as a Qualitative Research Method

Because of the following two key concerns, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the method of data collection. Firstly, they are highly suited for probing for further information and clarification of responses, as well as exploring respondents' perspectives and opinions on complicated and often sensitive matters. Secondly, the sample group's diverse professional, educational, and personal backgrounds prevented the implementation of a regular interview format (Barriball & While, 1994). Taking this into consideration, semi-structured interviews were organized with different departments of each municipality so that to comprehend the approach of municipalities holistically.

During the interviews 10 questions were asked to both the experts and practitioners. These included open-ended questions which are created in five main themes: approaches to local integration, ways to overcome the challenges of legal framework, cooperation with stakeholders, local migration governance potentials, and future agendas. All the semi-structured interviews were conducted between January 2021 and August 2021, except for the first one which was conducted as a pilot study in May

2019. Due to the pandemic conditions and restrictions on travel and mobility some interviews were conducted by telephone or online remote tools. The number of interviews with the actor specific information is listed below (See Table 2). Also, two interview question-sets are prepared for this study. The first one was used in interviews with municipality staff and the second one was used in interviews with civil society organizations and other institutions. These are separately presented in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Table 2: The number of conducted interviews with the actor specific information.

Actors	Departments	Expert	Practitioner	Total
Altındağ Municipality	Directorate of Social Aid Affairs	1	1	4
	Directorate of Cultural and Social Affairs	1	1	
Çankaya Municipality	Directorate of Social Aid Affairs	1		3
	Directorate of Culture and Social Affairs	1	1	
Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT)		1	-	1
Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), Ankara Community Center		1	2	3
Altındağ Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation		1	-	1
Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM)		1	-	1
Asylum and Migration Research Center (İGAM)		1	-	1
Turkish Refugee Council		1	-	1
Ankara Chamber of Commerce	ATO-İDEA (A subsidiary firm of Ankara Chamber of Commerce)	1	-	1
Total				16

2.4.2. Secondary Source Reviews

When the research started, the academic literature on the integration of refugees, forced migration and local migration governance have been reviewed. Even though the primary data collection was prioritized, the secondary resources have been considered to offer significant value to this research. So, the reports of international research projects, policy briefs, working papers and strategy papers of public institutions were reviewed in accordance with the research questions.

The literatures on Turkey's asylum policy, institutionalization of migration management, and forced migration history were also examined to have an analytical background to grasp the issue before the fieldwork and interviews got started. In a context of extraordinary public health measures due to the pandemic and due to the lack of time of experts, the related institutions' strategy papers and websites were also reviewed. In this regard, document analysis method was used to review these secondary resource to understand the scope of the current situation in the field and the rationale behind the different perspectives and/or discussions. The most important documents that were reviewed are the following:

- 11th Development Plan by *The Directorate of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey*
- Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan by *the PMM*
- Exit Strategy From the ESSN Program by *The FRiT Office of the Presidency of Turkey and the MoFSS*
- Strategic Plan (2020-2024) by *Altındağ Municipality*
- Strategic Plan (2020-2024) by *Çankaya Municipality*

2.5. Constraints and Challenges

Since the qualitative dataset of this research was collected in during a pandemic, the communication habits of many people were drastically changed. Also, the national restrictions sometimes hindered the fieldwork process. So, some interviews were conducted remotely by using online video communication tools or by phone calls. It was a challenge for the research and through the technological tools it was overcome. However, it should be noted that remote interviews are not the same face-to-face

interviews as it may limit the interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee during the interview. So, the remote interviews have been preferred to provide a substitute solution that could be used in the pandemic conditions.

On the other hand, conducting interviews with experts from each department was a huge stumbling block. The interviews almost never started at the pre-arranged times since those working in expert positions were generally busy and dealing with a lot of work at the same time. Also, some public institutions did not respond to the interview requests positively while some interviewed public institution staff were unwilling to share relevant data for the research because of the institutional drawback like long bureaucratic permission procedures to be able to share specific dataset has not released publicly before.



CHAPTER III

ANALYTICAL BACKGROUND

3.1. International Migration

In this section, the researcher firstly tries to delve into the nature of international migration so that the need of integration as a final goal to be understood, and secondly the need for localized integration policy efforts regarding Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) in Turkey will be explained in detail to converge the focus of the section to the local integration discussion in the country. In doing so, the global refugee protection regime also will be examined to elaborate the status of Syrians in Turkey.

The human mobility across the borders is a never-ending phenomenon. For scholars, working on international movement of people is attractive because the motivations of migrants and the conditions of journeys are changing constantly. Conversely, the limitations by states on borders to prevent the crossing of non-registered people into the lands are widening the scope of international migration: irregular migration, forced migration, refugee flows etc. Also, there is not a single and homogeneous unit of analysis in international migration (Sert, 2012, p. 29). So, the labor migrants, international students, skilled migrants, irregular migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, international or temporary protection holders are comprising the unit of analysis in international migration literature (Castles, 2000).

As a result of globalization and the high intensity of human movement, the boundaries between forced and voluntary migration, and hence refugees and immigrants, are becoming increasingly blurred (Çelik & White, 2021, p. 1). In that regard, the case of Turkey is worth examining and framing the forced migration studies in the context of SuTP. That is because Turkey is hosting the largest number of refugees who are the Syrians that came to the southern borders of Turkey to seek asylum in mass flows, and this research aims to investigate the politics of forced migration governance both at the

central and local levels in terms of best-fit actors regarding the local integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Regarding the Turkish context, the recent number of registered Syrians reached to 3.762.385 million in Turkey as of April 2022.⁶ Since this number reflects only the registered Syrians, the total number can be expected to be higher. In addition, more than 98% of Syrians live in cities not in camps anymore (Erdoğan, Şener, & Ağca, 2022). Conversely, the voluntary return numbers of Syrians who returned from Turkey are quite low, which was reported to be 128.319 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as of March 2022.⁷ However, according to the last data released by the central government the number of Syrians who voluntarily returned is over 500.000 as of May 2022.⁸ On the other hand, a current study revealed that %54 of the Syrians want to stay in Turkey (Erdoğan, 2020b). Based on this, it can be said that most of the Syrians in Turkey are unwilling to return to their home country, because it can be claimed that the Syrians in Turkey more prone to think that the living conditions in Turkey is better than in Syria. So, it can be argued that this issue has the potential to create a substantial challenge on Turkey's integration policy development processes.

3.1.1. Forced Migration and Overview of International Protection Regime

Forced migration occurs when conflict, natural catastrophes, famine, epidemic diseases, ethnic discrimination, and other social, economic, and political factors contribute to the forced displacements (Ihlamur-Öner & Öner, 2012). In forced migration literature, the labeling of forcibly displaced people differs both on political and legal grounds. Even if the term refugee has become a popular category there are also asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) or victims of human trafficking as accompanying the refugee category (Castles, 2003). Additionally, IOM puts the meaning for forced migration as “*a migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion*”. While defining the reasons for forcibly displacements, IOM signals the little-mentioned face of this kind of movements. It was

⁶ More information is available at: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last Access: 27.04.2022)

⁷ For more information please see website at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions (Last Access: 27.04.2022)

⁸ More information is available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/suriyelilerin-ulkelerine-gonullu-geri-donusu-suruyor/2595420> (Last Access: 09.07.2022)

widely acknowledged that there is a continuum of agency rather than a voluntary/forced dichotomy, and this could jeopardize the existing legal international protection regime (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2019, p. 77).

Gibney (2014) argues that the phrase "forced migration" is more than descriptive; according to him, it is evaluative at the same time because it incorporates moral judgments about the legitimacy of the movement. Then, he claimed that the existing global governance of forced migration could possibly refers to the states' framings regarding any status or rights so that the states may take less international responsibility in the provision of international protection in their lands. After the Second World War (WWII) ended, UNHCR has been formed to protect the ones who were displaced and seeking asylum in Europe. In order to designate the framework of rights of refugees a legal assurance was needed. That is because the nation-states were the only actors that will provide international protection to asylum-seekers and displaced people, they were in need of declaration of mutual duties and responsibilities. In accordance with that, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 Geneva Convention) came out.

Accordingly, the contracting states of 1951 Geneva Convention are subjected to investigate the legitimate demands of the ones who apply for asylum. The Convention was designed to respond to the basic needs of asylum-seekers and defines the refugee status as follows: *"as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 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 nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."* (Geneva Convention, 1951, Article 1A(2)).

Forced displacement is caused by a variety of factors and the multifaceted costs that it creastes for receiving countries are much more than those faced by non-receiving countries. Because of that reason in the preamble of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees the fourth paragraph highlighted that *"the grant of asylum may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries, and that a satisfactory solution of a problem of which the United Nations has recognized the international scope and nature cannot*

therefore be achieved without international co-operation".⁹ As it can be seen in that quote, the state of refugees were assumed as it may create extra burden for states in the first place. This is because the refugees may pose financial challenges to host countries and next to this financial challenge the nation-states may appear to be seen in other problem areas related to the socio-economic and political fabric (Gottwald, 2014, p. 527).

Considering the management of the potential financial and security challenges, the 1951 Geneva Convention signals the international cooperation but does not specify the scope of the burden-sharing and international solidarity among states on refugee protection. Neither does it identify the mechanisms through which this cooperation will be implemented or operationalized. This international cooperation among nation-states is essentially possible only when any burden-sharing mechanism is specified and implemented by refugee receiving countries. However, there is no binding burden-sharing mechanism among the refugee receiving countries placed by 1951 Geneva Convention or any other complementary bilateral/multilateral agreements.

In the 1970s, burden-sharing came to the fore with legal scholars who promoted global sharing of refugees by connecting refugees preferences with host countries via an "index of wealth and population density" (Suhrke, 1998). Before the Cold War it could be easier to create a sustainable burden-sharing mechanism when the total refugee stock was very small. However, after the 1990s, when Cold War ended, more refugee flows were started especially in Communist Bloc countries such as Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Kosovo. So, the reflexes of nation-states have shaped at that times, and generally tended to be more restrictive while creating asylum and migration management policies. That is because the nation-states' perceptions are generally based on that refugees who are in protracted situations can have potential to create a permanent changes in the social structure of the host society in the long-term (Kale, 2017, p. 63). So, the nation-states argued that burden sharing mechanisms would bring both the responsibility to meet uncertain needs of refugees and financial burden that coming from the management of this uncertainty for the comprehensive integration policy.

⁹ For more information regarding the preamble, it is available at: https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.23_convention%20refugees.pdf (Last Access: 17.07.2021)

States, on the other hand, have exhibited a reluctance to long-term, institutionalized commitments in which other states' rights to draw on the institution, similar to the right to draw on a bank account, are unclear or beyond their control. In this situation, 'drawing rights' would be the equivalent of requests that participating states absorb a specific number of refugees in the event of a huge refugee influx. The financial implications of joining such programs are largely unpredictable because the frequency and scale of these catastrophes are unknown. So, the states, as rational authorities, are not prone to bound themselves in any long-term responsibility-sharing mechanisms that cannot be predictable, and the cooperation between nation-states to share responsibility for refugees in specific circumstances could happen on an *ad hoc* basis (Suhrke, 1998, p. 402).

On the other hand, the effect of Cold War also created a two-fold approach to the refugees. Chimni (1998) explains this approach by highlighting that at the time of Cold War the “normal” refugee image was created which refers to anyone who is a white man and anti-communist while the ones fleeing from less developed countries after the Cold War were defined as the “problematic” refugees (Chimni, 1998, p. 357). Considering the racist approaches to refugee status, it can be argued that the refugees were instrumentalized in the fight between the west and east sides of the Cold War. Additionally, as explained above, the existing refugee protection system was created in the aftermath of WWII to deal with a primarily European displaced population facing very different prospects than today's refugees. So, the current protection needs of asylum seekers and refugee numbers differ from those that exist at that times 1951 Geneva Convention adopted.

Considering the year 2015, for example, it can be said that 5.8 million more people were displaced compared to the previous year. In the report of UNHCR regarding the situation in 2015, UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, stated that since WWII the world has experienced the highest levels of human displacement in 2015. He also added that the crisis is not deriving from only huge numbers of displacement at international level, it is also a crisis that derives from the lack of solidarity to overcome the protection needs of displaced people around the world (UNHCR, 2016, p. 5). So, with The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (The New York Declaration), of which Turkey was an important driver, the necessity of solidarity in terms of providing protection

without any externalization of responsibility in international arena was underlined in 2016.

The New York Declaration was designed to demonstrate the key elements of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) to be applied to large-scale movements of refugees and protracted refugee situations. Within the scope of CRRF, the contracting states agreed that the support for countries hosting a large number of refugees will be delivered, and the promotion of refugee inclusion in host societies is also declared.¹⁰ However, the handling of the refugee crisis outlined in the Declaration was not binding and only represent an alternative to the barriers erected during the 2015 "European migration crisis" (Mathew, 2021). Based on that argument, it also can be said that through the New York Declaration, as it was just a vision document, the international community reacted again on an *ad hoc* basis to prevent the irregular migration toward Europe.

In that regard, the convergence of the preferences of signatory nation-states to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees will be appropriate to explain here. That is because this convention puts international responsibility of protection on contracting states regarding the ones who forcibly displaced or seeking asylum. Considering the definition of the term refugee in 1951 Geneva Convention it was seen that there was a time and geographical limitation for anyone to be eligible for refugee status coming from the "*events occurring in Europe before 1 January 1951*" clause (Geneva Convention, 1951, Article 1-B (1a)). Here, it can be interpreted that the condition of getting refugee status was bound on time and geographical limitation. It was put in purpose to control the mass flows of refugees, especially after the II. World War. However, with the 1967 Protocol this time and geographical limitation removed, but not all of the contracting states of 1951 Convention approved this amendment (UNHCR, 2011, p. 4). Turkey was one of these states that did not remove geographical limitation.¹¹

According to UNHCR statistics, top 5 refugee hosting countries are; Turkey: 3.7 million, Colombia: 1.7 million, Pakistan: 1.4 million, Uganda: 1.4 million and Germany:

¹⁰ More information about the The New York Declaration is available at <https://www.unhcr.org/new-york-declaration-for-refugees-and-migrants.html> (Last Access: 22.09.2021)

¹¹ For more information regarding the limitations on 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Protocol, it is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b73b0d63.pdf> (Last Access: 29.08.2021)

1.2 million (as of end-2020).¹² These numbers show that Turkey is hosting most of the refugees and there is not a fair distribution of refugees around the world. However, the lack of any binding burden-sharing mechanism adopted through the 1951 Geneva Convention makes this global refugee protection regime and governance more complex and challenging. Accordingly, UNHCR offers three durable solutions for better protection of refugees and to realize the burden-sharing between states to some extent. These solutions are; i) voluntary return, ii) resettlement, and iii) local integration.¹³

Considering the Turkish case, it would be beneficial to analyze the numbers of both the voluntary returns and the resettlement. According to the official statistics, it was remarked that over 500.000 Syrians voluntarily returned to Syria as of May 2022.¹⁴ Also, the numbers are showing that less than 1% of the world's total refugees are submitted for resettlement each year, according to UNHCR, which means it remains a very limited durable solution.¹⁵ For the year 2020, UNHCR targeted to resettle 20.000 refugees from Turkey¹⁶, but only 6.097 refugees departed for resettlement. It can be argued that this discrepancy could be derived from the extraordinary pandemic conditions in 2020. However, when have to look at the numbers between the years 2011 and 2021, total number of resettled refugee from Turkey is 149,314,¹⁷ while the number of resettled Syrians from Turkey is 17,739 between 2014 and 2021.¹⁸ So, it can be deduced from these statistics that the resettlement is not enough solution when considered the total refugee stock of Turkey. Hence, based on the voluntary return and resettlement numbers, it can be argued that these options are seemingly far from being a durable solution for refugees in Turkey where approximately 4 million refugees live. That is because the resettlement places provided by other countries are limited and stranded refugee situations in Turkey continue to escalate.

¹² More information is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/> (Last Access: 11.08.2021)

¹³ For more information on the Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern, it is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/solutions.html> (Last Access: 11.08.2021)

¹⁴ More information is available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/suriyelilerin-ulkelerine-gonullu-geri-donusu-suruyor/2595420> (Last Access: 10.07.2022)

¹⁵ For more information, it is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/solutions.html> (Last Access: 31.08.2021)

¹⁶ For more information, it is available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/71064.pdf> (Last Access: 31.08.2021)

¹⁷ For more information, it is available at: <https://rsq.unhcr.org/en/#T5Ob> (Last Access: 31.08.2021)

¹⁸ More information is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last Access: 31.08.2021)

The last projected durable solution is the local integration. This was basically explained as the integration of refugees within the host community. This option might be seen as the long-term and permanent solution for refugees. However, it is a long-lasting process because it consists both the process of acceptance of receiving society and adaptation to the new country for refugees. This process has a three inter-related dimensions (Crisp, 2004):

- It is a *legal dimension* that refugees benefit from the granted basic rights coming from the 1951 Geneva Convention. Pursuant to this convention, countries of asylum should provide refugees the right to seek employment, to engage in other income-generating activities, to own and dispose of property, to enjoy freedom of movement and to have access to public services such as education. This, in the future, can pave the way for the naturalization of refugees.
- It can be regarded as the *economic dimension* that refugees will develop their daily livelihoods by using the right to seek employment. It is important to acquire a level of self-reliance so that refugees will be less reliant to the humanitarian or state aid. In the contrary case, the refugees cannot be considered as locally integrated.
- It is a *social dimension* that gives a support to the refugees to live together with the host community. This should be free from any systematic discriminative narratives or actions by the public authorities and local people. So, this bounded to both refugees and the host community at the end of the day (Crisp, 2004, pp. 1–2).

Considering these dimensions, it can be deduced that a local integration solution is based firstly on the rights and the capability of having the sustainable livelihood circumstances. Then the social dimension accompanies these basic rights prerequisites. Without this social dimension, even if both the legal and economic dimensions provided, it is probably lacked to create a sustainable local integration in the country of asylum. That is why this dimension emphasizes the need of local communities' involvement to reach out the long-term local integration processes.

In such a circumstances, the first countries of asylum will be in protracted refugee situations. That is because the protection is highly needed intervention and the framework

put by UNHCR was seemingly poor to be comprehensive for everyone in need of protection. Here the case of Turkey is worth examining. When scrutinizing the actualized numbers of resettlement and voluntary return, with more than 3.7 million Syrian refugees, it can be seen that Turkey is the country where these options cannot be durable enough and this places Turkey in stranded refugee situation. So, the last projected durable solution which is the local integration might be applied in Turkey's refugee context as a last resort. However, this option has big challenges such as the huge size of population of concern in Turkey and the lack of an institutionalized integration policy at national level.

3.1.2. The Gravity of the Situation in Turkey

In this part, the situation in Turkey will be presented from three angles: the ad-hoc governance character of Syrian forced migration management in Turkey, the burden shift from central government to local governments in that governance mechanism, and the intensity of Syrians in some cities and districts as a challenge to the local integration of Syrian refugees.

The civil war in Syria created mass flows of forcibly displaced people firstly towards neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. Turkey implemented an "open door policy" in response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria with whom Turkey shares the longest land borders. As the Syrians crossed the Turkish borders to seek refuge, Turkish authorities provided them only tents to accommodate in border towns such as Kilis, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Gaziantep. In the first place, the plan was to keep them in refugee camps in separated areas of border towns that's why the politicians called them "guests" in anticipation that they will stay in Turkey just for some time until the unrest in Syria eliminated. That was the reason that they were not granted any legal rights or status in the first few years (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016).

With the intensification of the conflict in Syria, especially in 2013 and 2014, higher numbers of people arrived in Turkey. In 2013, monthly 40.000, and by late 2014 monthly 55.000 people were arriving in Turkey to seek asylum. The continuity of the exodus created a chaotic environment in the context of both asylum procedures and the management of mass flows. In the meantime, Turkey adopted the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2013, which entered into force in 2014. As of early 2015, the Syrian population in Turkey was more than 1.7 million and it has tripled

compared to the end of 2013. Correspondingly, when the open door policy was ended in 2016, the number of Syrians who were seeking asylum in Turkey was approximately 2.8 million.¹⁹ So, the new legislation on asylum and international protection was timely and designed by following the international norms and 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016, pp. 60–61).

Turkey as one of the states keeping the geographical limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention does not grant refugee status within its legal framework to people who arrive from countries outside of Europe. This limitation can be interpreted as a kind of instrument that Turkey use to control the refugee flows and forced migrants beyond especially its southern borders.²⁰ The Article 61 of LFIP clearly shows that this limitation is underlined in Turkey national legislation: *“a person 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, shall be granted refugee status upon completion of the refugee status determination process.”* (LFIP, 2013, Article 61).

Instead of refugee status, Turkey preferred to give a temporary protection status to Syrians. Essentially, there are two reasons to provide temporary protection: i) the national law that prevents giving official refugee status to the ones not coming from Europe, ii) the international 1951 Convention that puts in a way that the refugee status can only be given through individual asylum applications (Kale, 2017, p. 55). This implementation included in international protection response of Turkey, and pursuant to Article 91 of LFIP, *“Temporary protection may be provided for foreigners who have been forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country that they have left, and have arrived at or crossed the borders of Turkey in a mass influx situation seeking immediate*

¹⁹ For more information on the trend of number of Syrians in Turkey, it is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last Access: 15.09.2021)

²⁰ More information is available at <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.6458.pdf> (Last access: 15.09.2021)

and temporary protection.”²¹ This was the first time that asylum legislation of Turkey mentions the definition of temporary protection for the mass inflows. Then, Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) was released in late 2014 to indicate which services will be provided in which conditions. In the 6th chapter of this regulation, detailed regulations have been made on certain services including health, education, labor market access, social assistance, and translating services.²²

The framework of temporary protection defined in LFIP was based on the provision of international protection and defined rights for foreigners in Turkey. It was also comprising the basis of providing the basic needs such as accommodation, health, education and social assistance that Syrians can use. So, a comprehensive integration policy regarding the Syrians, who constitute the vast majority of asylum-seekers in Turkey, was not defined or recognized as an ultimate goal in LFIP. Instead of using the term integration, Article 96 of LFIP used the term as harmonization: *“The Directorate General may, to the extent that Turkey’s economic and financial capacity deems possible, plan for harmonization activities in order to facilitate mutual harmonization between foreigners, applicants and international protection beneficiaries and the society as well as to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be independently active in all areas of social life without the assistance of third persons in Turkey or in the country to which they are resettled or in their own country. For these purposes, the Directorate General may seek the suggestions and contributions of public institutions and agencies, local governments, non-governmental organisations, universities and international organisations.”*²³

This clause can be analyzed in two ways: i) even if the harmonization is characterized as mutual, the basis for harmonization has been placed as provision for foreigners with the information and skills they need to be self-sufficient in all aspects of social life in Turkey, in the country where they are resettled or in their own country, without the support of third parties, ii) since there is not any actor assignment for a well-

²¹ More information is available at <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.6458.pdf> (Last access: 17.09.2021)

²² More information is available at <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/21.5.20146883.pdf> (Last access: 15.09.2021)

²³ More information is available at <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/108031/133291/F-1983140401/TUR108031.pdf> (Last access: 20.09.2021)

framed integration policy implementation, the related article could be commented as if the responsibility of integration or social cohesion has been put into the shoulders of communities. While doing so, it can be argued that the intervention of Turkey's PMM in the context of integration policy-making is based on only providing for some basic needs, and not being willing to develop long-term and sustainable integration policy by including both the social and economic aspects of the integration issue for now.

Additionally, some scholars have argued that Turkey is intentionally used the term harmonization instead of integration as they thought that the public authorities in Turkey is not accepted yet that Turkey is an immigration country anymore (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016). Hence, it can be argued that because of this reason there is not a political will to develop a well-designed and purposeful integration policies at national level. However, Akçapar (2017) has also argued that after a decade living together with refugees and asylum seekers from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Bangladesh the authorities in Turkey had to accept that Turkey has become a *de-facto* immigration country (Akçapar, 2017, 3).

The harmonization clause puts especially the Syrians in an uncertain condition that is deriving from the official temporary protection status of Syrians. This is because, "the asylum process for Syrians in Turkey is characterized by a protracted uncertainty with precarious waiting, scant knowledge, and an ambiguous legal status. It provides a prolonged uncertainty in both timely and spatially *de-facto* context for the asylum process of Turkey" (Biehl, 2015, pp. 57–58). So, the lack of fixed directions regarding the future implementation of Syrians' possible stay in Turkey could feed other gaps and complexities in integration policy towards Syrians. For example, the dilution policy, which entered into force in February 2022, is piloted firstly in the Altındağ district and some Syrians have been resettled in other districts of Ankara after the derelict houses they lived in were demolished. However, as observed in the field, the resettled Syrians are still prone to go back to Altındağ as the national authorities have not applied a solid and rigid mechanism that is supported by the law or additional regulations.²⁴ So, it can be seen that the national level interventions occurred on an *ad-hoc* basis.

²⁴ More information is available at: <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/seyretime-sonrasi-altindag-gitsinler-diyenler-suriyelilerden-kira-alanlar-haber-1554096> (Last access: 17.07.2022)

On the other hand, the way of provision of work permits by The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MoLSS) for Syrians could be regarded as it is creating complexities in the labor market integration of Syrians. That is because, having the work permit is only possible when a local recruiter applies for the work permit on behalf of a Syrian employee.²⁵ This procedure can be analyzed in a way that even if a Syrian can have the right to work in Turkey, the initiative to use that right in appropriate way is in the hands of local employers. This way of providing rights has a great potential to create some illegal workers in the market and finally it creates a barrier in the labor market integration of Syrians.

Regarding the temporary protection status that Syrians benefit in Turkey, Biner (2016) puts that legal pluralism can be seen in the Turkish case, which means different actors such as the NGOs, international organizations and local governments are engaging in better integration of Syrians in Turkey. This comes as an inevitable reality in Turkey because she states that the temporariness of legality and practices in the scope of asylum corresponds to "the reality that the asylum seeker is considered as a transitory subject" and, ultimately, "the impossibility to create a settled existence in Turkey, even if the asylum claim is justified." (Biner, 2016, p. 88). As a result, it can be said that the gaps in the legal/national level of integration policy of Turkey are prone to pose a challenge at the local level integration of Syrians in cities.

The vast majority of those registered Syrians under the mandate of UNHCR, which is 3,763,652 (equates to %65 of total number) live in Turkey as of May 2022.²⁶ In addition, UNHCR statistics say that 5,369,146 Syrians around the world live in urban areas, and 277,686 people stays in refugee camps as of September 2021. It shows that the %95 of total registered Syrians live in asylum countries' urban areas.²⁷ Starting with the Syrian crisis, the burden of providing refugee protection has reached out the maximum of its history both at international and national levels. Also, the official numbers of the PMM denotes that %98.6 of Syrians in Turkey live in urban areas as of April 2022²⁸ and

²⁵ More information is available at <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/3.5.20168375.pdf> (Last access: 21.09.2021)

²⁶ More information is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 02.06.2022)

²⁷ To look over the data, it is available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria> (Last access: 15.09.2021)

²⁸ More information on the Syrian refugee numbers and place of stay is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 29.04.2022)

the term urban refugee is the best fit to call them.²⁹ The reason for this situation can be analyzed in a way that Turkish authorities did not follow a strict reception and settlement policy which means the migration of Syrians into Turkey proceeded in a liberal and unorganized way (Kale & Erdoğan, 2019). As a result, both the lack of burden-sharing in the global refugee protection regime and the lack of a refugee distribution mechanism between Turkish cities contribute to the weight of service provision for local governments in Turkey for Syrian refugees.

The current statistics of PMM gives detail on cities' Syrian refugee populations. According to data released as of September 2021, Syrians prefer to live in metropolitan and border town cities such as İstanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, Adana, Mersin, and Kilis. The most important point here that the ratio of Syrians in cities. Regarding the overall ratio in Turkey, registered Syrians comprise %4.26 of Turkish population as of September 2021. However, in some cities (for example; Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis, Adana, Mersin, Kahramanmaraş, and Şanlıurfa.) the ratio of registered Syrians to Turkish citizens are much higher than the Turkey average.³⁰ İstanbul, as an outlier case, attracts attention because it is home to the largest number of registered Syrians. The distribution of Syrians in İstanbul, with its 39 districts, is likewise imbalanced, as is the case in Hatay, Gaziantep, and Şanlıurfa (Erdoğan, 2019, p. 7). The outputs of Turkey's Syrian forced migration management process which is running on an *ad-hoc* basis can create challenges for the future of localized integration policy development in Turkey. So, focusing on the cities and districts inhabited by the Syrians will be operational to converge the discussion on the subsidiarity in local integration for this study.

The intensity and clustering habits of Syrians in some cities, and especially in some specific neighborhoods can have a potential to create isolated areas. The term ghetto is suitable to explain these areas in terms of ethnic or religious segregations emerged after the mass migration movements (Small, 2008). When there is not any persistent approach to the status of Syrians and the lack of fair refugee distribution among the cities and districts, it can be said that this non-policy is facilitating the ghettoization of Syrians, and the numbers are increasing in some neighborhoods the ghettoization and isolation are

²⁹ For more information about the term of urban refugee, it is available at <https://marmara.gov.tr/UserFiles/Attachments/2017/05/09/2a50f712-6413-489f-9deb-56dc52de7264.pdf> (Last access: 22.09.2021)

³⁰ More information is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 17.09.2021)

inevitable (Erdoğan, 2020b, p. 146). Then it can be claimed that the policy ad-hocracy at national level in integration policy-making could be regarded as a root cause of the ghettoization. In such a condition the lack of social relations between the host community and Syrians can also pose a challenge to social cohesion and integration in the long-term. So, for the long-term purposes regarding the sustainable integration of the Syrian refugees, developing a solid and localized integration policy should be a priority for the central government.

The incidents happened on August 11, 2021, in Altındağ's Battalgazi neighborhood after a young Turkish boy was killed in a fight between Syrians and local people caused the escalation of tensions in the streets, where local people attacked the shops and homes of Syrians. At the time, the illegal crossings of Afghans on Turkey's western borders was trending on social media and there was growing xenophobia among the public. On the other hand, the increase in the Syrian population who are registered in a different city and stay in the Altındağ district made the public opinion more prone to be violent in Altındağ. In following days, PMM released an official declaration by stating some limitations for Ankara province.³¹ The most important ones are;

- Ankara province is closed to the registration of temporary protection as of September 2, 2021.
- Syrians with temporary protection status who are registered in other provinces of Turkey, but live in Ankara will be identified and sent back to the provinces where they were registered, and their residency processes in those provinces will be followed up with a notification obligation.

With these recent restrictions, the central government intervenes at local level to maintain the social order by trying to limit the intensity of Syrians in Ankara. However, the actual numbers and recent research findings on the Altındağ neighborhood already point out that there is a ghettoization in some regions of Altındağ (Kavas et al., 2019). In addition to these restrictions, after the August incidents, the PMM has started for a newly called dilution policy regarding the districts where Syrians constituted ghettos and declared that 16 provinces have been closed to any temporary protection registration for

³¹ More information about the official declaration is available at <https://www.goc.gov.tr/ankara-ili-ozelinde-alinan-kararlar-hakkinda-duyuru> (Last access: 22.09.2021)

Syrians as of February 2022. This dilution policy also widened to cover all the districts with a Syrian population of more than %25 have been restricted to accepting the residence of any foreigner. In this regard, the PMM has stated that if a foreign settlement is detected that is higher than the rates determined at the neighborhood level, relevant incentives are supplied through various means, and consent-based relocations are guaranteed. The pilot research began in the Altındağ district after the tensions in August, 2021, and 4.514 Syrians were left the Altındağ district as of February 2022³² which actually constitutes a quite small range of Syrians live in the Altındağ district.

So, the restrictive intervention of the central government body can be interpreted in a way that it is a kind of response to the huge reaction of host community and an individual incident created tension in ghettos of Altındağ. Also, this low-impact intervention can be assumed as a good sign that the management of migration and refugee protection in Turkey are complex and situation-specific (Çelik & White, 2021), which can be regarded as the result of the national policy ad-hocracy in forced migration governance in Turkey (Biehl, 2015; Natter, 2021). In addition, recognizing the challenges of migration policy development in the Turkish context, the issue of high numbers of irregular Afghan migrants seemingly will be relevant in the future aspects of migration management in Turkey.

The rapid and mass forced migrant influx to Turkey was unexpected when the Syrian war started, and the lack of a comprehensive integration policy at state level made the local communities to accommodate the needs of refugees on *de-facto* setting. In doing so, the lack of state-level integration programs was compensated by the social acceptance of host communities and unprecedented engagement of local governments. Even if there is not any defined responsibility or direct delegation from the center to local governments to provide services for the refugees, some of the local governments took initiatives for service provision not based on any official regulations put by the national integration policy. That's because some municipalities such as Sultanbeyli, Fatih and Esenyurt municipalities have faced with a huge crowded refugee populations in their districts. This un-projected shift in the responsibility of refugee response from the national level to local level created a huge service provision burden in some district municipalities, and the

³² More information is available at: <https://www.haberturk.com/suriyeli-nufus-icin-seyreltme-projesi-baslatildi-3350384> (Last Access: 01.06.2022)

urgent needs of refugees were fulfilled by local governments regardless (Kale & Erdoğan, 2019, p. 225).

The absence of a burden-sharing mechanism at the international level and the reluctance of other states to cooperate with Turkey regarding the Syrian refugees have made Turkey a protracted refugee country. The first intervention implemented by Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) on a disaster management basis to provide basic needs for people taking refuge in Turkey's border towns only (Kaya, Rottmann et al., 2021, p. 40). However, the current number of urban refugees is really high, and seemingly the burden of protection on Turkey's asylum regime converted to the local integration challenges especially for some district municipalities currently.

Analyzing the severity of above mentioned responsibility shift in the Turkish context, it is good to put here that states' responses to the international migrants, especially for the forced migrants, are shaped by two challenges: i) how the external borders can be protected against any illegal crossing?, ii) how to deal with the social transformation that happens inside the country because of fast and intense migrant flows? These questions matter when the hosting countries realized that much of forced migrants will not go back to their home country and they are starting to be a part of the hosting society. Here, the bigger and more important question comes: how the migrants and refugees can be integrated into the host society (Unutulmaz, 2012, p. 137)? This is a challenging question for any country hosting huge numbers of forced migrants or refugees who are seeking international protection, and the case of Turkey perfectly struggling with this challenge. Keeping in mind that, O'Neill and Spybey (2003) also state that the refugees are transforming the cities' culturally, politically and economically.

In that regard, it would be better to focus on the local integration efforts by the municipalities in Turkey. That is because the urban refugees' relations with local communities matter for sustainable social acceptance and the municipalities' involvement can also contribute to this process. So, the current burdensome situation in cities necessitates that the term local integration beyond the definition of UNHCR's three durable solutions and the subsidiarity principle is in action with the local integration needs in urban areas of Turkey. That is because, the local dimension of integration policies is recognized and emphasized by scholars especially in terms of developing and

implementing comprehensive integration policies (Capono & M. Borkert, 2010; Jorgensen, 2012).

Acknowledging the relevance of local dynamics in the creation of integration policies, it is also recognized that each country's approach to integration and achievement of integration as an ultimate objective differs in terms of legislative framework, international context, and political will (Betts et al., 2020; Dionigi, 2017). As regards, investigating the approaches to the integration term while considering the Turkish context will be appropriate and timely for this study.

3.2. Different Approaches to Integration

The term *integration* is used in a wide spectrum for both the natural sciences and the social sciences. In this study, the term will be used in the context of international migration literature in a way to develop a ground that paves the way for states to manage ethnic and cultural diversity associated with migration. Within this context, the term also will be evaluated in terms of whether it is suitable for the migration governance at local level or not. Since the international migrant stock is growing and the migration governance at international, national, and local levels are interconnected; managing various types of diversity has become more challenging for states (Schönwälder, 2020).

Therefore, the term integration in terms of creating a response by nation-states has been the *basket concept* which refers to any policy implementations between the assimilation and multiculturalism approaches, which have become unacceptable anymore (Rodríguez-García, 2010). That is because both assimilation and multiculturalism approaches offer different frameworks for the management of the diversity that came with migration, but at the end of the day the main aim of these policy formulations is the integration of foreigners (Favell, 2015).

Alba and Nee (2007), as reformist scholars in assimilation studies, have examined the first phase of assimilation approach. During the first phase, called classical assimilation discussion, assimilation has undertaken a double duty: i) representing a common ideology for the perception of the American experience and, in relation to this, an ideal reflecting the direction in which ethnic and racial divisions formed in the US, and, ii) representing the fundamental principle for the social science understanding the

social scientific processes of change experienced by immigrants and, more importantly, subsequent generations. (Alba & Nee, 2007, p. 1). In addition, Kivisto (2005, p. 8) also highlighted that assimilation was perceived as a tool of making all people in the society similar, and this includes all the society not only immigrants. That is because, the main objective of assimilation theory was the creation of common cultural life and to make it happen all the locals and immigrants should be melted in one pot (Zangwill, 1921).

Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx (2016) argue that the precursors of integration studies were classical assimilation theories and these theories have a very nascent understanding of the real world. Accordingly, in these studies, settlement and incorporation have been seen as a more or less linear processes in which immigrants were supposed to change almost entirely to merge with the mainstream culture and society (Garcés-Mascareñas & Penninx, 2016). In that regard, Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx (2016) had provided some critiques. The most important one was related to the vagueness of the term “mainstream”. How can a society be described as mainstream? Which features of the host societies can be called as representing the mainstream culture? So, while evaluating the changes that occurred in characteristics of immigrants and any interactions between the host society and newcomers it is impossible to be based on any mainstream cultural habits.

Additionally, the multiculturalism approach³³, which appeared as a more tolerant model to manage migration-induced diversity was firstly implemented in Canada. This approach foresees that the immigrants from different ethnic groups should be recognized by nation-states as distinct cultural communities living together with the host society (Unutulmaz, 2012). By contrast with the assimilationist perspective, this recognition also covers the acceptance of different ethnic identities and races to be able to live without expecting from any of them to forget their language, traditions, cultures, and so on. At that point, Kymlicka (1995) reminded that immigrant groups should not be considered as nations, but should be considered as a part of community who need to learn the dominant culture’s language and norms.

³³ Before assessing what multiculturalism offers to integration studies and philosophies, the difference between the usage of “multiculturalism” and “multicultural societies” should be remarked. While multicultural societies represent the diversities a community has, multiculturalism occurred as a political intervention to manage the diversities that multicultural societies have. So, multiculturalism is a comprehensive policy that governments generally apply.

While implementing multiculturalist policies there are two important points that should not be forgotten as suggested by Vasta (2007). These are “providing to immigrant rights, social equality, and participation possibilities”, and “accepting the cultural differences through recognizing them in the society” (Vasta, 2007, p. 7). According to her, these principles need to be accepted by governments, the society, and immigrants, alike. Because these principles have complementary characteristics and cultural recognition will be meaningless unless immigrants do not participate in societal institutions such as education and labor markets. While there is a large and expanding literature on normative and descriptive types of integration policy regimes, comparative studies rarely address the topic of what forms of policy intervention are implied by these policies (Lutz, 2017, p. 2).

Social and political integration of migrants into the host society have been seen as the common goal, but there are no fixed policy formulations or understandings to get that goal (Göksel, 2019). The reason for this lack of fixed definition regarding what integration is or how it can be achieved is that it changes from “country to country, over time, and it depends on the interests, values, and perspectives of the people concerned” (Stephen Castles et al., 2002, p. 112). Because of that reason, different immigration countries take different actions to manage the diversities they have. The difference between states’ actions regarding the management of diversity generally derives from different historical backgrounds, societal features, political agendas, and projections towards the demography and new minorities.

The term “new minorities” is important here. This term was firstly used by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) through Edinburgh Declaration, in 2004, which “recognizes that in addition to “traditional” national minorities, there are large “new” minorities in several OSCE participating States as a result of migration during recent decades” (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2004, p. 8). So, it is argued that the “new minorities” refer to the diversity that came with migration, and the management of this diversity should be provided by policies developed after the consideration of different local dynamics in different state contexts. This conceptualization also means that Europe is aware that the new generation migrant populations will provide different characteristics from those known as traditional ethnic minorities.

In that regard, similar to Dekker et. al., (2015), the researcher distinguished assimilation, multiculturalism and integration as typical policy formulations to converge the discussion in this study to the best-fit actors in an environment where more localized integration policies are needed especially at city level. Thus, managing the diversities in that “new” minorities, and also managing the “new minorities” in the nation-states will be the next decades’ main challenge in the world where there are currently 281 million international migrants according to World Migration Report (2022) released by IOM (McAuliffe & Triandafyllidou, 2021).

The discussion towards the policy development for the integration of migrants into the host society could be placed on a continuum of policy approaches with two ends: assimilation and multiculturalism (Göksel, 2019). Even if these two approaches represent the opposite ends, they share a “common goal” which is to integrate the newcomers into the host society. Thus, to attain that goal, the direction of discussion towards the best policy development for integration will be based on the preferences of policy-makers who are able to give a more assimilationist or multiculturalist character to the integration policy as a public policy. It can be argued that the nature of this preferences derives from any changes regarding the socio-economic, political, and historical assumptions about the interaction and the relationships between the host society and migrant groups (Chung & Cheong, 2011).

To develop further context-based policy formulations and analysis regarding the situation in Turkey, the term integration will be investigated in terms of what they offer and how they are defined. Then, the integration policy-making process in Turkey will be scrutinized regarding the scope for municipalities to take a role in local migration governance in the field and how the integration policy implementation process at local level is affected by the national policy ad-hocracy at national level.

3.2.1. Integration Approach

In reference to policies and strategies to manage the diversity that came with migration, the term integration has been used as a *basket concept* in this study. There are two reasons for this: i) the term “integration” became a dominant concept to identify the aim of migration policies of states at national level (Favell, 2003), ii) it can be asserted that the policies developed by both assimilationist and multiculturalist policies are also

referring to integration of newcomers in the long run. So, the scope of this term is very comprehensive that can include different and conflicting policy formulations such as assimilation and multiculturalism.

Unutulmaz (2012) indicates that the term integration came out as a result of comprehensive societal transformations that locals in Europe have been exposed to by immigrant flows. Then nation-states started to use the term integration because it is vague and this provides a flexible ground for politicians while developing migration policies in a broader sense (Unutulmaz, 2012, p. 141). In 2004, EU has declared a set of principles on integration because it appears as a policy challenge. With the Common Basic Principles of Integration (CBP) the term integration was accepted as a policy outcome while defining the need of implementation of common integration policies in Europe (Alba, Reitz, & Simon, 2012).

Conceptualization of the term “Integration”

Note here that the term integration as a common goal of migration policies, also has some alternative terms such as inclusion, incorporation, adaptation, accommodation, and cohesion (Unutulmaz, 2012, p. 139). In the Turkish context, as another alternative, the term *harmonization*³⁴ is used. So, through the term harmonization, the integration process is defined by the Turkish legislation in a way that immigrant groups may preserve their cultural identity but are expected to live in harmony with the host society (Hoffmann & Samuk, 2016, p. 10).

Considering the basic definitions of the term of integration, it needs to be noted that there is no universally agreed-upon definition. So, the term provides a broad scope for scholars to discuss the necessities and prerequisites for successful integration of newcomers in a society and for policy-makers to configure the public policies according to public opinion and the current political projections regarding the management of diversity. However, a very general definition of the term can be offered as the “process of newcomers becoming a part of the host society” (Stephen Castles et al., 2002, p. 115). What is more, Stephen Castles et al. (2002) argue that integration is a two-way process

³⁴ The official definition of the term harmonization is available at Presidency of Migration Management (PMM)’s website: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/uyum-hakkinda> (Last access: 13.06.2021)

that is based on the interactions which could possibly make the newcomers a part of the receiving society.

Regarding the different formulations of integration as a political goal, Favell (1998) suggests that every country has a philosophy of integration while adopting the public policy in accordance with the different issues such as the demographic structure, socio-economic conditions, and ethnic boundaries. So, this is a kind of acknowledgement that states' attitudes are generally shaped by the local political agenda, which means integration in practice can be differentiated because of context-related issues. Furthermore, Heckmann and Schnapper (2003) support this argument by analyzing the right strategy for integration research in terms of various models of integration, because every nation-state requires adaptation in terms of future policy results. Additionally, it can be asserted that the term integration is becoming more useful for both the empirical research and for policy discussions in diverging national and city contexts (Penninx, 2004).

Supporting and widening this standpoint, it can be remarked that the integration is “not a static concept” but rather a dynamic one “which tends to be shaped by historical, political, social and legal conditions” of each country (Favell, 1998; Unutulmaz, 2012). On the other hand, Unutulmaz (2012) then has asserted that the integration term became a political agenda-based societal project, which means the context-related issues have huge impacts on the integration policy formulations (Unutulmaz, 2012, p. 144). In addition, Hynie (2018) puts that the ability of refugees to integrate, on the other hand, is heavily influenced by policies that define their social and material environment.

Considering the different contexts and projections regarding the integration term, it will be appropriate to discuss the different conceptualizations regarding the idea of integration of foreigners that came with migration. In that regard, Heckmann and Schnapper (2003) intend to define the integration term as being a process based on four dimensions: 1. structural, 2. cultural, 3. social, and 4. identificational.

The first dimension -*structural integration*- indicates obtaining some basic rights and access to essential institutions (housing, education, health, labor market and participation to political life via citizenship right) of the host society. They also add that learning language and enhancement of social relations between newcomers and host

society is necessary for the migrants to participate in the new “whole” as new “members” of the society. The second dimension –*cultural integration*– basically derives from the new membership status of the migrants. Heckmann and Schnapper (2003) see the cultural integration as a process in which behavioral, cognitive and cultural changes of individuals occur through time. But, it does not mean that immigrants are required to abandon their home country’s values or cultural symbols. So, their explanation on the second dimension, cultural integration or acculturation, is based on the mutual exchanges made between the newcomers and local people.

The third dimension is *social integration* which means being a part of the host society. It is reflected in people’s private relations and group membership through marriage, friendship or social links in the society. This reflection in the social life boundaries is quite important for immigrants to be accepted as a part of the new society. The fourth dimension is called as *identificational integration* through which the sense of belonging required for immigrants to be identified by ethnic and/or national characteristics of the new society (Heckmann & Schnapper, 2003). Considering these dimensions, it could be argued that integration is a holistic process in which every dimension complements the others.

Ager and Strang (2008) also made a major contribution regarding the conceptualization and operationalization of integration. They focused on the mid-level comprehensive framework and identified ten domains based on four levels for understanding the dimensions of successful integration. They argued that a solid integration definition can be built on four main thematic areas which are; i) markers and means for housing, employment, education and health; ii) social connection defined as social bridges, bonds, and links; iii) facilitators which are the essential needs to interact with the host community such as local language and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability in daily life; iv) the last thematic area is the foundation that includes rights and citizenship which are seen as a fundamental items for refugees' full and equal participation in society. Ten domains by four thematic areas can be seen below in Figure 2.



Figure 2: A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration

Source: (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 170).

Recognizing the rights of immigrants in accordance with the national regulations and providing the status that immigrants benefit to live appropriately could have some constraints. These constraints generally derive from legal frameworks and socio-economic dynamics of the host country. Favell (2015) agrees that integration policies should be customized to the demands of each state and context. He also claims that integration has come to be thought of as the sum of “a diverse range of state policies, laws, local initiatives, and societal dispositions – which could be implemented by many agencies at many levels – comes to be thought of as a single nation-overall state's strategy or policy of integration” (Favell, 2015, p. 75). So, above-mentioned domains created by Ager and Strang (2008) for conceptual framework of successful integration definition also provides valuable insights regarding the interplay between national and local level integration policy implementation. In this regard, it can be argued that the *Foundation* and *Markers and Means* headings could be regarded as the areas of integration at national level while the *Social Connection* and *Facilitators* headings as the areas of integration at local level (Dekker et al., 2015).

That's because the rights and citizenship domain under the *Foundation* heading refers to the limits of the status of the ones who can be expected to be integrated and these

limits as a kind of legal framework are drawn by the central government's regulations and specific laws. On the other hand, the domains (employment, housing, education and health) under the *Markers and Means* heading are bounded to the *Foundation* heading because the legal status defined by the central government at national level also regarded as a reference point to regulate the specific sectors such as employment, housing, education and health. Additionally, under the *Social Connection* heading, social bonds and social bridges domains which are referring intra and inter group relations between the foreigners and local people, could be regarded as a kind of local integration area where spontaneous integration that is not strictly designed/framed by a law. So, the *Facilitators* heading with two domains (language and cultural knowledge and safety and stability) is playing an important role in terms of the engagement of foreigners into the new social environments through the interaction with the local people at local level.

While investigating the integration policies of Turkey, it should be noted that the term harmonization was used to refer mainly to the social cohesion phase of the integration by putting “...to equip the foreigners with the knowledge and skills to be independently active in all areas of social life without the assistance of third persons...” in Article 96 of LFIP. So, it can be argued that Turkey prefers to prioritize the harmony between newcomers and host society in social life. Additionally, as discussed by Akçapar and Şimşek (2018), citizenship and integration are in fact complementary concepts, and their complex interaction is influenced by many political, economic, and sociocultural facets of a community in addition to being influenced by governmental policy (Akçapar & Şimşek, 2018). As a result, for this study, it is preferred to use the term integration instead of harmonization because integration is conceptualized in this research as a comprehensive and broad term that could refer both to the structural and social phases of integration of newcomers as discussed by Hynie (2018) and Favell (2015).

Conceptualizing Local Integration

Some scholars are becoming increasingly interested in the local dimensions of integration (Alexander, 2007; Caponio & Borkert, 2010). That is because, the implementation of the national integration policies at local level sometimes can have difficulties and in order to provide a sustainable integration policy-making the local pragmatism is needed at the end of the day (Jorgensen, 2012). On the other hand,

Emilsson (2015) also stated that integration policy-making at local level is recognized in Europe and there are some knowledge and experience-sharing projects between cities such as Cities for Local Integration Policy (CLIP)³⁵ and EuroCities Network³⁶. Supporting these standpoints, Hovil (2014) asserted that both the national and local level integration should be complemented and they should promote each other for the purpose of having a veritably durable solution, namely the local integration of refugees.

The process of integration of newcomers starts at local level because integration policies are expected to adopt a place-based approach, tailored to the needs of migrants in their workplaces, as well as the unique peculiarities of host communities. So, the integration could be considered as it takes place in people's homes, neighborhoods, and the schools to which they send their children, as well as in supermarkets and public spaces (Jeanette, 2018, p. 24). Therefore, the need for locally-fit integration policies emerged. Then, the local turn in developing integration policies has changed the focus of inquiry to migration-related diversity at the city level (Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017). It is commonly acknowledged that migrants are increasingly shaping modern urban environments around the world and that the global trend of decentralization makes cities major participants in the governance of migration and migration-related diversity. So, the responsible actors who will be implementing and adapting the integration policies will inevitably be the local governments (Simsek-Caglar & Schiller, 2018).

However, in the Turkish case, it should be stated that according to the Turkish legislations the local governments are not able to develop an integration policy. Therefore, it is an issue that has to be designed and developed at national level as a kind of long-term strategy that requires a lot of public institutions' engagement in the first place (Lowndes & Polat, 2020; Memişoğlu & Yavcan, 2020). Afterwards, it could be expected from the national integration policy to leave a maneuvering area for local governments to adapt and customize the national policy for better governance of migration-related diversity and inclusion of foreigners. Therefore, the inclusion of local government in the process of policy development at the national level and the flexibility of policy transformation to local should be ensured in the implementation of policies

³⁵ More information is available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/clip-european-network-of-cities-for-local-integration-policies-for-migrants> (Last Access: 07.04.2022)

³⁶ More information is available at: <https://eurocities.eu/> (Last Access: 07.04.2022)

(Penninx, 2009). In that regard, it is good to remind here that the local integration conceptualized by UNHCR is referring to the legal, economic, and social dimensions of integration at the destination country level which is also a national level.

Yet, in this study, the researcher will address the term local integration that refers to social cohesion activities and service provision dimensions at city and district level because the case studies of this thesis are two district municipalities in Ankara. This is because integration policy-making is not one size fits every context and different legal regulations and different local dynamics necessitate more localized and customized measures/implementations. So, the local integration conceptualization in this study derives from the combination of social cohesion and service/aid provision at local level rather than the national level. The social cohesion activities could be addressed in a way that creates some common environments and socialization areas that promote the interactions between local people and refugees. On the other hand, the service provision is investigated to understand whether the municipalities ignore the refugees in their service provision. That is thought to be an important indicator that could show how the municipalities approach to the existence of refugees in the district.

In short, my conceptualization will be mainly based on the local governments' capacity and willingness regarding local integration of refugees that are shaped by mostly the national level legal framework. So, before discussing the local migration governance in Turkey, the forced migration management and integration policies of Turkey will be presented in the next section to elaborate on the current situation regarding the integration of Syrians in Turkey.

3.3. Management of Forced Movements in Turkey

While Turkey has long been considered a country of emigration, it has become a country that increasingly receives immigrants due to its growing economy, its accession process to the European Union (EU), and its geopolitical position that borders with Europe. In addition, an increasing number of transit migrants have become stranded in Turkey. This is because Turkey has been seen as a safe refuge for asylum seekers from neighboring Middle Eastern countries and further afield. Turkey's status as a "transition country" and its attempts to join the EU are putting pressure on the country's immigration

and asylum policy to be overhauled (İçduygu, 2015; Kirişci, 2007). The existing migration management system in Turkey started to be shaped after the Syrian civil war. With the instant and huge mass humanitarian movements in its southern border, Turkey adopted the LFIP in 2013. Prior to this, Turkey applied its asylum policy and migration management based on three documents; i) 1934 Law on Settlement, ii) 1951 Geneva Convention, and iii) 1994 Regulation on Asylum (İçduygu, 2015).

While the Law on Settlement has firstly put the main framework of migration management and asylum policy in Turkey, the essential goal of this law was to accept the ones as immigrants who were people of Turkish culture and descent.³⁷ The 1951 Geneva Convention also served as a universal basis for the responsibility of nation-states to provide protection for displaced people. As suggested above, Turkey has maintained the geographical limitation to only offer official refugee status to asylum-seekers from Europe. Last but not least, 1994 Regulation on Asylum³⁸ which was designed as a response to the mass influx that came from Iraq can be seen as the first detailed national legislation to regulate the asylum claims in Turkey (Kirişci, 1996).

Legal Framework of Protection Regime in Turkey

Since Turkey was located at the crossroads of forced migration flows, it has experienced increasing numbers of forced displacement incidents (Özgür & Özer, 2010). Thus, having both the immigrant and transit country characters, Turkey's experience in hosting the displaced people especially coming from its southern borders in the last two decades made the asylum policy framework of Turkey more flexible and ad-hoc (Öztürk, 2015, p. 394). However, the 'EU-ization' step in constructing a single asylum system has already begun in the Turkish context, with the issue of the European Council's Accession Partnership Document in 2001 (and its later amendment in 2003) (İçduygu, 2007; Öztürk, 2017, p. 197).

The mass flows of Syrians started in 2011 also facilitated the law-making process of a more comprehensive asylum and migration management policy in Turkey. At the central government level, under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the

³⁷ More information on this law is available at <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/2733.pdf> (Last Access: 29.09.2021)

³⁸ More information on this law is available at <https://www.refworld.org/docid/49746cc62.html> (Last Access: 29.09.2021)

Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) was established through LFIP that came into force in 2014 to manage the international migration, and to control the irregular and forced migration in accordance with the national priorities and binding international conventions. It turned into the PMM in 2022, reflecting a growth in its size as well as significance.

Additionally, some general provisions on both the mobility of foreigners towards the Turkish borders and non-refoulement principle, residence types, deportation conditions, international protection, temporary protection (TP) and harmonization have been put in LFIP. TP was applied in the Turkish context as an alternative to international protection and it was adopted based on the conditions of the European Council's (EC) 2001 Directive on Temporary Protection (Öztürk, 2017). Due to the fact that TP provides a practical solution for basic protection needs in mass-influx situations, its flexibility and the ambiguity of its relationship to international protection could lead to a trap for people in need of international protection, where access to the regular asylum procedure and thus to long-term solutions other than repatriation may be deemed impossible (Edwards, 2012).

Even if the legal status of Syrian refugees designated in LFIP's Article 91 as TP status holders, the specific rights and ways to meet the needs of Syrians in Turkey clarified in the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) that came into force on October 2014.³⁹ Both the LFIP and TPR can be seen as the complementary documents on the grounds of the management of asylum process, the human mobility towards Turkish borders, and the management of mass-influx situations. However, the framework of TPR is more suitable to be called as an emergency response has arisen through practice rather than a legally binding international instrument.

Further, the implemented protection regime in Turkey has some challenges that bring both insecurities and uncertainties in daily life of the TP status holders. The first challenge comes from the time limitation. (Öztürk, 2017) has highlighted that TPR does not put any time limit for the duration of TP and delivers the authority to decide on time

³⁹ For more details on the specific services for temporary protection status holders, please see: <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/21.5.20146883.pdf> (Last Access: 03.10.2021)

limitation to the President.⁴⁰ So, this creates a big uncertainty on the time of stay and has the potential to weaken the possible social cohesion between Syrians and local communities in Turkey. However, the original EC Directive on TP was offering a time limit as maximum three years. Secondly, Article 11 of TPR states that the termination of TP is also bounded on the President's decision, and there was not any defined objective criteria for the collective termination clarified in TPR. Thirdly, TPR does not provide a right to TP status holders to apply individually for international protection even if the EC's 2001 Directive on TP offers access to international protection at any stage of TP (Öztürk, 2017, pp. 201–202). So, it can be inferred that there is always a potential for TP status holders to be insecure and being in protracted refugee situations, and all these combinations of challenges tended to create a three-layered uncertainty set at the legal ground.

When analyzing the TPR which is essentially providing a protection regime, detailed regulations have been made regarding certain services for temporary protection beneficiaries. However, these regulations are rapidly designed in accordance with pragmatic reasons and instant needs that's why it is not based on the law that is binding (Edwards, 2012). It means that it is open to be fragile in terms of change or cancellation at any time by the decision of the President. So, TPR comes with this kind of embedded insecurity and complicates the integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey. As a result, the current temporality and flexibility of the asylum system narrow the scope for Turkey's integration policy development, and the longer the integration policy implementation time, the higher the cost of this policy.

Thus, the legal ambiguity that comes with the TPR regarding the TP status for Syrians made the integration policy of Turkey more unforeseeable in terms of not being bounded by a reliable and solid framework which contains the detailed conditions of some interventions/measures for the sustainable integration of Syrians.

⁴⁰ Before the 2019 amendment, the responsible body to decide on issues regarding the temporary protection was the Board of Ministries. More information is available at: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2019/12/20191225-38.pdf> (Last Access: 13.10.2021)

3.3.1. Turkey's Integration Policy Challenges

Considering the legal framework of Turkey's forced migration management particularly on Syrian refugees, it would be good to provide a scope for the integration policy development of Turkey. That's because, it must be conceded that Turkey is in a "protracted refugee situation" as described by UNHCR (2004) as "having refugee populations of 25,000 or more who have been in exile in developing countries for five or more years." (Loescher & Milner James, 2006, p. 106). In such circumstances, with more than 3.7 million Syrian refugees, Turkey represents the most unique case in the world. So, the need of a comprehensive integration policy cannot be ignored in Turkish context.

In this regard, the clause of harmonization in LFIP can be assumed as a way of defining the possible actors that could play a role in the integration policy of Turkey. İçduygu and Şimşek (2016) argued that the term "harmonization" is used instead of "integration" by LFIP, indicating a prudent approach to integration difficulties in the Turkish context. Because Turkey was assumed to be more of an emigration and transit country than an immigration one, the laws governing integration were relatively lax. So, there was not an officially formulated comprehensive integration policy of the country that aims at integrating international migrants and refugees into the wider societal context (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016, p. 62).

An Overview of Uncertainties

The Article 96 of LFIP states that *"The Directorate General may, to the extent that Turkey's economic and financial capacity deems possible, plan for harmonization activities in order to facilitate mutual harmonization between foreigners, applicants and international protection beneficiaries and the society as well as to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be independently active in all areas of social life without the assistance of third persons in Turkey or in the country to which they are resettled or in their own country. For these purposes, the Directorate General may seek the suggestions and contributions of public institutions and agencies, local governments, non-governmental organisations, universities and international organisations."* Based on this article, it can be argued that there is not a specific actor delegated by the LFIP to follow and implement integration policy both at the national and local level.

As Durmuş (2021) analyzed that while LFIP minimally referred to local governments whose contributions can be sought while developing any harmonization-related activities or policies, the TPR does not include any assignments for the local governments regarding the integration policy at the national or local level (Durmuş, 2021, p. 127). It also can be considered that while TPR provides some details on the reception implementation of forced migrants, it refers voluntary return and resettlement in a third country as the only long-term solutions.⁴¹ So, it can be inferred that the local integration as a durable solution is not legally recognized in TPR for Turkey's Syrian refugees (Durmuş, 2021, p. 127).

In that regard, understanding the institutional standing for the better integration policy of Turkey, there are two important documents at central government level. The first one is the 11th Development Plan that was released in 2019 by the Directorate of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, and covers the years between 2019 and 2023. In that plan, under the Interaction of Global Developments in Turkey heading, Article 96 states that *“as internal migration concentrates particularly in provinces with developing economy and external migration increases and concentrates in certain provinces due to instabilities in the neighboring countries, effective policies are needed to address the population distribution and the integration of migrant population with urban life.”*⁴² This clause could be commented that the central government also recognizes the need for effective integration policy-making especially in the cities where external migrants mostly settled and concentrated.

Additionally, in the same document, the Policies and Measures sub-heading, which is under the External Migration heading covers two important points: i) the institutional structure of migration management will be strengthened and its effectiveness will be increased (Article 661), and ii) harmonization of people under international protection and temporary protection to social life will be increased (Article 662). Based on these points, it can be deduced that central government is recognizing the shortcomings

⁴¹ More details can be seen between the Article 42 and 45 at: <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/21.5.20146883.pdf> (Last Access: 20.10.2021)

⁴² More information is available at: <https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/OnbirinciKalkinmaPlani.pdf> (Last Access: 20.10.2021)

on the ground regarding the ineffectiveness of current policies on the integration of both international protection and temporary protection status holders.

The second important document is the Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan which was released in 2020 by the PMM. As the main acting agency in migration management of Turkey at central government level, PMM aimed to cover all stakeholders who are working in the harmonization/integration area in Turkey to have a road map for the coordination and identification of the priorities. In doing so, six thematic areas were identified under the umbrella of harmonization, namely social cohesion, information, education, health, labor market, and social support (social services and aids).⁴³

Social cohesion has been defined as the first strategic priority in this document. For this priority PMM and the contributors put three goals: i) managing the social perception of immigration and immigrants and the attitude towards foreigners in a way that contributes to social cohesion, ii) developing coexistence and mutual dialogue at the local level, iii) ensuring the active involvement of migrants in consultation mechanisms at the local level. Among these three goals, the second one is standing out in terms of assigning an actor for the related goal and recognizing the shortcomings that will be fixed via legal, administrative and institutional reforms. As defined in the second goal's implementation method, *"making necessary legal, administrative and institutional arrangements in order to strengthen the role of municipalities regarding social cohesion"* phrase has been put as the first target under the goal. So, it is a crucial step that the need of local government engagement has been recognized in a strategy paper prepared at national level.

Even if there is a need of reform for the local governments' further engagement in integration of immigrants⁴⁴ at local level, this document will be a strategic one which provides some milestones to be accomplished because it defines some current shortcomings. Same as the 11th Development Plan, Harmonization Strategy Document

⁴³ Detailed information on the thematic areas is available at: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/kurumlar/goc.gov.tr/Yayinlar/UYUM-STRATEJI/Uyum-Strateji-Belgesi-ve-Ulusal-Eylem-Plani.pdf> (Last Access: 20.10.2021)

⁴⁴ The definition of immigrant used in Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan document, unlike the meaning used in the Settlement Law, has been used to cover foreigners who have the opportunity to stay legally, persons who have applied for international protection or status, and Syrians under temporary protection, as mentioned in the LFIP and LFIP's Implementation Regulation.

and National Action Plan's offers and advices are essentially providing a framework for the process of better developing and implementing an integration policy. So, in these plans, it is not possible to see any reference to any agency to actualize the integration policy of Turkey, because there is not a holistic and clear so-called integration policy. However, this document is at least a good sign for the future perspectives on the localized integration policy approach of Turkey. This is because under the Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan's first strategic priority, which is the social cohesion, strengthening the role of municipalities was defined as one of the strategic aims to develop the coexistence and mutual dialogue at the local level.

An Administrative Pathology: Ad-hocracy

In addition to the uncertainties derived from the legal protection framework, Göksel (2019) has also tried to define the obstacles that Syrian refugees face in Turkey's integration policies. In doing so, she benefited from the "Just Integration" theory developed by Honneth (2014) in the context of the reciprocal recognition of both immigrants' and local peoples' identities. According to this theory, the first step in defining the obstacles to immigrants' integration into their host society is to diagnose social pathologies occurred in the host country's recognition order. So, it can be argued that one-sided or narrow interpretations of normative values such as legal equality, freedom, and accomplishment, as well as opposing institutional rationalities, result in social pathologies (Honneth, 2014). In this regard, Göksel (2019) claims that the Turkish context has two social pathologies: i) the inconsistency between legal and public discourses on integration, and ii) high unregistered employment rates of Syrian refugees.

In the first pathology, Göksel (2019) has investigated both the new legal setting established by LFIP to see if it contains any positive changes towards an integration policy and the discourses of political leaders concerning the future status of Syrians and their approaches to the integration. Göksel (2019) has argued that the LFIP in terms of legal and institutional frameworks of the integration policy formulation seemingly has made a progress. With the Article 96, the term *harmonization* was firstly used to refer to the reciprocal character of integration activities and programs in accordance with the needs of foreigners. However, some officials highlight that the hospitality and tolerance of Turkish culture are applicable for the Syrian refugees as they are guests in Turkey for

a while. Since in international law there is no equivalent for the term “guest”, that kind of explanations contradicts with the legal ground and overshadows the new legal discourse on the harmonization of Turkey (Göksel, 2019; İçduygu, 2015).

According to Göksel (2019), the second pathology derives from the high level of involvement of Syrians in the informal market. The measures and regulatory interventions regarding this issue were firstly defined by the Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection which was adopted in 2016.⁴⁵ In this pathology, the argumentation provided by Göksel (2019) focuses on the direct outcome of the related regulation, which was the high rate of informal employment that poses a real challenge for the integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey. In doing so, Göksel (2019) defined the reasons of high rates of informal employment among Syrians in three categories: i) the existence of a dual labor market in Turkey, ii) refugees' inadequate language skills, and iii) the difficulties in validating refugees' qualifications (Göksel, 2019, p. 200). When we look at the number of issued work permits for Syrian refugees between the years 2011 and 2021, it is seen that there are only 140,301 people working legally in total.⁴⁶ It is a very low figure considering the number of working age population of Syrians (those aged 15-64)⁴⁷, which is 2.147.261 as of October 2021.⁴⁸

Although Göksel (2019) has properly observed the social pathologies, it can be said that there is an additional administrative pathology which is the ad-hocracy in migration governance that could be regarded as the root cause of two social pathologies. The term ad-hocracy can be explained in a way that to call the policy development process without any clear delegations and legal framework toward a specific aim. So, in the lack of specific actor assignment in LFIP for integration, and in the lack of certain time interval for the TP status to be expired put by TPR, the actors in the field became more tended to act in accordance with its capacities and priorities in Turkey. In that regard, the term *ad-*

⁴⁵ Detailed information is available at: <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/3.5.20168375.pdf> (Last Access: 15.10.2021)

⁴⁶ This is calculated by the researcher by using data released on the the Ministry of Labor and Social Security's website. It is available at: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-58329307> (Last access: 30.10.2021)

⁴⁷ This age range is chosen in parallel with the definition of OECD while evaluating the demographic features of different countries. It is available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/working-age-population/indicator/english_d339918b-en (Last access: 30.10.2021)

⁴⁸ This value was obtained by the researcher by adding the number of Syrian refugees between the ages of 15 and 64. Detailed information is available at PMM's website: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638> (Last access: 30.10.2021)

hocracy needs to be better investigated and analyzed to understand the additional administrative pathology which is characterized by the lack of institutionalization of integration policy in Turkey.

The national policy ad-hocracy has evolved from a discrepancy of official and *de-facto* policies, a failure to predict the results of policy decisions, and, as a result, reconciling public policies with the resulting unexpected conditions, and sovereign nations' poor adaptability to transnational policy processes. So, policy ad-hocracy in immigration policies might be said to have resulted in a mostly unplanned settlement and a policy paradox or malaise that lingers (Miller, 1986, p. 64). On the other hand, Natter (2021) has investigated both the bureaucratic organization and public policy literatures to elaborate how (un)intentional character of ad-hocracy affect the state's power. Afterward, she explains that in the bureaucratic organization studies, the ad-hocracy was shaped as an intentional institutional set-up that is establishing some specific units to be able to respond instantly to problems in complex and changing conditions beyond the bureaucratic hierarchy, while increasing the state power. Regarding the public policy literature, she underlined that ad-hocracy is such an unintended consequence of policy implementation, arguing that the gap between policies on paper and policy implementation practices is bound to create ambiguity, unpredictability, and ultimately deviations from initial policy goals where the state power is decreased (Natter, 2021).

Natter also (2021) reconceptualized ad-hocracy as an *intentionally ambiguous governance strategy* to secure state power to make a comparison between Tunisia and Morocco's immigration policy. In doing so, she has used the term governance to refer to the process and dynamics that characterize the entire policy cycle, from agenda-setting to decision-making and implementation; and state power is defined as the ability of institutions – both political actors like the government, parliament, and president/monarch and administrative actors like high-level civil servants and street-level bureaucrats – to achieve their objectives, maintain control, and implement policies (Lindvall & Teorell, 2017; Natter, 2021). In that regard, it can be argued that Natter (2021) uses the term ad-hocracy to address the flexibility and case-by-case arrangements in immigration and asylum policies of both Morocco and Tunisia. Then, Natter (2021) has been analyzed the policies of Morocco and Tunisia in three pillars of ad-hocracy: flexibility, pragmatism and informality. So, in this study the term ad-hocracy will be addressed in parallel to the

way of Natter (2021) followed, and the current integration policies of Turkey will be scrutinized whether it has reflected the features of these three pillars.

In the Turkish case, it can also be argued that the new asylum policy framework put by LFIP and TPR narrows down the comprehensive and solid integration policy domain in Turkey by providing both insecurities and uncertainties in terms of future policies on the TP status holders. This could be deduced from the fact that even in the “Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection” there is not any detailed actor referrals for the harmonization activities or programs. Based on this fact, it can be assumed that the PMM is acting reluctantly to develop a sustainable and comprehensive integration policy. Hence, in practice, some measures regarding the social cohesion or integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey were implemented in a situation-specific and context-bound way as Çelik and White (2021) also argued. So, it can be argued that this approach causes to call this process has been run on an ad-hoc basis that can be conceptualized as an administrative pathology in general terms.

Reconsidering the grey area which is naming the ideal or possible actors that will initiate and obliged to implement integration policy, Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx (2016) showed that the governance is the key. Regarding the organizations, they pointed out the importance of whether the implementation of policies by any organization will be checked. That's because it is expected that the governance mechanism is functioning and aimed to minimize the divergences between the policy-making and policy implementation processes. Another aspect that can affect the governance of integration is the choice of the coordinating body within the governmental administration: Is it centrally located and coordinated by a specific ministry or department (i.e., home affairs, social affairs, or employment)? Or is it decentrally organized across all of the areas relevant to integration policies (Garcés-Mascareñas & Penninx, 2016, p. 22)? Providing an answer to these questions would make it easier to name a possible and ideal actor that will initiate and implement integration policy appropriately and to-the-point.

Even though both the “11th Development Plan” and “Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan” recognize the lack of effective integration policy, and advise to strengthen the role of local governments at the local level, the binding legal

frameworks (LFIP and related Regulations) don't provide an authority to any specific actor to lead the integration policy, and only delegates the responsibility in *de-facto* settings. As a result, it may be claimed that Turkey's central government's role in integration policy development and implementation matches the intentionally unorganized administrative structure described as the national policy adhococracy.

Last but not the least, there are some difficulties coming from the combination of legal ambiguity of TPR applied for SuTPs and the vagueness of the integration philosophy of Turkey which has liberal tendencies while (un)specifying the actors whom to be cooperated for its integration policy implementation on the ground. At legal level, seemingly the policy ad-hocracy is also shaped by the insecurities come from TPR for Syrian refugees and uncertainties coming from the LFIP in term of local integration governance. On the other hand, the administrative pathology, as conceptualized *ad-hocracy* in this study, could also derives from the lack of a regulation for harmonization activities across the country. Since there is not any detailed regulation or directive like a TPR based on the Article 96 of LFIP towards the main framework of integration programs, definition of concrete steps aiming the integration and actor-responsibility match, it can be inferred that there will not any burden-sharing on the ground.

3.4. The Role of Local Governments in Integration Policy of Turkey

In this section, based on the legal framework of national integration policy and its challenges, how the municipalities take a role in local integration will be demonstrated. In doing so, the legislation on the local governments in Turkey will be investigated to see the limits of municipality activities regarding local integration which has been conceptualized in two dimensions; i) social cohesion activities and ii) service/aid provision.

The combination of the lack of burden-sharing mechanisms at the international level regarding refugees and the lack of a *de-jure* integration policy in Turkey at the national level inevitably created a shift from central government to the local governments in terms of emergency need response (Hovil, 2014; Kale & Erdoğan, 2019). Then, on the ground, it was seen that the local governments are taking initiatives to meet the needs of refugees in Turkey, where a *de-facto* integration policy took place targeting refugees.

This local governments' engagement happened mainly on three grounds: i) to respond to the urgent needs, ii) to support the harmonization activities, and ii) actively participate in the creation of governance mechanism (Rottmann & Susan Beth, 2020). So, the role of local governments in the Turkish context is worth scrutinizing in terms of the ability to overcome budgetary issues and to take initiatives in the field. Additionally, in doing so, the extent of the reflection of the national policy ad-hocracy in two selected municipalities will be investigated to understand the limits and approaches of the ways of overcoming challenges in the field.

The PMM, as the sole national authority on migration management in Turkey, has some efforts in accordance with the Article 96 of LFIP to promote the harmonization between refugees and local people in Turkey. Some of these efforts can be seen at website of PMM. There are, for instance, some workshops and programs aim the social cohesion run by them (Rottmann & Susan Beth, 2020), but one of the most important programs is the “The Harmonization (*Uyum*) Neighborhood Meetings”⁴⁹ held in cooperation with mukhtars at the neighborhood level in several cities' different neighborhoods. For a public institution at the central level, prioritizing and thinking of the smallest part of a whole could be appreciated.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the organizational and institutional dimension of social cohesion and integration governance consists of a complex structure. Today, policy development processes are in a complex order as they create a multi-layered decision-making environment that emerges within the multitude of relevant actors, sectors, and issues in Turkey (Özçürümez & İçduygu, 2020). This is especially true when it comes to migration management and governance, which is a multi-layered, multi-sectoral, and multi-area policy issue. Therefore, given the plethora of actors, sectors, and issues, the central government is expected to play a steering role (Dahlström, Pierre, & Peters, 2011).

In the migration studies literature, although there are traditionally state-centered studies on integration policies, it can be seen that the multidimensional structures of

⁴⁹ More information about the specific news on the Harmonization (*Uyum*) Neighborhood Meetings in Bursa-Orhangazi is available at: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/uyum-mahalle-bulusmalari-26-bursa-orhangazi> (Last access: 30.10.2021). In addition, a wide range of programs and activities aim to boost harmonization between refugees and local people can be found here: <https://www.goc.gov.tr/galeri> (Last access: 30.10.2021).

integration policies have been examined on the one hand, and in time, the number of studies on local governments has increased on the other hand. That is because even though most research on integration policy concentrates on policy-making at the national level, the difficulties are more felt at the local level (Hoekstra, Josef Kohlbacher, & Daniel Rauhut, 2018, p. 18).

Furthermore, interactions between immigrants/refugees and locals in streets, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and public spaces, as well as the fact that local actors operate more in sync with communities. So, it can be argued that integration firstly starts at the local level. In this regard, local governments are rapidly becoming major players in governance in the design and implementation of successful integration policies (Penninx, 2009, p. 5), and the research on variations in the models and practices of integration across different countries matters. So, the context-bound nature of local integration policies is clearly illustrated in comparative analyses by some scholars (Alexander, 2007; Favell, 1998).

Although local governments are increasingly emerging as prominent actors in the policy-making process regarding the more localized intervention in migrant integration, the power and responsibility sharing between the central government and the local governments contributes to policy-making process to increase the effectiveness of the policies at local level (Emilsson, 2015, p. 4). This is because, integration of newcomers is an area where states and cities tend to have differing viewpoints and approaches (Gebhardt, 2014). As a result, cities are becoming more active actors, setting their own agendas, taking some policy initiatives, and having important practical solutions to integration and diversity accommodation difficulties (Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017, p. 242).

It should be acknowledged that the main reasons for this situation are that the local governments, which aim to ensure the socio-economic harmony of immigrants/refugees and local people and live together, on the one hand produce more pragmatic solutions to local problems, and on the other hand, they are more inclined to adapt policies to meet the daily needs of the communities (Hoekstra et al., 2018; Lowndes & Polat, 2020). The pragmatism approach, which was discovered by Lowndes and Polat (2020) in their research on Sultanbeyli, Şişli and Zeytinburnu municipalities in İstanbul with regard to the interpretation of these local governments' on national legal framework aimed to meet

the integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey. After the research, they were defined three ways for local governments to cope with the refugee influx in Turkey case. The first way could be explained that when the needs of refugees are not met there will be bigger problems in the future. So, dealing with the local problems in a timely manner will save municipalities from having to spend more in the future. In the second way, the municipalities are prone to believe that the presence of refugees would allow them to access international funds, bringing visibility and material benefits to the municipality (as well as to the local population), because there are many international financing streams sought broader community participation in order to enhance social cohesion. The third way was expressed that the pragmatism approach of the municipalities could be connected to the foreign policy ambitions that central government seeks in the long-term. That's because when the needs of refugees are met, and when these refugee groups are well educated and learned Turkish very well the future trade relations and peace negotiations in the future will be more gaining and smooth through these refugee groups.

Additionally, Emilsson (2015) stressed that cities needed localized integration policy-making process because every city has unique societal structures, and faces different complexities or situations derives from both socio-economic conditions and responsibility sharing mechanisms put by legal frameworks. Building on this ground, (Jorgensen, 2012) greatly analyzed that geographical and demographic sizes, economies, organizational structures, local networks and political standings of local governments shape the implementation of integration policies. On the other hand, the fact that the local government and the central government have the same or different ideologies and the degree of the centralized structure of the state also directly affect the policy making and implementation process (Hoekstra et al., 2018, p. 32). What is more, the individual efforts towards the refugee politics and approach to integration are crucial at municipal level regarding to what extent a local government is engaged in refugee related programs or issues (Betts et al., 2020).

Considering the above mentioned literature on local turn in refugee integration, it can be seen that there are some studies that investigates both the local dynamics affect the implementation of integration policies and the engagement of local governments in integration policy-making process in Turkey context (Tekin, Aslan, & Söylemez, 2017; Betts, Ali, Memişoğlu, 2017; Erdoğan, 2017; Öztürk, 2019; Özçürümez & İçduygu,

2020). On the other hand, it is seen that these researches are generally based on districts with dense population of Syrians in İstanbul. So, the research on districts with dense population of Syrians in Ankara is limited, and one of these was essentially aimed to understand the local dynamics that most affect the relationship between local people and Syrians in Ankara's Altındağ district (Erman, 2017).

There is a nascent literature on the variation of integration policies in different countries, and especially in cities. In this regard, Memişoğlu and Yavçan (2020) shed light on the Şişli and Sultanbeyli districts of İstanbul. In their article, they mainly discussed the variation reasons of two district municipalities in Istanbul in terms of their integration program designs and implementations. However, the research on the variation dynamics of both integration approaches and implementation of integration policies between different districts in the same city is limited. Based on that gap, this study aims to contribute to the local turn in migrant integration literature by assessing which dynamics of different districts located in the same city are the most affects the willingness and capacity of local governments in integration policy implementation. To make it happen, designation of an index on the subsidiarity of local integration indicators will be executed as a result of this research.

Local Governments' Challenges

With the most crowded refugee population and the lack of fair distribution mechanism of Syrian refugees in its cities, Turkey is a unique case to analyze. The local governments which are engaging intentionally or unintentionally in integration policy of Turkey will be a good start to examine both the gaps and challenges of legal framework applied currently for Turkey's local governments.

The law on local governments in Turkey (Municipality Law, No. 5393) sets the legal framework regarding the activities, responsibilities and limitations in city administration for municipalities. Based on this legal ground, it can be said that the law was basically built on the services to be given to the "local residents". Here, the concept that non-residents will take part in is "townsman-*hemşehri*" (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 40). Under the Townsman Law sub-heading, the Article 13 of Municipality Law states "everyone is a townsman of the town in which they reside. Citizens have the right to participate in municipal decisions and services, to be informed about municipal activities

and to benefit from the assistance of the municipal administration. Aid must be provided in conditions that do not harm human dignity. The municipality carries out the necessary studies for the development of social and cultural relations among its citizens and the protection of cultural values. In these studies, measures are taken to ensure the participation of universities, public professional organizations, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and experts.” (Municipality Law, 2005).

In terms of policies towards Syrian refugees in Turkey, the very serious differences in approaches and actions that exist even among the district municipalities of Istanbul reveal the confusion on this issue. Municipality Law left an “open door” for the services to be provided to refugees, but did not assign a mandatory duty (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 40). Even if there is a room in terms of receiving municipal services for the ones who are not citizens in their residence of country put by Article 13, the content of Article 14 is also posing a contradictory situation. Article 14 says “municipal services are offered to citizens in the closest places and with the most convenient methods. In the provision of services, methods suitable for the situation of the disabled, elderly, destitute and low-income are applied.” It can be inferred from this article that municipal services are designed only for the residents of the country. So, there is seemingly a discrepancy between Article 13 and 14 regarding the recognition of refugees as agents at the local level. So, this contradictory situation reflects some complexities in practice. For example, municipalities are concerned that expenditures to be made to non-citizens, especially those that require resources from the municipal budget, may be qualified as “irregularity” by the Court of Accounts (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 41).

On the other hand, applicants for international protection undergo resettlement planning. For example, the "Königsteiner Schlüssel" system, which monitors Germany's state system, distributes refugees based on predetermined criteria and in a balanced manner from the moment they sought asylum to balance the asylum-seekers population between the cities and districts. However, Erdoğan (2020b) correctly asserted that it is difficult to develop a central plan and settle refugees in this manner in times of enormous influxes, especially in nations bordering the source country. As the number of Syrians who have arrived in Turkey since 2011 and have been placed in camps (temporary shelters) in the first place built in provinces along the border region has increased, the public institutions in Turkey have demonstrated a "silent acceptance" that they are free to

leave and settle wherever they wish (Erdoğan, 2020b). Considering the legal complexities, the lack of clear provisions and a clear legal framework (coming from both Municipality Law and LFIP) related to refugees makes it difficult for municipalities to make decisions about refugee assistance and work. Municipalities need a clear legal basis on issues such as providing resources for spending on refugees, allocating buildings for schools for refugees, and providing assistance and services to people who have not yet registered, as well as registered refugees.

The economic capacity of municipalities are also creating some complexities in practice. That is because, the budget of municipalities is created by the share of general taxes in accordance with the population of registered Turkish residents in municipal area. The social assistance budgets of municipalities are also calculated according to the population of Turkish citizens residing within the boundaries of the municipality. Therefore, municipalities are not provided with additional funding to provide assistance to refugees, and municipalities have difficulties in meeting the needs of refugees due to financial inadequacies (Marmara Belediyeler Birliği [MBB], 2015). When to examine the funding opportunities of the municipalities in Turkey for their extra burden created by forced migration Özçürümez and İçduygu (2020) stated that supporting the refugees would be more challenging and burdensome because the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) fund will be end up in 2022 and the refugees will be in need of more assistance. So, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) aids, which designed under and the FRiT program, both the protection and social cohesion intervention in Turkish context will be in need of sustainable and strategically planned solutions in upcoming days.

Aside from the legal and financial challenges, the municipalities are seemingly unable to plan and implement the work they will do for Syrians due to a lack of a comprehensive database to exchange information between different public institutions and municipalities, as well as the fact that some Syrians live in the cities unregistered (Elicin, 2017). On the other hand, Coşkun and Uçar (2018) argued that there are differences between municipalities in terms of access to reliable data. According to them, it is also plausible to argue that political affiliation is a crucial factor in gaining access to information, because municipalities run by the ruling party have access to data from state agencies (Coşkun & Uçar, 2018).

Considering these structural challenges coming from the lack of institutionalization of integration policy in Turkey, it can be argued that the official discourses on the integration issue, by the time, has shifted from the securitization to the politicization in Turkey (Gülmez, 2019). On the other hand, Gülmez (2019) analyzed that the discourses among the political parties vary in Turkey. Based on this analysis, it can be argued that while the ruling party Justice and Development Party (AKP) constructed its discourse on the Islamic references like *Ensar-Muhacir*, the Republican People's Party (CHP) used an economic discourse saying that the Syrians are the reason of the unemployment because they were seen as the cheap labor by Turkish employers. Recognizing this Islamic reference of the JDP, it would be appropriate to analyze this political move to calm down the local people against Syrians in Turkey. Additionally, the claim of the main opposition party, the RPP, on the unemployment could be regarded as a reminder for the ruling party that the mission of the central government should be prioritizing the wealth of local people in the first place (Gülmez, 2019). Accordingly, it could be expected that this variation of the politicization of the Syrian refugees in Turkey inevitably would reflect on the local integration efforts of the local governments are run by the JDP and RPP at local level because it should be noted that the political will is also expected to be decisive to deal with the integration issue both at national and local level in the long-run in Turkey (Betts et al., 2020). So, the explanations of political leaders could be regarded as an indicator of their approaches to the Syrian forced migration.

Beyond this politicization, Ilgit and Memişoğlu (2017) stated that the legal ambiguity and the uncertainties in status of Syrians in Turkey are playing the major role in discussing the issue generally on political ground. In this regard, Daniş and Sert (2019) argued that when the legal uncertainties merged with the fact that %98 of Syrians in Turkey lives in cities, urban governance of migration has become an important agenda item for Turkey. That's because the effects of this mass migration are felt primarily at the local level. Based on this need of urban governance the categorization developed by Daniş and Sert (2019) is quite important to understand the extent of the approaches of the municipalities in such an uncertain and politicized context.

Table 3: A categorization on the responses of the municipalities regarding refugees.
Table is prepared by the researcher.

Municipality Category	1. Anti-immigrant	2. Not interested	3. Limited and partial humanitarian aid	4. Active in migration management
Features	1.1. The municipalities in this category don't want immigrants and refugees at the municipal borders, 1.2. Also, they try to restrict the access of refugees to some services.	2.1. The municipalities in this category ignore the refugees while providing services, 2.2. They state that the responsibility on refugees is belonged to governmental bodies.	3.1. Municipalities that adopt a passive stance on the issue, even though they offer little social assistance to the refugees, 3.2. This assistance is mostly in an irregular rhythm and consists of in-kind aid such as food, clothing, and household goods to a small number of people.	4.1. Municipalities that actively take part in migration management at local level, 4.2. Also, these municipalities are carrying out studies for harmony and integration beyond social assistance.

Source: (Danış & Sert, 2019).

Considering these groupings, it can be argued that even if some municipalities are ignoring the existence of the refugees in their districts, there are also some municipalities to take actively part in the refugee migration governance in the district. So, in the light of the findings, it would be possible to compare and analyze the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities' approaches in terms of local integration governance that is based on the characteristics of each category defined in the table above.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

In this section, the researcher will present the findings of the research and then these findings will be analyzed under three thematic headings. While doing so, both the interviews and secondary sources will be benefited from. Under each heading, the findings of Altındağ municipality and then the Çankaya municipality will be given in order and analyzed. Afterward, the comparison will be provided.

4.1. Policy Ad-hocracy in Implementation

In this section, the extent of the reflection of national policy ad-hocracy at two municipalities' local integration approaches will be shared under three headings. So, through quotations, firstly the challenges and gaps in the legal framework pointed out by the interviewees and secondary sources will be given. Secondly, the findings will be conveyed and compared.

4.1.1. Perspectives on the Legal Framework

In Turkey, the current national legal framework of municipalities regarding the service provision and organizing social cohesion activities for refugees is limited. Even if the Municipality Law (No. 5393) defines the ones who live in the same neighborhood as townsman (*hemşehri*) in Article 13, the financial and infrastructural capacity of municipalities are not generally enough to cover all the services for refugees properly (Erdoğan, 2018). Since the density of Syrians in Altındağ district increased rapidly the administration of the Altındağ municipality was faced some ambiguities whether to provide services or not.

The burden on municipalities in helping refugees is too great. The absence of any clear definition of the responsibility of municipalities in the law complicates our work.

The refugee living here is not registered in Ankara, is it my townsman or not now? In other words, s/he breathes here, consumes water here, eats and drinks here, but it seems to be registered in a different city in the records of the PMM. These people are on the run. Now, whether I should help them or not, the current legislation does not enlighten anyone (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, the registry issue is a challenge that harden the works of the municipalities at local level. On the other hand, it should be considered that according to the “Law on Giving Shares of General Budget Tax Revenues to Special Provincial Administrations and Municipalities”⁵⁰ even the registered Syrians in Ankara is not involved in the calculation of the annual budget of the municipalities. So, the total amount of the budget of the Altındağ municipality is calculated by taking into account only the Turkish population as they are the taxpayers (Danış & Sert, 2019). However, every people living in the district is expected to be served by the municipality.

Now, while appropriating the municipalities from the central budget, it is calculated according to the number of Turkish citizens living in the area for which the municipalities are responsible, over the taxes collected in Turkey. However, the 50,000 Syrians currently living in Altındağ district are not included in this account because they are not Turkish citizens and are not taxpayers. Altındağ has a population of 350,000, but I have to serve 400,000 people with the incoming budget. With the increase of this population, my workload starts to increase in every branch, from the park and garden service to the collection of garbage and cleaning the street (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

Regarding the budgetary issues and the density of Syrians in the Altındağ district, it can be argued that the current given budget for the municipalities that have to provide both infrastructure and superstructure services for Syrians who are residing in the district is not enough. Also, the density of Syrians in the Altındağ district has potential to hinder the services that have already planned to be provided for local residents (Erdoğan, 2018).

Since the living standards in Altındağ district is very low and there is furniture production workshops in Siteler industry zone that provides wide range of job

⁵⁰ More information is available at: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2008/07/20080715-1.htm> (Last Access: 06.01.2022)

opportunities for refugees to work illegally more Syrians would like to live in Altındağ even if they are registered in other cities. As a result of the lack of a fair mechanism for the distribution of refugees, it can be argued that Syrians in Ankara inevitably choose to live in Altındağ because the abundance of illegal employment opportunities and cheaper rents make the Altındağ district favorable (Erman, 2017). In this regard, the suggestion of the expert in the Altındağ municipality is quite important.

It is necessary to establish an order in terms of the distribution of refugees between cities. There is a need for a resettlement policy within cities and even between districts. How many refugees are there in Çankaya? How many refugees are there in Altındağ? We know there is a big difference. This puts different burdens on the districts and even increases the current burden. If it will be the policy that the cities where the refugees have settled they should be compelled to live the cities registered in somehow (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, when compared to the Çankaya district, it is clear that there is a big difference in the density of Syrians. There could be two main reasons for this. First of all, house rents in Çankaya are much higher than those in Altındağ. Secondly, there are no areas where Syrians can work illegally in the Çankaya district like Sıtlar industry zone. As it was discussed earlier in the third chapter, the homogenization of the population both create ghetto gatherings that could be obstacle in front of the integration, it can be argued that the lack of institutionalized resettlement policy in cities creates a huge burden only on some specific local governments, not equally affects the others (Kavas et al., 2019; Memişoğlu & Yavcan, 2020).

The expert in the Altındağ municipality also highlights that to distribute the burden of some municipalities firstly the central government should decide if the Syrians will stay in Turkey permanently then a decision wise strategy should develop. However, as it was stated earlier in the third chapter, the character of the temporary protection regime for Syrians, prone to vague and ad-hoc (Öztürk, 2017). In this regard, Rottmann and Susan Beth (2020) have correctly analyzed that the borderline between the reception and integration policy is not sharp in national protection regime in the Turkish case, because there is no legal distinction between them.

If the refugees are to stay in Turkey and this is the prediction, I say, then let's make a distribution according to the population. According to the population of Altındağ, a certain number of immigrants should come here, and a certain percentage of people should go to Çankaya and be settled there, according to the population of Çankaya. The central government needs to do this. Otherwise, there will be more ghetto neighborhoods in the Altındağ district unfortunately (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

Accordingly, the second point of the expert is also crucial that the ghetto gatherings can be a really problem for the social cohesion and sustainable integration policy unless the mobility of Syrians stop and controlled by the central government (Kavas et al., 2019).

If there will be a fair distribution or settlement policy regarding the Syrians, our job would be easier at the integration point. This distribution policy does not automatically allow Syrians to establish their own ghetto areas in our neighborhoods. Thus, it has to act according to the conditions of that district. They also needs to learn our language because s/he will have to communicate more. But now, in some neighborhoods, Syrians do not know Turkish at all and do not need to know it, because it is the Syrians who runs the market, butcher, jewelery store and shopping places in the neighborhood. In other words, they have created a living environment for themselves here (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

In this regard, Erdoğan (2020b) analyzed that in a rapid mass influx of Syrians by the years starting from 2012, uncontrolled settlements inevitably occurred in cities, because the central government was not able to create an institutionalized settlement policy in sudden. However, the lack of settlement policy bolstered this de-facto situation by the years, and there have been very important numerical differences between provinces, districts and even neighborhoods.

There was a lack of control from the very beginning of the influx. When the central government cannot manage it well, the communities always choose the easiest way. In other words, they settle in the districts where they can find a job and shelter economically, because I don't have an authority to say, don't live here, go live wherever you registered (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

Based on this quote, it is important to put here that in the Strategic Plan (2020-2024)⁵¹ of the Altındağ municipality, it was stated that the migrants' related problems can be solved via urban transformations, which means the Altındağ municipality will be destroying the rundown and old houses, in which mostly Syrians live with a lower rent. So, it can be regarded that the Altındağ municipality is trying to deal with the density of Syrian in its district through its own tools at local level. In addition, it should be noted that the vagueness deriving from the temporary protection regime applied for Syrians in Turkey makes harder and challenging the services and activities of the local governments in the field (Biehl, 2015; Memişoğlu & Yavcan, 2020; Öztürk, 2017). That's because when Syrians firstly came to Turkey in 2012 under the temporary protection the situation was accepted as it would be temporary.

I think the most important concept here is integration. That's because this is reciprocal firstly, but Syrian refugees were perceived as the same as asylum seekers under temporary protection since 2012. However, we are faced with a de facto situation now as Syrians have settled in our country, which means they are not temporary anymore (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

As an NGO, we carry out our activities on a project basis. I think this will be the case unless a higher level decision is taken and a permanent integration policy is adopted at national level (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Asylum and Migration Research Center (İGAM)_Expert_1).

Based on these quotes, it can be argued that by the years the existence of the Syrians in Turkey started to become permanent, and the legal framework regarding their stay is still presenting an uncertainty. In this regard, the expert in the Altındağ municipality reminded that they are facing de-facto situations such as both the service provision and integration burden as a local government. In this regard, it can be discussed that the temporary protection status could be regarded as a challenge for Syrians to be interacting and integrating into the host society as they are thought to be gone in the near future. Evidence from the conceptual framework for successful integration defined by Ager and Strang (2008) that the *Foundation* dimension with the sub-domain of rights and

⁵¹ The full text of the plan is available at: https://www.altindag.bel.tr/?com&#!stratejik_plan (Last Access: 08.04.2022)

citizenship is that the framework of the status of Syrians has inevitable impacts in their integration processes.

On the other hand, the financial aspect of the issue needs to be addressed. Since the socio-economic situation of the local residents of the Altındağ district is already low the social aids given to the Syrians are limited. The quick calculation of the expert in the Altındağ municipality shows the gravity of the issue.

Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do for local integration unless the burden on our municipality is relieved in the local context. Even in the context of social aid, we are talking about 50,000 Syrians. At least 30,000 of them are in need of help. That's the number of my own citizens I helped during the year. When I try to help Syrians also, it directly collapses the municipality's budget. Imagine that you give 150 Turkish lira per month to a person, which makes approximately 1,800 lira per year. With this, 100 loaves of bread can be bought per month. This is the number of breads that a family of 4 can consume in an average month. If you give 1,800 Turkish lira per year to 30,000 needy Syrians just to buy bread, it would cost approximately 54 million Turkish lira. However, the total budget of the Altındağ Municipality is 440 million Turkish lira. And this supposed to include the expenses of pavement, road, asphalt, personnel salary, cleaning, whatever you can think of, this is the entire budget of the municipality, including infrastructure and superstructure (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, even the monthly bread aid to be given to a family of 4 puts a serious financial burden on the municipality and there is not any extra budget item developed for the Syrians living in the districts. In such an environment, as it was stated by the expert in the quote above, the municipalities couldn't bear down on the local integration issue. Reminding the budget issue, it can be argued that even in social aids or in-kind aids there is not enough budget. Recognizing this financial burden, the expert has added that the Altındağ municipality still does not ignores the Syrians.

In other words, refugees are not taken into consideration while creating my budget. So, we are obviously helping a little forcefully. It gets stressful. For example, in the audit of the Court of Accounts, the aid boxes I distributed during the pandemic are always a question mark. Most immigrants are registered in the camps. They are on the

run here and I am helping them. The officer of the Court of Accounts does not accept this. How would s/he know that I really gave that help to that person? I can't prove it. However, we try to explain the situation as best we can. So this is an issue that requires legal regulation (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

So, it can be said that the Altındağ municipality does not provide any cash assistance for Syrians in the district, and only in-kind aid was distributed in the pandemic times. On the other hand, these in-kind aid distributions can complicate the audits of the municipality. Since there is not any defined items in the budgets of the municipality for Syrians, this kind of initiatives taken by the municipality administrations are seemingly tolerated by the officers of the Court of Accounts.

Additionally, beyond the legal framework with regard to the integration of Syrians in Turkey, the politics of refugees are matter. Supporting and contributing the stance of Unutulmaz (2012) that the integration is a kind of political vision that shapes both the discourses of political leaders and the policy development process inevitably, it is also crucial to highlight how the discourse could affect the public opinion.

I think that the rhetoric of the political authority in the media, whether it is the opposition or the government, also affects the perception, reluctance and disapproval of the local people towards the Syrians. Therefore, local people are affected by the negative news about Syrians. If a permanent immigration policy is to be considered, I think all of these should be handled meticulously and sensitively in the media as well. We pay attention to this as much as possible (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

In that quote, it can be argued that since the media usage of the responsible authorities are decisive to shape the public opinion, the expert in the Altındağ municipality tries to pay attention not to be engaged in a social tension even in micro level. So, the contribution of the expert here is very important that if there will be a clear and sustainable national integration policy to make the migration management resilient the central government should be careful while informing the public via the media.

The perspective of the Çankaya municipality regarding the legal prospect is seemingly different from the Altındağ municipality, and not based on the initiatives taken for the Syrians live in the district. The main aim of the Çankaya municipality is firstly to

provide social aids for the local elderly residents, women and people with disabilities live in Çankaya district. For this reason, the Çankaya municipality administration prepared a regulation to justify their aids even for the local people during the audits of the Court of Accounts.

With this new regulation we have prepared, our aim is to solve the weighty needs that we do not always approve of. The fact that the needy groups and their needs were unclear in the procurement processes in the Municipality Law made it difficult to account for the Court of Accounts. In this context, we have made a more detailed definition in order to facilitate our transactions. In this regard, the Social Assistance Regulation was created by defining what the young, elderly, disabled people and women in need. Those living on the street are not defined as the group to be served, in this regulation. In addition, drug addicts and refugee groups are not included there (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

When examined, it can be seen that there is no room for the Syrian urban refugees living in the Çankaya district in that Social Assistance Regulation.⁵² On the other hand, although the number of Syrians in the Çankaya district is much less than in the Altındağ district, it can be said that while the Çankaya municipality does not recognize the Syrians as the group to be given social assistance, the Altındağ municipality takes an initiative and a financial risk for the aid provided to the Syrians living in the district.

Municipalities are not always managed by the same political party as the central government, and even if your spending is well-intentioned, audits by the Court of Accounts can sometimes be a problem. We wanted the Court of Accounts to approve this regulation and to carry out our expenditures accordingly (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

This comparison also reveals that the Altındağ municipality which is governed by the ruling party is not expected to have any trouble during the audits of the Court of Accounts. However, the Çankaya municipality which is governed by the main opposition party RPP wants to be ensured that there will not any budgetary problems during the audits of the Court of Accounts, and prepared a new Social Aid Regulation to use while

⁵² Approved regulation can be found at: <https://kms.kaysis.gov.tr/Home/Goster/167146?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1> (Last Access: 10.01.2022)

even giving aids to the local residents of the Çankaya district to correctly justify the expenses. Based on that Social Aid Regulation, it can also be argued that if there was a will to widen the social aids both for the Syrian refugees and homeless people, it could be done via some additional articles on the above mentioned regulation by the Çankaya municipality.

On the other hand, the expert from the Çankaya municipality underlines that any Syrian refugees can benefit from the Çankaya Houses at the neighborhood level anytime. That's because there is not any limit for the ones who are willing to attend any courses in the facilities of the Çankaya municipality. The expert also stated that to develop any specific intervention regarding the Syrian refugees in the district, the Çankaya municipality has to involve the definition of services assigned for Syrians in strategic plans.

First of all, it should be defined as a service area in our municipality and included in the strategic plan. We may not be able to help in cash, but there is no obstacle in our provision of health services, education services, social events or whatever it is necessary for inclusion, even if it is not in the strategic plan. We don't have an approach like this: Let me tell you: it is never out of question that we do not register our immigrant groups to our Çankaya House at the neighborhood level. If s/he wants to benefit from the activities there, s/he can attend any of his courses. There is no obstacle in front of this (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Therefore, it can be said that the approach of the Çankaya municipality is not fully ignoring the Syrians living in the district. So, if there will be some progressive steps on the social cohesion and services designed for Syrian urban refugees living in the Çankaya district in the future, it can be assumed that the Çankaya municipality is already equipped practically and mentally to solve any legal problems via regulations. However, the current situation is beyond that normative context.

I think the legislation creates an obstacle up to a point. Apart from that, there is much we can do and there are many organizations in our district that will support us in carrying out these studies. I'm talking about international organizations such as UNHCR, WHO and UNICEF for cooperation. All of these organizations have offices in our district. That's why we are very lucky, actually, we can do a lot of work together. For this reason,

I do not think that the legislation will be a major obstacle at the point where it is preferred. If our president says let's do a study on groups that come with forced migration, then we will be more active, of course. Currently, sometimes we respond, sometimes we don't. There are too many Syrians in this country and they need to be integrated with the local population because they live in clusters (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

In that quote, it can be understood that the political will is playing a key role in the approaches of the Çankaya municipality regarding the service provision and widening the social cohesion activities (Betts et al., 2020). On the other hand, that approach seeing the legislation as not much a challenge if there is a political will is crucial to understand the point that highlighted by Unutulmaz (2012), which is integration is regarded as a political agenda-based societal project. It is also quite important finding that while the Altındağ municipality, which is governed by the ruling party put emphasis on the revision of the current legislation to provide fixed and defined services for Syrian urban refugees in the district, the Çankaya municipality has put emphasis on the political will to provide any defined service area for Syrian urban refugees in the district. In this regard, it can be argued that if there is a political will at the central level of both the political parties and the central government, the legislative issues could be bypassed at the local level as did by the Çankaya municipality with the Social Aid Regulation.

Additionally, it was beneficial that to grasp what if there is no legal obstacles how the municipalities act in accordance with the local integration that covers social cohesion and service/aid provision in their districts. In this regard, the expert in the Altındağ municipality correctly analyzed that the closest public institution to the public is the local governments. It could mean that penetrating into the field is easy through the local governments.

The municipalities in Turkey should be a part of the integration programs at local level. As for the harmonization of Syrians, the biggest part of the work is left to us. Because we are the closest actor to the local people. I meet with the local headman or imam. I am also in contact with our neighborhood representatives who are under the party's district chairmanship. In this way, I collect information in order to determine needs of the field in best way (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

Beyond the current context, the expert in the Altındağ municipality remarkably pointed out to its engagement of field to monitor and adapt the national integration policy at local level. So, it can be argued that, if there is a national integration policy that also recognizes a maneuver area and flexibility for local governments then it will be easy for local governments to coordinate the integration programs. In that regard, it can be argued that the expert in the Altındağ municipality is prioritizing the local governance as it is seen as the best and pragmatic way to control the field. On the other hand, the expert in the Çankaya municipality has also a pragmatic approach.

Certainly, the central government should build the harmonization process through municipalities. This also needs to be tied to a standard. In all municipalities, as in other services, who will do what and in what order, accompanied by a legislation that draws the framework of the actions, these should definitely be standard. In addition, there should be a follow-up mechanism to measure the impact and outcome of the actions. If these things do not happen, if we do nothing, the Syrian population will surpass our population and perhaps acquire citizenship, and after a while, they will become our voters, and they will be able to make decisions about us that we may not want (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, it is seemingly a fact that there should be a local turn in the integration studies. Even if it is a de-facto situation in the Turkish case that the local governments faced a lot of burden in the field, the expert in the Çankaya municipality was stated that the clarification about the steps and actor match in terms of legal framework toward the integration of Syrians in the long-term is a necessary because this clarification is seen as a pragmatic way of implementing the integration programs at local level (Lowndes & Polat, 2020). It also can be argued this pragmatism is grounded on the concern that the possibility of Turkish population surpassed by Syrians in the future.

As one part of the reflection of the national policy adhocacy, the legal framework implementation in two selected municipalities is presenting an ideal area to compare the approaches of the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities towards the ways of overcoming or addressing the challenges on the ground. When compared, it is obvious that there is a huge difference between the Altındağ and Çankaya municipality in the number of Syrians

lived in the district. So, it can be seen that the Altındağ municipality is having a huge service provision burden than the Çankaya municipality that could hinder the capacity and potential of the Altındağ municipality to provide a proper integration program.

On the other hand, while providing services and aids for Syrians, the Altındağ municipality is taking initiative by commenting on the Municipality Law even if there is not any delegation for the municipalities to provide services for foreigners living in the district. In that regard, it can be argued that even if the Altındağ municipality did not design any integration programs aiming the Syrians, at least it did not ignore them in activities or courses. The inclusion of the Syrians in already planned activities could be a starter of the social cohesion spontaneously. That is how the national policy ad-hocracy made the Altındağ municipality act in the field.

Meanwhile, even if there is a smaller number of Syrians in the Çankaya district, the municipality is not defining any service area for the Syrians. Moreover, the Çankaya municipality does not include the Syrians in Social Aid Regulation which was prepared currently to justify the expenses of the municipality. So, it can be argued that it was a political choice and, without a political will possibly there will not any service area or integration program in the Çankaya municipality.

4.1.2. Party Politics at the Local Level and Relations with Central Government

This part is designed to demonstrate whether the relations with the central government could be regarded as a part of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy. The relations with central government are important in Turkish case because the municipalities which are governed by the same party in the rule are having quite easy and functional relationship and/or cooperation with the central government. On the contrary, the municipalities are not governed by the same party in the rule are having constraints both in communications and cooperation with the central government.

Recognizing the fact the central government is in a position that provides legal ground for any activity and events via its steering and law-maker role (Dahlström et al., 2011), the scope of steps taken by the municipalities in the field are depended on the regulations and the current legislations. So, in Turkey, the relations between the local governments and central government in terms of forced migration governance at local

level are shaped by the LFIP, and the municipalities are called as an actor that should be consulted by the PMM for their suggestions and contributions to the harmonization activities in the Article 96. So, it can be understood that the municipalities are not assigned any duty or responsibility in terms of harmonization or integration activities (Durmuş, 2021).

The PMM is also aware that every actor in the field is trying to do something, even if it is small. In this context, we had official correspondence from time to time with the PMM. However, we, as local governments, are not in a position to say that there is a problem in terms of legislation while providing services to foreigners (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

As it can be seen in that quote, even if the harmonization article does not provide a clarified scope for municipalities' integration program, the Altındağ municipality took initiatives to maintain their services for Syrian urban refugees also. In this regard, it is worth mentioning here that even if it was not regularly the PMM is tended to follow the activities or events up in the Altındağ district via official correspondence with the municipality.

Our municipality was asked to inform the PMM about their activities for refugees in a letter from the PMM in 2018. Through this letter they just asked us to keep track of what we were doing. In fact, this was requested in order to be informed to follow up the work and transactions in general and to help (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Based on this correspondence it can be argued that the PMM wants to control the field in fact. Since the density of Syrians in Altındağ district is much higher than Çankaya district the Altındağ municipality was only asked to inform. On the other hand, it could be seen that the Çankaya municipality was not aware that how many Syrian urban refugees live in the district. Even if the expert shared an estimation regarding the number it was also stated that reaching out the updated data from the central government is not possible for Çankaya district.

We don't usually work for refugees. But when we want to work with them, we don't even know their contact numbers and where they live. For example, we wanted to distribute social assistance to Turks residing in the Çankaya district, and we asked the

central government for the contact information of the poor families or the elderly who would likely benefit from this assistance, but we could not get any reply. Even though this outreach was planned for the Turkish people, we could not obtain relevant data from the central government. However, we are used to this because the central government treats us like this because we are the municipality of the main opposition party. This also brings some risks and handicaps. There are four main institutions can distribute social aid and there is not any coordination or shared database between these institutions. It means one person can benefit from four different social aid programs at the same time and this could create a huge burden on public spending (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Considering the relations between the Çankaya municipality and the central government it can be argued that the central government does not pose a balanced approach against the municipalities. This lack of standardized attitude also can be seen as a political constraint in the cooperation between the Çankaya municipality and the central government. In that regard, as Emilsson (2015) stated that although local governments are increasingly emerging as a prominent actor in the policy-making process regarding issues that directly concern the local, including the forced migration issue, the power relationship between the central government and the central government determines the effectiveness of local governments.

Here, on the other hand, it will be good to revisit the local pragmatism versus localist thesis put by Alexander (2007) to explain the policy incongruences between the national and local level bodies. As it was given earlier, in local pragmatism thesis, he stated that there is an integration policy at national level and there is also a local dimension of this nation-wide integration policy to reconcile the ethnic or religious diversity to be able to solve any integration problems in pragmatic ways. On the other hand, he was explaining that in the localist thesis the lack of an integration policy at national level that is not providing a basis for forming a local model of integration, but shaped by a specific problem or a political setting in different contexts (Alexander, 2007). Based on these thesis, it can be argued that in Turkish case where there is not an institutionalized integration policy at national level it can be argued that the efforts of local governments could be placed under the localist thesis.

In addition to this, the political reservations and party policies are also indicative while investigating to what extent they affect the approaches and programs toward the local integration of Syrian urban refugees in two selected municipalities. Since the municipalities, as a political entities, are seeking the votes of local people in the elections, it could be expected that the municipalities act in accordance with the demands of public and political conjuncture at that time. In that regard, it is important to put that even if the expert in the Altındağ municipality took initiative to give in-kind aids, sometimes local people question that why the limited resources distributed to the Syrians while they are also in need.

Of course, there is also a political dimension of this issue. When you deal with Syrians, the citizens involuntarily react to them and say that you are not doing anything to me, you are doing it to them. They will actually vote in the election, not the Syrians. On the other hand, I would also place an ad in the newspaper. I was going to share informational posters and texts about the integration of Syrians. I was going to publish all of these, asking who provides the food for the Syrians and what their legal status is, but when it started to get reactions from the citizens, we had to cut it off. As there is a perception that as if we are working for Syrians not for our own citizens (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

Based on that quote, it can be argued that the political side of the issue is playing a decisive role in the activities of the Altındağ municipality, which is run by the JDP. Contributing this standpoint, Erdoğan (2020a) has found that %62,6 of the supporters of Cumhur Alliance, which includes both the JDP and the Nationalist Movement Party (NMP), think that the Syrians will take the jobs of the local people. So, it can be argued that this public opinion is taken into account by the Altındağ municipality sometimes not to deal with Syrians so much in the field. On the other hand,

I thought that the integration studies would be very ambitious. However, when there is anger and rejection in the society it is not possible. For the time being, these concerns at the party headquarters may be the reason why we are mostly inactive (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1)

In that quote, it can be seen that the expert in the Çankaya municipality also referring the reactions and rejections of the local people against the Syrians. Additionally,

it can be deduced from the quote that the party policy at central level made the Çankaya municipality inactive regarding the integration programs. In this respect, it is quite important here to revisit the comprehensive research conducted by Erdoğan (2020a). As a result of this research, Erdoğan (2020a) also found that %79 of the supporters of Millet Alliance, in which the RPP is the biggest political party, think that the Syrians will take the jobs of the local people. Based on this, it can be argued that it is seemingly reflected on the approach of the Çankaya municipality, where the RPP is the governing party.

So, as it was put by Betts, Ali, and Memişoğlu (2017) that the political orientations of the mayors have an effect on the service and aid provision approaches regarding the refugee politics at local. On the other hand, the political abstention in the Çankaya municipality is seen in the cooperation with other stakeholders.

ASAM was offered a cooperation with us and UNICEF to open a community center in Çankaya district for women and children. It was very good offer for us because I was hoping that we are having a new service are in the Çankaya, but our mayor encountered this cooperation offer and we had to cancel it (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, the mayor effect cannot be ignored at local level while designing a service area for refugees in local. In that regard, supporting Danış and Sert (2019), it can be argued that the political visions or ideological orientation of mayors could hinder the local integration governance in the ground. A comparative analysis, however, would explore that both the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities are under the pressure of the local people, which directed these two municipalities to act in accordance with the political demands of the public at the end of the day. So, it can be assumed that the initiatives on the ground are far from being sustainable and effective without any solid national integration policy and a political will.

4.2. Understanding of Integration

It is very important to understand how different actors address the integration issue. Therefore, this research aims to grasp different argumentations on the integration at the municipality level. Figuring out this in very different localities will enrich the study. In doing so, both the experts' and practitioners' opinions will be benefited from. Some

see integration as a holistic process that covers both daily life practices and access to the services.

Integration into the local life should be holistically. Both the social and cultural life are important here. However, it is a social concept, and should be reciprocal and comprehensive for the whole society which is a living system and when a foreigner enters this system s/he needs to be integrated somehow (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

We can't talk about integration without providing access to essential services. One cannot be expected to integrate easily from someone who has migrated forcibly. Integration is different for asylum seekers and people who have voluntarily migrated. Integration therefore depends on the access of those granted status to services (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Turkish Refugee Council_Expert_1).

As we can see in these quotes while some interviewees put emphasis on the broadness of the integration because accepting a foreigner in a local community necessitates some adaptation steps, some highlighted that the granted status and opportunity to access basic services are playing a major role in integration process. In that regard, it can be argued that integration, as a final goal, should be offered as well-defined and comprehensive (Strang & Ager, 2010).

On the other hand, being integrated into a living system has two faces. It is crucial to state that while the newcomers try to adapt the local values and cultures, there is also an adaptation process of the members of the existing society to the new cultures and values that came with foreigners. In this regard, it can be argued that the idealized integration process is a two-way process (Phillimore & Goodson, 2008; Stephen Castles et al., 2002).

Now, when we talk about integration, everyone understands that the refugees should be able to adapt to the society that they go to. In fact, it is reciprocal, and here asking whether the host society adapts to them or not is a good question. That is because I think integration is a two-sided concept. It is also important for refugees and immigrants to adapt to the society they go to, as well as for that society to accept them, to adapt to them, that is, to create a common ground between the two groups (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Hence, the term integration can be explained as a two-way process that cannot emerge without any interaction. The fact that expecting only the adaptation from newcomers to the new culture and values would not enough for the successful integration was also seen in the statements of experts in the Altındağ municipality. In Article 96 of LFIP, the logic of harmonization was explained as facilitating the mutual integration between the local people and newcomers via providing some basic knowledge and life skills so that the foreigners would not be in need of any assistance of third parties in all areas of social life. In this regard, it can be put here that the integration of foreigners is approached by the Altındağ municipality as it is conceptualized in the LFIP as harmonization that prioritizes the social cohesion.

Building on this conceptual formulation, it can be indicated that PMM addresses the term integration as the harmonization to highlight the social cohesion between local people and foreigners. Even if this social cohesion phase is one of the most important aspects of the integration in any country, there is also a need putting that the term integration is also a right-based concept that requires giving and guaranteeing equal conditions for foreigners as defined for the residents regarding the basic rights such as access to education, labor market, health, and accommodation (Ager & Strang, 2008).

I think integration is more of a rights-based concept. That's because the most basic feature of integration is providing access to fundamental rights. Considering the situation in Turkey, we can say that this approach is not fully settled yet. Because Syrians are viewed as people who will work as a precarious, long-term and cheap labor force. For this reason, the rights-based approach has remained in the background and an abstract and ambiguous approach such as social cohesion with the local people has been adopted at the moment (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Practitioner _1).

Even if the two experts in the Altındağ municipality see the integration as a holistic and reciprocal process, the contribution of the practitioner is quite important. That is because, it should not be ignored that social cohesion could only be expected on a ground where all the members of the society are treated equally by the laws and regulations (Ager & Strang, 2008). However, the analysis provided by the practitioner in the Altındağ municipality explains the rationale behind the choice of the term harmonization in LFIP instead of integration. As it was stated in the quote, there is not a

fixed and well-defined integration policy at the national level and the term harmonization was preferred to refer only to the social cohesion. Supporting that standpoint, İçduygu and Şimşek (2016) have argued that the term harmonization was intentionally preferred because this term does not state a fixed and well-defined approach to any integration program, because public authorities in Turkey have not still faced the reality that Turkey is an immigration country rather than the emigration country anymore (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016).

On the other hand, the point shared by the expert in the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) is quite important that prioritizes the labor integration in terms of social cohesion and integration as a final goal.

Integration means employment. If there is no employment, there will be no integration, because municipalities cannot always support refugees in cash or in kind. Municipalities often do this employment work through NGOs in order to minimize the reactions from the local people. Some municipalities also carry out these activities through the NGOs they have established (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT)_Expert _1).

Considering the economic activities as playing a vital role in the life, a need to make a living and getting prosperity, the emphasis of the expert from UMT is quite meaningful because being integrated into the labor market is presented by Ager and Strang (2008) as means of the integration. This quote also provides a method generally followed by the municipalities that are willing to create employment opportunities for refugees, but not willing to be criticized by the local residents. In that regard, it can be argued that the integration is became a phenomenon and working concept that NGOs and the municipalities rapidly have to cooperate (Jeanette, 2018).

There is another point of view that highlights the importance of learning the local language for integration in the host society. This point is also made in the literature, as language is used in daily routines, solid communication with the host community is expected to facilitate the integration through having relationship between the foreigners and local people (Morrice, Tip, Collyer, & Brown, 2019).

In my opinion, integration is getting service as other members of the society and then getting to the point where the foreigners can continue their life without being

excluded in social life. On the basis of this, an integration process starts with talking the local language. In other words, there should never be an approach to make the foreigners adopting our own culture when they come. Everyone should protect their own culture and values, but should also know the culture of this place in order not to experience any difficulties in this society while living with us. Only in that way we can ensure the development of the culture of living together without excluding them (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert _1).

Based on this quote, it can be argued that even if learning the local language can be considered as the starter of the integration process, it should also be added that the foreigners could not be regarded as if they must adopt the local culture after forgetting their previous cultures (Alba & Nee, 2007). On the other hand, the expert in the Çankaya municipality stated that integration is a kind of inclusion in terms of getting service as other members in the society, which is quite meaningful when considering a local dimension of integration programs and studies. Since the municipalities are located as the closest legal entity to the public, this dimension can be seen as one of the instruments that local governments can use in customizing the national level integration policy-making at local level (Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017).

Furthermore, there are some whose argumentation on the municipality's approach to integration is limited. That is because they think that the integration policy should be developed and implemented at the national level by the Ministry of Family and Social Services, not by the Ministry of Interior.

I don't think anything on the integration of foreigners. This is not my business. Also, this should be considered mostly by the Ministry of Family and Social Services not by the Ministry of Interior (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert _2).

Taking into account this quote, it should be decided whether the integration policy-making is only an administrative issue that requires the Ministry of Interior to deal with it or a social service issue that requires the Ministry of Family and Social Services to work on it. After this decision made at central government level, it could be expected to give both the authority and responsibility to the specific agencies to run integration activities in coordination with other public institutions and may be municipalities across the country. So, the approach of the expert in the Çankaya municipality could be placed

in the second category which is listing the features of not interested municipalities that was defined by Daniş and Sert (2019), and discussed earlier in the third chapter. It can be argued that the Çankaya municipality is placed in the not interested municipality category, because of the reason that the municipality administrative doesn't want to be seen as dealing with refugees since they are abstaining from getting bad reactions from the local residents.

Comparing the approaches of Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities in terms of understanding of integration, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality is approaching the integration as a two-way process, because social interaction in society is regarded as the starter of the integration. Additionally, the rights-based nature of integration was underlined by the practitioner in the Altındağ municipality while the expert in the Çankaya municipality put emphasis on learning the local language by the foreigners as a priority and prerequisite for better social interaction and developing practices of living together.

On the other hand, even though there are fewer Syrians living in Çankaya than Altındağ, it was stated by the expert in the Çankaya municipality that the authority and responsibility in planning and implementing the integration programs must belong to the central government, not to the municipalities. However, the expert in the Altındağ municipality underlined the reciprocal character of integration rather than which actors should develop the integration policy even though there are more Syrians living in the Altındağ district. So, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality which is run by the same political party in rule tends to follow the track of central government that highlights the social cohesion in the Article 96 of LFIP, even if there is neither a budget nor authorization.

In the literature the changing character of integration has been implied by many scholars (Ager & Strang, 2008; Favell, 2001; Stephen Castles et al., 2002). Since integration is a contested concept that could be regarded mostly on the basis of policy goals and policy frames (Garcés-Mascareñas & Penninx, 2016; Penninx, 2009), the understandings of two different municipalities also have varying dynamics. Thus, the context-bound nature of integration necessitates different interventions and policy goals in localities with various dynamics. So, the theories and different concepts concerning the

coexistence of immigrants and local people in society are shaped by the circumstances of the time, and they take on political significance in accordance with the perspectives and goals of policymakers and practitioners in each context (Unutulmaz, 2012).

4.2.1. Definition of Integration by the Municipalities

In this section, the institutional way of defining or describing the integration in two selected municipalities is discussed and analyzed. Recognizing different understandings of integration in both municipalities is also crucial to cross-analyze the question whether there is an institutional definition of integration by the municipalities.

It appears that there is not a comprehensive approach in terms of local integration of Syrian urban refugees in Altındağ district. In other words, it can be stated that there is not any planned and to-the-point integration program to implement in Altındağ district because it lacks a reference point that should be provided by a national integration policy at central government level (Coşkun & Uçar, 2018; Erdoğan, 2020b):

We do not have an institutional definition or such a formal stereotype or way of defining integration or harmony (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert _1).

On the other hand, the social municipality approach which is defined as a service provider for everyone living in the district can be regarded as the facilitator instrument for the local integration at the local level (Doomernik & Ardon, 2018). Even if this approach provides a comprehensive ground, sometimes it cannot be possible to detect if some activities are deliberately designed for the local integration of urban refugees.

In short, there is no definition, but there is action. As a result, we have to include everyone living in our district, since we are in the understanding of social municipality (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert _2).

As we can see in this quote, it could be possible to say that the inclusion of refugees in planning of the services and events is a good start in creating social cohesion between local people and Syrian urban refugees in Altındağ district which was also stated by Broadhead (2020). Even if there is not any specific budget for these services and programs, the Altındağ municipality was preferred to support the idea of living together both in local people and Syrians because of pragmatic concerns. That's because the

municipalities are expected to meet the needs of population in their districts while keeping the services delivered it can be said that they don't have the luxury to wait a comprehensive integration policy from the central government. So, they have to take action without a clear and solid definition of integration, because their main motivation is to keep their districts from the conflicts. Therefore, rather than a long-term integration plan, the term integration has appeared for the Altındağ municipality as a "working definition" that prioritizes the attempts to ensure interactions between local people and Syrians by interiorizing the approach that when refugees come to their districts, their routine services should not be interrupted and social peace should continue.

Moreover, in terms of the institutional definition regarding the integration, the approach of Çankaya municipality does matter here. Even if there are a small number of Syrians in the Çankaya district when compared to the Altındağ district, it can be seen that the political hesitations are on the play. So, ignoring some topics in strategic plans is a good indicator that provides the attitude of the Çankaya municipality regarding the integration.

Unfortunately, we do not have an institutional definition and the integration of refugees is the only service area not included in our strategic plans. So it was not included at all. The reason for this is the choice of the political party that caused the election of our mayor not to provide services or integration activities regarding the groups that came with forced migration. This approach of the party center is inevitably reflected in the preferences at the municipal level (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Based on this quote, it can be said that ignoring both the refugees and any integration programs as a service area at the municipal level in the Çankaya municipality is the result of a political choice mad by the party headquater. In other words, it doesn't appear to be a local political choice made by the municipality, but rather one dictated on them from the party headquarters. In addition, another reason for this attitude shared by the Çankaya municipality personnel might be the small number of Syrians living in the Çankaya district. Therefore, the absence of equally pressing and significant problems or tensions between the local people and the Syrians in the Çankaya district, compared to

those in Altındağ, may have made the integration of refugees a topic that should not be dealt with at the municipal level.

4.3. Local Integration Efforts

For this study, the term local integration is conceptualized to refer both to the social cohesion activities and to service/aid provision. The social cohesion activities are also addressed in a way that creates some common environments and socialization areas that promote the interactions between local people and Syrians. On the other hand, service provision is considered to understand whether the municipalities ignore the Syrians while providing some basic services or social aids in their districts. That is thought to be an important indicator that could show how the municipalities approach the existence of Syrians in their districts.

4.3.1. Social Cohesion Activities

Social cohesion, as used by Özçürümez and İçduygu (2020), can be regarded as both a social model and a policy model that interconnects different groups by eliminating the incoherence, violence, and tensions. So, it is important to figure out the approaches of selected municipalities to social cohesion activities, because diversifying the communication channels, and developing interaction between local people and newcomer groups are crucial for better and successful integration in the long run (Hynie, 2018). In that regard, the Altındağ municipality is running different activities aiming at both social cohesion and further preventing isolation and ghettoization.

We have 17 youth centers and 24 women's education and culture centers. In these centers we have been already giving courses on hobbies and vocational training for women. Since the arrival of refugees in our district in 2013, we have widened the scope and increased the number of some courses or seminars on psycho-social support, language, hygiene, and sexual health. We also gave seminars on sexual and gender-based violence so that women and girls are aware of their rights. And since the participants could not take care of their children during these seminars, we also provided kindergarten support. While the mothers attended the seminar in our center, their children spent time in the kindergarten. However, with the onset of the pandemic, we can

no longer hold such events, unfortunately (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

In that quote, it can be deduced that the Altındağ municipality has reorganized the social activities for Syrians which had already existed for the local residents. As a result of this, some different activities, such as language, hygiene, and sexual health courses, have also been conducted in accordance with the needs of Syrian refugees aiming the inclusion of Syrians in Altındağ municipality's services. So, this is a good indicator that shows the Altındağ municipality is willing to be inclusive and flexible while planning some courses with the purpose of bringing together the Syrians and local people, which could be regarded at least as an important step toward social cohesion in the first place. Hence, it can be inferred here that the expert in the Altındağ municipality placed these kind of activities and courses as social cohesion activities and the Altındağ municipality has an understanding of integration that based on the inclusion of Syrians in these activities.

The Altındağ municipality also pays special attention to not to schedule separate days for Syrians to use the sport center.

We have gyms in our centers and Syrians can use these gyms 2 days a week. Also, local people can come in these days, of course. We have been sensitive not to discriminate between the local people and the Syrians. Because it is our main policy not to separate groups in our other activities. We paid attention to this from the very beginning (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

As it can be seen in the quote, the expert underlined that they don't apply any discrimination against the Syrians and they just integrated them in the schedule of the gym. In that planning both local people and Syrians use the gym on the same day is quite a meaningful step towards the integration by the municipality in the long run. In doing so, it can also be argued that not giving isolated slots for Syrians is a very crucial move to provide the social interactions spontaneously.

Based on the conceptual framework that developed by Ager and Strang (2008), it can be said that the *Social Connection* dimension with the social bridges sub-domain has been ensured by the Altındağ municipality, which can be regarded at least as a step towards firstly the social cohesion and secondly the integration. However, it should be

noted that the Altındağ municipality did not encourage the Syrians on the other hand. Keeping in mind the fact that the Altındağ municipality does not discriminate against Syrians, and including the Syrians in some courses and activities it appears that the Altındağ municipality is not stepping toward a concrete local integration program. That's because it can be seen that the Altındağ municipality has only the approach that putting effort for Syrians to benefit from the municipality services and these activities have been regarded as a kind of social cohesion activities by the experts in the Altındağ municipality.

Beyond the activities organized by the Altındağ municipality, the cooperation with other stakeholders has been developed to foster and widen the scope of local integration. Considering the cooperation in the field, it is important to investigate its sustainability scenarios towards the integration programs. In this regard, the capacity of the municipalities to cooperate significantly affects the direction of the cooperation. In the case of Altındağ municipality, it seems that the cooperation usually proceeds through the Women's Training Centers because these centers are the only legitimate platform that can be used.

For example, we, as the local government, did not work on integration alone, because the integration process needs to be developed in cooperation. Therefore, we worked a lot with non-governmental organizations. For example, we cooperated with the ASAM for jewelry and felting courses in Women's Training Centers in Hacılar and Önder neighborhoods. At the same time, we gave seminars with ASAM on various topics such as psycho-social support, hygiene and sexual health in these centers (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Based on this quote, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality cooperated with the ASAM to provide a proper area for some activities. It is crucial that the municipality is not ignoring the refugees and the integration issue at all. However, the felting or jewelry courses could be regarded as a result of the approach of the Altındağ municipality that provides services for the protection of the refugee community from isolation. On the other hand, it can be seen that the expert is underlining the need for cooperation with NGOs for better integration in the field, which is also a good sign that the local integration governance could possibly find a ground in Altındağ. In this regard, it can be argued that this approach could be placed in the third category which is stating

the features of limited and partial humanitarian aid as described by Daniş and Sert (2019), and discussed in the third chapter. Additionally, it appears that the Altındağ municipality does not organize explicitly social cohesion activities for Syrians rather choose to include them in some activities to prevent the isolation of Syrian refugees and could be regarded at least as the starter of being active in local integration governance at local level.

Regarding the social cohesion activities which aim to bring together the children of both Syrian refugees and the local people, a journey to Çanakkale and İstanbul was organized by the Altındağ municipality in cooperation with the Altındağ Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation:

In 2017, we organized journeys to Çanakkale and İstanbul to create a cohesion among Syrian refugee children and Turkish children. We tried to be comprehensive in these journeys and each trip was organized with half Turkish and half Syrian children, and we saw that during the journey they found a lot common issues to talk and discuss (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation_Expert_1).

There is another way of cooperation that Altındağ municipality developed with ASAM on the ground. For some of ASAM's social cohesion activities, the municipality facilitated the process of reaching out to the relevant beneficiaries in the field. Since the municipality staff know the Syrians in the district well, it sometimes plays an intermediary role in this regard.

In addition, we ensured the participation of Syrian women living in our district in the digital storytelling workshop conducted in partnership with ASAM and Hacettepe University. Sometimes we also act as intermediaries in such activities. Thus, both the Syrians living in our district participate in the event and our cooperation with non-governmental organizations is strengthened (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Within the scope of the project 'Together We Stand', social cohesion activities were carried out in cooperation with Youth Centers of Altındağ Municipality, and at the same time, Altındağ Municipality provided free sports areas and recreation areas for these events (Interview, Ankara, 2021, ASAM_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in these quotes, when there are potential cohesion activities, the Altındağ municipality welcomes cooperation and has been willing to provide access to its facilities. In that regard, the comments of the expert in TRC Community Center are also quite important:

Each actor can have a separate place in the field. The Altındağ municipality also gives the support in terms of letting us use its facilities for the activities sometimes. However, they are not initiating any activities until we propose (Interview, Ankara, 2021, TRC Community Center_Expert_1).

Based on this quote, it can be argued that even if the Altındağ municipality accepts offers rather than initiating itself for social cohesion activities to provide access to some recreation areas or sport centers belong to the municipality. However, leading the activities and initiating cooperation don't appear to be prioritized because of the lack of a defined responsibility/authority in LFIP regarding migration governance and integration policy (Erdoğan, 2017). Additionally, it can be seen that the Altındağ municipality adopted a local integration approach that has two main pillars by including the Syrians in service provision; i) empowering refugees and reducing their dependency on the public institutions, ii) maintaining social peace for the purpose of reducing the ghettoization and segregation (as well as increasing social tension) that has already begun (Kavas et al., 2019). In this regard, it should be noted that the political orientation and the position they define for themselves in terms of integration seems to be affecting the approach of the Altındağ municipality.

Here, a multi-stakeholder project is worth mentioning. The ANKA project aims to encourage both Turkish and Syrian women to establish cooperatives in the field of textiles and handicrafts in order to facilitate their entry into business life and contribute to their sustainable income. This project is run by the ATO-IDEA⁵³ (a subsidiary firm of Ankara Chamber of Commerce) with the partnership of TED University Social Innovation Center, Altındağ municipality, ASAM, and Joon which is a social enterprise that supported brand management and business development of the cooperative.

⁵³ Detailed information about the institution is available at: <http://www.atoidea.com/Ato> (Last access: 02.12.2021)

There is a plan to establish a cooperative as the output of this project, which started two years ago and whose aim is to support women-led social enterprises in selected regions. 70% of the women selected for the implementation of the project are Syrians and the remaining 30% are Turkish women. Women who received training in the fields of cooperatives, accounting, advertising and social enterprises also started to produce products by taking practical trainings on knitting and sewing. For this project, our municipality supported in providing the necessary workshop places for both in education and production stages and in reaching Syrian women who could be interested in this project in our district (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Considering the main objectives of the ANKA project, it can be argued that there is an integration aim in the long-run to ensure economic independence and integration of Syrian women by supporting them to establish a business where they will earn income by both acquiring a profession and doing this profession. On the other hand, it can be regarded that the aim of catering social cohesion by providing that some of the participants are Syrian and some are Turkish is complementing the main objective of the project which is the integration in the long-run. Regarding the cooperation way of the Altındağ municipality with other stakeholders in this project, it can be said that the Altındağ municipality has played a facilitator role by providing the Syrian participants and an atelier within the municipality. Since the approach of the Altındağ municipality is quite positive in regards to be included in the governance of local integration in its district through projects, it is expected that the capacity of working with different stakeholders of the municipality might be increased and strengthened by the time. Last but not least, the role of the Altındağ municipality can show us that there is a high effort for the protection of refugee society from isolation.

As it was discussed by Lowndes and Polat (2020), it could be claimed that the Altındağ municipality is on good track to enact and interpret the national policy on harmonization that does not give a specific authority to the local governments but gives a *de-facto* responsibility. That's because it can be argued that the central government does not define such a policy clearly either. However, it would be appropriate to say that at national level there is not an integration policy with clearly defined main targets, expected outcomes and operational steps toward these targets.

On the other hand, paying attention to the fact that both Turkish and Syrian people participating in the events and projects show that the activities are being carried out in an inclusive way. In this regard, the cooperation between TRC Community Center and the Altındağ municipality is a good example.

We did the project “There is Hope in the Kitchen” with Kızılay. A total of 30 women, 15 Turkish and 15 Syrian, among our members of the Women's Education and Culture Center, received cooking apprenticeship training for 3 months. After their internship, Kızılay helped them get a job. This was an effective study for direct employment (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

As it can be seen in this quote, the inclusion of both Turkish and Syrian people in the same project became a kind of norm in social cohesion activities initiated by various NGOs and supported by Altındağ municipality. So, it can be argued that this way of planning the activities could facilitate having relationships between Syrians and Turkish people. Also, in the long run, the empowerment of Syrians by training them to be eligible for recruitment in the Turkish labor market could have a positive impact on the integration of Syrian urban refugees.

On the other hand, it should be highlighted that the media representation of these activities matters in terms of engagement of wider local people in such activities. To make this happen, the Altındağ municipality is making these kinds of activities visible so that half of the participants are Turkish and the other half Syrians.

On our social media accounts, we make sure to announce the work we do as a municipality, or the seminars and courses offered for refugees. We do this by prioritizing events attended by both Turks and Syrians. Because if our political aim is to truly integrate or ensure its sustainability, we provide a warmer and more sympathetic flow of information to the public in that sense (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Based on this quote, supporting the stance provided by Goodman and Kirkwood (2019), it can be asserted that the local governments' media usage could be a tool that facilitates the social cohesion and made the local people think that the municipality is not only dealing with the Syrians in the district, which can be an ice-breaker move in the long-term. Regarding the participation motivation of the local people in such events, it

could be assumed that this kind of media usage provides a perception among the local people that attending in such an event is trustworthy because a municipality, a public legal entity, organizes this organization. Supporting the standpoint of Kale and Erdoğan (2019), it can be argued that emergency response initiatives evolved into local integration efforts to promote social harmony among district residents over time. Although municipal governments did not have a well-defined definition of social cohesion, the prevalent assumption was to maintain "solidarity" among fellow people or minimize tensions (Kale & Erdoğan, 2019, p. 229). Even if it was the case in the Altındağ district, the pandemic made the social cohesion activities luxury and the protection sector oriented projects gained weight in the field (Üstübcü & Karadağ, 2020).

On the other hand, the Çankaya municipality does not provide any specified social cohesion activities for Syrian refugees living in Çankaya district. Since the density of Syrians in Çankaya is not high as it is in the Altındağ district, it can be argued that the cohesion activities are not prioritized.

We have 28 centers at the neighborhood level. We call these centers Çankaya House and various courses are offered here. However, there is a limited demand for Turkish courses from Syrians. Since they live in very few neighborhoods in our district, we open the language course if there is a demand in the neighborhoods where they are dense. The language course has been opened in 4 Çankaya Houses so far (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be seen in that quote, the Çankaya municipality gives Turkish language courses in Çankaya Houses when it is requested by Syrians. It can also be argued that much as the expert in the Çankaya municipality sees learning the local language as a prerequisite for better integration and asked newcomers to learn the local language, it seemingly does not take any initiative for this such as disseminating the Turkish language courses by encouraging the Syrians in district-wide. So, it can be argued that the language learning is left for the demand and preferences of Syrians themselves. This approach also could be regarded as having some similarities with the approach of the Altındağ municipality on the ground of being unwilling to take initiative and employing the resources for refugees, but step toward when there is a request by the refugees. The reason of this approach by the Çankaya municipality could be derived from the political

positioning of the Çankaya municipality and the low number of refugees in Çankaya district.

Recognizing the cooperation with other stakeholders it should be noted that the Çankaya municipality presents a different example in terms of the frequency and willingness to cooperate for the empowerment of the Syrians living in the Çankaya district. In this regard, it was seen that the related branches of the Çankaya municipality were not aware that there is an International Vocational Training Center⁵⁴ run by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality in Ankara's Pursaklar district.

In the field of employment, we are only in contact with the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and our employment center. If necessary, dialogue is established with institutions such as Ankara Chamber of Industry or Ankara Chamber of Commerce, but we do not cooperate with the center of another municipality. This is not a political choice. In this context, I give an example of our cooperation with Ümraniye Municipality. It didn't happen with the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, we didn't even investigate what they were doing (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Considering the existing situation in terms of cooperation between the Çankaya municipality and the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, which is also run by the RPP, it can be argued that the Çankaya municipality did not need any external cooperation body for the referral of Syrians living in the Çankaya district so that they will be integrated into the Turkish labor market after specific trainings are given. So, it can be argued that the Çankaya municipality displays much less interest in such an assertive work which is the labor market integration of Syrians living in the district because of the reason that the municipality is not willing to be involved in a comprehensive integration implementation in the field.

On the other hand, it was shared that there are some NGOs asking for logistical support for their activities from the Çankaya municipality. While responding these demands the Çankaya municipality seems to be helpful for these events.

⁵⁴ More information is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/tr/28011-uluslararasi-koruma-ihciyaci-icindeki-kisiler-ve-ev-sahibi-topluluk-uyeleri-mesleki-kariyer-edinme-yolunda-beraber-egitimlere-katiliyor.html> (Last Access: 27.03.2022)

We have often been requested by NGOs to give logistical support for their activities. For example, they are asking transportation services for their social cohesion projects. Besides, we also give them proper places for the training and events. That's because we think that we are ready to support as long as they work in our district (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Even if the Çankaya municipality is not involved in social cohesion projects directly, it should be stated that the municipality sometimes took a facilitator role in terms of logistics at least. So, it seems that the Çankaya municipality has the willingness to cooperate with NGOs in the district when there is a cooperation request by the NGOs. In this regard, the Çankaya municipality hosted April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day celebration event⁵⁵ for children who live in Altındağ, Mamak and Çankaya districts with the supports of UNICEF and ASAM.

That day, [Turkish and Syrian] children played games in the playgrounds set up for them, accompanied by professional animators who played cartoon characters, and distributed kites, ropes, balls, etc. they formed their own games with toys and had the opportunity to get closer to each other. And this showed us that when such environments are created, those cold conflicts will actually disappear, because at the beginning of the event, families who stayed far away from each other and only with their own group started to get close and chat with other immigrant families after a while. We are also aware that this is just an event and is not sustainable (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Recognizing the positive impact of such organizations even if it is not providing a sustained effect on the communities, it can be argued that Çankaya municipality staff is not fully ignoring the Syrian refugees and instead making an effort for social interaction that can be created between the local people and Syrians. There is an additional notable finding that the NGOs are the ones who take initiatives aiming social cohesion and at the local level they see the municipalities as necessary and best fit actor especially in local integration governance. As a result, participating in such an event, which is also organized and hosted by the Çankaya municipality, can be seen as a firm and concrete indicator that

⁵⁵ More information about the event is available at: <https://www.cankaya.bel.tr/news/9972/Multeci-Cocuklar-Unutulmadi/> (Last access: 27.12.2021)

the municipality of Çankaya is not in a position to fully disregard the Syrians in the district. However, it should be noted here that there are some political challenges that confront the desire of being part in forced migration governance of the Çankaya municipality:

Through these events, we want to break the ice in higher ranks of the municipality administration against the Syrians. We say to our vice presidents that these activities do not mean that we have developed an institutional acceptance against Syrians. Because there is an international organization in the event, we just stand side by side with it. Some of our vice presidents agree with this, some do not. Additionally, we support some activities we believe that could be efficacious for our district via some NGOs in Ankara, but we prefer not to declare them on our social media. That's because the refugee issue is a sensitive issue and we don't want to be criticized by the residents (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be understood from this quote, political reservations inevitably affected the visibility of some activities, because the expert fears about to be perceived by the local people as if the administrative of the Çankaya municipality is accepting Syrians and facilitating the integration of them. That's because there is probably a fear of political harm in this regard. However, this situation did not put the municipality staff back from working for refugees, even if it is rare, and through some individual events, even if they are not sustainable, the expert in the Çankaya municipality is trying to make the administrative staff more engaged in the issue. So, it can be argued that there is an individual effort in the Çankaya municipality to deal with Syrians. Throughout these individual events and individual efforts, it should not be ignored that the cooperation between the Çankaya municipality and NGOs in terms of social cohesion for Syrians has two main effects; i) the potentials to boost the operational and logistical capacity of the Çankaya municipality, ii) melting the political ice in a micro policy context regarding the social cohesion of Syrians in the first place.

Considering these positive effects, it can be argued that even if it is individual, the efforts of the interviewed expert could be regarded as a pragmatic move beyond the political issues. In their classification of three different district municipalities in Istanbul, Lowndes and Polat (2020) have argued that some municipalities prefer to be pragmatic

so that there will not be much a burdensome situation in terms of integration of Syrians in the future. In the Çankaya municipality case, it can be argued that there is not any burdensome context compared to Altındağ municipality, but in the first place the capacity-building and learning the know-how side of its approach could be seen as another way of being pragmatic if there will be any distribution mechanism of refugees in the near future in Turkey.

On the other hand, the fact that the expert expressing their institutional abstention on social media accounts is very crucial part to understand the approach of the municipality. In the above presented quote, it was clear that they are not disseminating their individual events for Syrians, because of the hesitations they have if the local residents disagree with these events occurred in Çankaya, and if they could possibly lose political support from the local people in the next local elections. In this regard, supporting the standpoint of Schmauch and Nygren (2020), it could be stated that the decision regarding the way of dissemination of some integration activities is complex and also presents a good indication regarding the pillars of the approach of municipalities towards the politics of integration in Turkish case.

Comparatively speaking, the Altındağ municipality has been engaged in social cohesion activities and related stakeholder cooperation in the field more than the Çankaya municipality has. It is partly due to the fact that there are many more Syrians living in the Altındağ district, and this made the Altındağ municipality to engage in more activities designed to aim not to isolate refugees from the society, to eliminate the tensions between the local people and Syrians, and secondly, to prevent further and more costly efforts to create a social cohesion at local level, which is a kind of pragmatism that discovered by Lowndes and Polat (2020) in their research on Sultanbeyli, Şişli and Zeytinburnu district municipalities. In this regard, it can be added that both the Altındağ and Çankaya municipality had some de-facto responsibilities they had to in the current uncertain and politicized environment in the Turkish context.

The social cohesion activities are another component that should be analyzed to better understand to what extent the national policy ad-hocracy reflected on the approaches of the selected municipalities. In this regard, it can be argued that the realities of the field made the Altındağ municipality to face challenges of hosting more refugees

compared to the Çankaya municipality. Moreover, being involved in different social events organized by different NGOs is a good sign that the Altındağ municipality has the potential for local integration governance at the local level. Additionally, it should be stated that without any cooperation, neither municipality would be able and willing to work with Syrians in social cohesion activities because of such reasons as lack of budget, insufficient capacity, absence of integration programs, and political hesitations.

Building on the fact that there is not an institutional and long-standing approach to the local integration of Syrian refugees both in Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities, the cooperation between other stakeholders inevitably happened through individual activities mostly with the offer of NGOs. So, it can be argued that there is possibly a reflection of national policy ad-hocracy at the local level in local integration governance in both the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities. That reflection of ad-hocracy is deriving from below listed findings that are interconnected and could be summarized as:

- The municipalities are not sure about the role they should play in forced migration governance at the local level,
- There appears to be a lack of a clear political will in municipality administrations regarding the Syrians,
- Municipalities, particularly Çankaya Municipality, have hesitations/political reservations about being criticized by the local residents in the district for social cohesion activities targeting Syrians.

4.3.2. Service and Aid Provision

In this section, the researcher will try to reflect the legal vagueness deriving from the Municipality Law on service provision. Then, the approaches of the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities will be presented to make a comparison in terms of how they interpret the legal ambiguity and whether they tried to overcome the legal obstacles while providing services and aids for Syrians in their respective districts. So, to a certain extent it can be argued that the service provision represents the side of *de jure* integration (Hovil, 2014) because the related Turkish legislation, the Municipality Law, defines the needy people to be supported.

On the other hand, Kale and Erdoğan (2019) argue that while Article 14 defines the people in need to be supported via social aid, from a maximalist perspective, it can be argued that the Syrians with low income are needy people. Kale and Erdoğan (2019) also asserted that this maximalist perspective could be benefited from while interpreting the Article 13 of the Municipality Law by stating that the Syrians could be regarded as townsman (*hemşehri*) as they live in the same neighborhood with Turkish people to pave the way for providing services.

In this regard, how the (non) inclusion of the refugees in the legal framework applied for the local governments affect the operations of the selected municipalities in the field is crucial for this study. So, the analysis of the expert from the Altındağ municipality is worth mentioning regarding the integration of Syrians in Turkey's current legal and practical grounds.

Considering the harmonization of Syrians in Turkey, I think 'natural selection' would be the best phrase to describe it. Because right now, people are trying to survive in the district where they settled. There is nothing extra that they did while they were here. Unfortunately, this is our situation right now. ESSN aid comes from the European Union, in addition sometimes international organizations provide assistance and sometimes other NGOs provide support. So, we are not in a permanent and sustainable solution (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_1).

As it can be deduced from this quote, even if there are some aid and financial support that Syrians benefit from, the sustainability of this funding is doubtful. So, the point shared by the expert in the above quote is crucial and seemingly factual that there is a need for institutionalized funding for local governments in terms of the integration of the Syrians beyond the sporadic aids.

Additionally, regarding the institutionalized funding at national level, the Exit Strategy from the ESSN Program by the The FRiT Office of the Presidency of Turkey is an important document to analyze here. This document is prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), and the main aims were to reduce Syrian refugees' reliance on the social assistance system and to formalize their acquisition of skills and competencies that the labor market requires (Akyl, 2018). Recognizing the fact that the dependency on the social aids of Syrian refugees are not sustainable solution,

the preference of the development-based approach at the central level can be regarded as a good sign toward the labour market integration of Syrians formally. However, it should be noted that this document is a kind of vision document that provides a general strategical framework, not concrete steps. In this regard, it is crucial to highlight that the localization of the aids are needed at local level, because the municipalities are becoming passive without any assistance or financial support.

In 2019 we wanted to open a center such as the Immigration Services Center, which was established within the Keçiören municipality, under the Altındağ municipality in cooperation with IOM. For this, an application was made to the ECHO fund by IOM, but it was not accepted and we could not open it. So, these activities are all fund dependent (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Turkish Refugee Council_Expert_1).

As it was seen it that quote, the lack of extra budget for the refugees in the municipalities made the municipalities seek some international funds to implement some projects in their localities. However, it can be said that the local governments are tended to benefit from this kind of funds to be able to provide better services such as health, legal and psycho-social counselling for the needy people in their districts (Erdoğan, 2017).

Supporting the standpoint of the experts in the Altındağ municipality and Turkish Refugee Council, Özçürümez and İçduygu (2020) analyzed the sustainability scenarios of the municipalities that had to deliver services and aid to conclude that the local governments in Turkey should be supported by an institutionalized national funding from the government especially designed for the districts accommodating dense Syrian populations with limited financial capacities. As it was mentioned earlier, Özçürümez and İçduygu (2020) also stressed that the ESSN aids, which designed under the FRiT fund, will be end up in 2022, and the protection intervention in the Turkish context will be in need of sustainable solutions.

In addition to these sustainability scenarios, the project-based facilities or centers established by the municipalities are also in question. It appears in the case of Keçiören Immigration Services Center that the cooperation between the IOM and the municipality is project-based which means the sustainability issue is ambiguous. In that center⁵⁶ it is

⁵⁶ Detailed information on the center is available at: https://www.kecioren.bel.tr/gocmen_merkezi_hayatlarini_kolaylastirdi-409-haber.html (Last Access: 06.06.2022)

aimed to facilitate refugees' access to various public services such as health, legal support and psycho-social counseling, education, social assistance and solidarity, employment since 2016 in cooperation with IOM. Although this cooperation is tried to be extended with protocols, the operating costs of the center including personnel costs are expected to be afforded by the Keçiören municipality when the project is completed. However, these project costs are far away being afforded by a district municipality:

I'm also city council member at Keçiören municipality. We are constantly extending the protocols between the Keçiören municipality and the IOM, because affording Keçiören Immigration Services Center that provides a wide range of services is not possible for a district municipality. When IOM stopped to fund this center we don't know what to do. Considering the financial condition of the municipality it is hard and challenging to continue the services as it was before (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT)_Expert _1).

It is also a fact that the Altındağ municipality faces a very significant financial challenge while providing aids. The expert underlined the fact that more than half of the Syrians are in need of social aids, but the local people in similar conditions should be prioritized by the municipality.

I have my own citizen who is not well off. I already distribute social aids to them, because my obligation orders it in the law. And what will my budget be if I distribute it to the Syrians also? We will have to distribute the money that does not come. However, we are currently breaking the law. In order for us to take more concrete and realistic steps, we need to see whether the Syrians are permanent or temporary. According to me, that natural selection will only be broken when the laws at national level are revised in accordance with the local governments' needs. Unless the burden on the municipality is alleviated, there is no solution in terms of social cohesion or social aids (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert _1).

In this quote, it can be seen that the municipality administration of Altındağ is under a twofold burden regarding aid provision and had to break the rules sometimes. Based on the current situation, supporting the standpoint of Kale and Erdoğan (2019), it can be argued that the expert in the Altındağ municipality is referring to the non-policy of central government at national level regarding the stay of Syrians in Turkey, and they

have been obliged to act in a way that bends the relevant legislation to provide aids to the Syrians in need. On the other hand, given the uncertainty surrounding Syrians' future stays and the lack of any responsibility delegation for actors in a clearly defined integration policy at the national level, it's understandable that municipalities are unable to develop and implement clear and long-term integration programs. In this regard, as it was stated by the expert, there is need of an institutionalized distribution or settlement policy in combination of the clear national integration policy, because the municipalities are seemingly left alone in responding any needs of the refugees and related challenges in the field.

There is another angle here that should be underlined in terms of the sustainability of the services and aids given to the Syrians. The expert in the Altındağ municipality argues that their efforts are far from permanent and sustainable.

We may have impossibilities arising from the legislation in terms of providing different services. In fact, we tried to focus on integration activities in Önder neighborhood, both in terms of services and psycho-social support, but the ghettoization may be due to the profiles of refugees there. On the other hand, our activities are in the nature of instant solutions and unfortunately they are not permanent. Therefore, the activities should be long-term and sustainable. For this, there needs to be a top integration policy, and the perspective and vision need to be in line with it (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Expert_2).

Based on this quote, it can also be argued that the administrative pathology, the national policy adhocism, is reflected at local level and could be seen in the Altındağ case. Evidence for this is coming from both the 11th Development Plan and the Harmonization Strategy Document and National Action Plan (2018-2023). That's because, as it was discussed earlier, these documents prepared at national level reflect only the political visions, not any ways of concrete steps towards the national integration policy making or delegating any responsibilities to any actors in local integration governance of refugees. Supporting and contributing to the standpoint of Natter (2021), it can be argued that, in the Turkish case, non-policy of integration at national level as a result of intentional ad-hocratic refugee governance followed by the central government to use the Syrians as a leverage against the EU to secure the state power (Terry, 2021).

Since there is no regional refugee distribution mechanism, municipalities confront both service burdensome and political challenges as a result of local people reactions to the service or aid offered to foreigners with their taxes. In that regard, the practitioner in the Altındağ municipality points out a quite practical solution for this challenge.

We can't provide cash aid anyway, we don't have a budget. From time to time, we only have in-kind donations such as goods, hygiene boxes and clothes. However, a few times the local people reacted strongly, saying why you are giving them to Syrians when we need them. Even municipal vehicles delivering aid were stoned. Then, when we were going to help, we tried to deliver the aid in the dark and with a vehicle does not have the municipality logo (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Altındağ Municipality_Practitioner_2).

In this quote, it can be deduced that the Altındağ municipality faces a strong reaction from the local population to the distribution of the aids to the Syrians. Even if there is such a reaction, the needy Syrians are not ignored by the Altındağ municipality, which is a quite devotedly approach.

On the other hand, the expert in the Çankaya municipality also underlined the over-reaction of the local people against municipality's aid provision to the needy Syrians living in the district.

If we start to serve the immigrant groups in such an open way declaring the distribution of aid boxes, support those in need, provide language courses, and say that we have works to ensure integration, the people of Çankaya will stone the municipality. So, we rarely mediate this kind of in-kind aid distributions that is it (Interview, Ankara, 2021, Çankaya Municipality_Expert_1).

Based on this quote, the dissemination of the activities through media or social media is perceived by the expert in the Çankaya municipality as a challenge since local residents would over react against the municipality. On the other hand, this is a political choice of the Çankaya municipality not to be pointed out by the local residents in the district. That's because, the municipalities, at the end of the day, are political entities that seek the votes of local people to continue to govern the municipality. So, it can be argued that as a matter of course the political interests of the municipality could be prioritized as happened in the Çankaya municipality case. However, the Altındağ municipality is taking risks while delivering the aids at nights with vehicles without municipality logo.

Comparatively speaking, while the Altındağ municipality chooses to continue provide social aids even if there is a risk of losing votes and negative reactions from the local community, the Çankaya municipality is already having much more reservations while delivering aids and local integration governance.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality is taking both political risks and initiatives to help the needy Syrians in the district by commenting on the Article 13 of the Municipality Law that Syrians could be regarded as the ones who are residing in the district and need of support with low income. On the other hand, the Çankaya municipality prioritized that being in the safe side at legal ground while helping local people. It is an important finding that the Çankaya municipality has prepared a Social Aid Regulation not to have a problem in the audits of the Court of Accounts, and only Turkish people are regarded as the ones to whom aid will be given in that regulation. In this regard, it can be commented that the exclusion of Syrians in this Regulation, even if it is on the paper, is an interesting finding that to show the administration of the Çankaya municipality's approach to the existence of the Syrians in the district.

However, even if the Altındağ municipality has taken initiatives while helping needy Syrians more than the Çankaya municipality, it did not prepare any kind of Social Aid Regulation to be in safe side. The reason for this could be argued that the power relations between the political party governing the Çankaya municipality and the ruling party could be a reason for double standard in audits that's why the Altındağ municipality is governing by the same political party in the rule does not need any legal clarifications by preparing a regulation for this. Additionally, it should be also underlined that there are some specific issues in both the Altındağ and Çankaya municipality approach in common ground. For example, the hesitation of being criticized by local people is common abstention that two selected municipalities share while providing aids and services to the Syrians.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS

Considering the findings of the field research, it can be argued that there are some important and interrelated topics have been highlighted through the research. In that chapter the researcher will provide analyses on these highlighted results of the research.

5.1. Policy ad-hocracy at national level in Turkey

Examining the Turkish context, it can be claimed that there is a policy ad-hocracy in integration policy making at the national level, the reflection of which could be seen in the governance of integration at the local level. Since the legal framework has been applied for Syrian refugees in Turkey is based on the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR), it can be seen that there is not a specifically designed integration policy at the national level. In that regard, a well-designed and purposeful approach in integration policy-making has some bottlenecks in the Turkish context. One of these bottlenecks is the lack of a time limit regarding the termination of TPR. Therefore, the future is vague for most of the Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey because it can be terminated at any time. Ironically, however, it can remain in effect forever at the same time. So, this bottleneck creates a clear *legal uncertainty*.

Besides, the related articles of the TPR do not allow Syrians to apply for international protection after termination, if it happens one day in the future, as they took refuge in Turkey in mass groups, not individually. So, it can be remarked that these related articles are providing a kind of a *legal insecurity* regarding future stays of Syrians, and contributed to the protracted situations of Syrians in Turkey. Combining these two limitations coming from the legal framework, it can be argued that even if the temporary protection regime in Turkey has provided practical solutions at the very beginning of the

mass flows, it can be regarded as a pragmatic approach rather than a strategically designed integration program for indefinite stays of Syrians.

Beyond these national asylum policy outcomes and non-policy of integration at national level, it also should be underlined that the political will was partly shaped by instrumentalization of Syrians in Turkey in foreign policy, particularly regarding the EU. Regarding this instrumentalization process, it can be claimed that Syrians potentially present political leverage against EU. A substantial example of this potential leverage against EU can be seen in the move of the government in Turkey in early 2020 when it has opened its borders to Europe. So, it can be argued that the national policy ad-hocracy was made possible for government to take action in that way. In addition to this, it can be argued that just as applied in the domestic politics, in order to solve the problems that arise in the short term or to achieve the desired policy goals instead of a long-term strategy, ad-hocracy is also applied in foreign policy, and the border crossings have been opened.⁵⁷ In that regard, it can be claimed that such an action has taken to achieve what is desired from the EU in the short term, without much thought of what kind of results will be revealed in the long term. Afterwards, this border opening application is terminated and as long as the demands from the EU are achieved (receiving another 6 billion Euros with a new statement), this application is not repeated again.

On the other hand, considering the domestic politics in Turkey, the policy ad-hocracy in integration policy making at national level is expected to provide a useful maneuver area for the government in refugee issue so that it could act in accordance with the demands of the local people because it was not bounded by any clear and institutionalized integration policy or strategy. Thanks to this flexibility advantage of the government, the political discourse tended to be changeable for political gains in the eyes of the public. This can be seen in the recent speeches⁵⁸ of the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Additionally, the FRiT program by the EU is providing grants for integration projects intended to be implemented in Turkey, and these grants are used in domestic

⁵⁷ More information is available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/arastirma/gocmenler-avrupa-yolunda-turkiye-kapilari-neden-acti/1754700> (Last access: 17.07.2022)

⁵⁸ For two different explanations made by the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, these news can be reviewed: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-suriyelileri-katillerin-eline-ve-kucagina-atmayacagiz/2582626> (Last Access: 09.07.2022), <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-61307585> (Last Access: 09.07.2022).

market bringing in financial resources in Turkey, which can be preferable for the public authorities over having concrete steps toward the integration aim.

Since there was not a fair refugee distribution mechanism designed by the central government, Syrians preferred to live in larger urban centers where there are a lot of job opportunities and relatively higher standards of living. However, the central government has designed a dilution policy, as of February 2022, aiming to prevent concentration of Syrians in specific neighborhoods after the August 2021 incidents in Ankara. So, this practical solution can be regarded as another example of situation-specific interventions rather than planned and sustainable integration policies.

In conclusion, as Natter (2021) did in her study, the policy ad-hocracy in integration policy-making at national level in Turkey also could be analyzed in three pillars; flexibility, pragmatism, and unpredictability. In the case of Turkey, it would be more suitable to use “unpredictability” as the third pillar while explaining the characteristics of the policy ad-hocracy at national level in integration policy-making. Since flexibility and pragmatism pillars are also seen in Turkey, the situation-specific interventions of the government could be considered as unpredictability characteristic of the policy ad-hocracy in local integration governance.

5.2. The reflection of policy ad-hocracy at local level

Considering the interplay between the central and local levels in local integration governance, this study has revealed that the national policy ad-hocracy has been reflected in the responses of both NGOs and local governments at the local level. Specifically analyzing the case studies, it can be argued that the reflection of the policy ad-hocracy could be regarded as a result of the fact that municipalities lack authority regarding integration policy implementation, but they have the responsibility to somehow deal with the issue in the local context. However, it should be noted here that to some extent this reflection also differed between the approaches of Altındağ and Çankaya municipality.

Even if there are not direct and solid steps towards the local integration of Syrians in the Altındağ district, as there is not at the central level also, it can be claimed that the local integration of Syrians issue has been addressed in a pragmatic way. In that regard, it can be claimed that the Altındağ municipality, which is governed by a Mayor from the

ruling party, JDP, was focused on the elimination of social tensions in the field by including Syrians in social activities. That's because there is a high intensity of Syrians in the Altındağ district and there is always a possibility of conflict in neighborhoods. While doing so, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality is acting with the motivation to follow the track of the central government, which is a kind of pragmatic approach that keep the public opinion under control and does not let Syrians to be excluded fully in the local level. The inclusion of Syrians in service provisions and some activities by welcoming the offers of cooperation by the NGOs could be analyzed in that way. So, it can be claimed that there are two important indications that the Altındağ municipality is addressing integration in a practical/instrumental way and it has shown a reflection of policy ad-hocracy in integration policy making at national level;

- i) being involved in cooperation with NGOs in the social cohesion activities: not initiating the cooperation
- ii) including the Syrians in already planned activities and municipality services: not initiating a social cohesion activity directly for Syrians

On the other hand, it can be seen that the approach of the Çankaya municipality, run by a Mayor from the opposition party RPP, to the local integration of Syrians was also shaped by party politics and political reservations. Because RPP declares its willingness to send Syrians back to their country⁵⁹, Çankaya municipality preferred to be inactive in local integration of Syrians. However, even if it was limited and initiated by an individual expert in the Çankaya municipality, if there is offer of cooperation to organize some social activities for Syrians, it appears that the municipality cooperates by providing logistical and venue support. Moreover, the fear of receiving reactions from the residents of the Çankaya district is another factor that influences the approach of the Çankaya municipality. So, the cooperation of the Çankaya municipality in organizing some events with the NGOs are not publically disseminated so much in their social media. In that regard, it can be argued that there are two indications that the approach of the Çankaya municipality could be regarded as a part of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy making;

⁵⁹ More information is available at: <https://www.politikyol.com/chpli-cevikoze-suriyeli-siginmacilar-konusundaki-tutumumuzda-bir-degisiklik-yok/> (Last access: 10.07.2022)

- i) being involved in cooperation with NGOs in the field: not initiating any cooperation
- ii) a political standing that prevents the Çankaya municipality to define any service area for refugees even if there is a small number of Syrians stay in the district

Considering how the reflection of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy making differed in the approaches of two municipalities, it can be claimed that the pragmatic concerns have mostly shaped both the municipalities' approaches to the local integration governance. So, it can be analyzed that both the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities are political entities seeking their own agendas for extra votes in local elections, they are prone not to take initiatives for any cooperation with the NGOs in organizing local integration activities and service provision because of the fear of local people's possible negative reactions. However, they don't refuse to cooperate when an NGO offers cooperation. In that regard, it can be claimed that the situation of the municipalities in local integration governance could be considered as not initiating but being involved which is quiet passive. Since the municipalities are acting in a vacuum of any strategically designed integration policy at national level, the approach of Alexander (2007) could be regarded as suitable in the case of Turkey: the localist thesis. In this thesis Alexander (2007) explained that when there is a lack of both national and local models of integration, the local policies are shaped uniquely, by the specific problems and conditions at the local level.

National policy ad-hocracy in integration policy-making has also reflected in the approaches of the NGOs in a way that their activities are mostly project-based and not sustainable. It means the integration activities and programs by the NGOs are not designed by a concrete national integration policy, rather they are designed in accordance with the funding institutions' agendas and specific objectives of the projects. On the other hand, it can be claimed that the NGOs have more flexibility to be active in local integration governance because it appears that they have some international funding to organize social cohesion activities in the field.

However, it can be argued that it is sometimes risky for NGOs to act effectively in the politicized environment regarding refugees in Turkey, and they try to overcome the

risks by cooperating with municipalities. As a public entity, the municipalities are considered as proper partners for NGOs to be on the safe side in the eyes of the public. Considering these practical concerns of the NGOs, the local integration governance mechanisms between the municipalities and NGOs could be thought as win-win situations. While the municipalities with limited financial resources are getting involved in cooperation schemes to prevent the isolation of refugee groups in the districts, the NGOs are realizing their own agendas by offering the cooperation in this regard. So, it can be argued that the NGOs are playing a facilitator role in the field. Considering the roles and limits of the municipalities and the NGOs scrutinized in this study, it would be good to summarize the local integration governance mechanism between them in table below:

Table 4: The actors in local integration governance

Actors	The central government	The local governments	The NGOs
Roles	Regulatory and Restrictive	Implementer/Executor	Facilitator
Functions	• Law and policy making at national level. • Through the law making it creates a legal framework and determines the status of foreigners. • Also, it could draw a framework for the cooperation between the stakeholders in the field.	• National policy practitioner at local level. • It could sometimes adapt the national policies at local level in accordance with the local dynamics. • It has a more flexible administrative structure to cooperate with the NGOs rather than central government.	• Offer cooperation with the local governments. • Through the cooperation offers it makes a space for the local governments to organize social cohesion activities. • Being flexible in projects funded by international donors.

CONCLUSION

This study has been aimed to understand the national integration policy of Turkey and the interplay between the legal frameworks of this policy at the national level and the local level implementations. Based on that interplay, the protection regime and forced migration management in Turkey were also investigated to better grasp the limits of the agencies could play a role in the integration governance process on the ground and how the Syrian urban refugees have been regarded in the legal framework. As was given in the previous chapters, this thesis has been aimed to investigate to what extent the local integration efforts of the selected two municipalities could be considered as a part of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy at the national level.

Since this study was designed as a comparative case study, the Altındağ and Çankaya municipalities in Ankara with bold differences have been selected to compare the approaches in terms of local integration efforts. In doing so, the term local integration addressed as organizing both social cohesion activities and service provision for Syrians at local level by the municipalities. During the inquiry, semi-structured interviews with 16 people were conducted in Ankara. These interviewees were from two selected municipalities and a set of civil society organizations (both experts and practitioners in these agencies are included) active both in pursuing social cohesion activities and developing cooperation with the selected municipalities in Ankara. Additionally, secondary source reviews (books, journals, legislation documents, regulations, strategic plans, white papers etc.) were examined.

Keeping in mind the main research question of the study, it can be remarked that the secondary source reviews provoked a big why and how question that the national policy ad-hocracy, occurred in the first place. So, the main legal framework on the foreigners and international protection, the LFIP, prepared after the mass inflows came to the south border of Turkey from Syria, has been examined in detail. Based on the LFIP, it can be asserted that the Syrians are provided a temporary protection status for an

indefinite time period. Then, it was deemed that the TPR, which is a more detailed and technical document that regulates the specific rights of the ones who are guaranteed a temporary protection status. After the document and legislation reviews, it has been discovered that the current protection regime in Turkey, shaped by the TPR, as an urgent intervention prepared in a short time period for mass inflows, because it was concluded that the asylum experience of Turkey has been characterized by *ad-hoc* solutions in the last two decades. So, it can be argued that any termination or time limit has not been considered in the first place even if the reference document, the EC's 2001 Directive on Temporary Protection, was providing a maximum three years stay for anyone holding a temporary protection status in the asylum country (Öztürk, 2017).

However, while scrutinizing the TPR, it has been revealed that there is no way for temporary protection status holders to have a right to apply for any other international protection status defined in the LFIP, as temporary protection was applied only in mass inflows, and applying for other international protection status necessitates an individual application. On the other hand, based on two main findings of the TPR review which are the indefinite time period of the temporary protection and the President's authority to expire the temporary protection at any time can be regarded as a challenge or retaining factors for Syrians to be integrated in the Turkish society in the future. Additionally, it has been found that there is not any well-designed settlement policy for the ones benefitted from the temporary protection status in the cities and this lack of fair distribution among the cities in Turkey made some relatively cheaper cities and districts more attractive and creates a pathway to ghetto gatherings at some point. In these regards, it can be argued that both this embedded uncertainty in the legal framework and the lack of settlement policy could hinder the integration of Syrians and narrow down the area of integration in the long run that could be pursued by both the Syrians and related actors.

Based on the Article 96 of LFIP, at the local level, the municipalities are regarded as one of the actors that might be asked a cooperation by the PMM to organize harmonization activities. So, it can be argued that there is not any fixed actor and responsibility match in the LFIP in terms of providing the harmonization/integration programs, which also could create an ambiguity both in burden and responsibility sharing at local level. Taking into account the fact that %98 of Syrians live in urban areas rather than camps, it can be seen that the local governments are facing a huge burden at the local

level in terms of local integration; social cohesion and service provision. Considering the Municipality Law, it has been discovered that the municipalities are not equipped with financial and operational capacity/responsibility to deal with such a *de-facto* situations in the field regarding the local integration. Hence, this study has found that the municipalities often had to take initiatives while providing both social cohesion activities and services for Syrians in the field.

Accordingly, in the view of interview findings, it has been discovered that the Article 13 and 14 of the Municipality Law gives a chance to interpret the Syrians as they are also townsman (*hemşehri*) for the Altındağ municipality that hosts most of the Syrian urban refugees in Ankara. However, as was given earlier, the lack of institutionalized and fixed integration policy at the national level created some gaps and challenges in terms of policy ad-hocracy in implementation. During the inquiry, it has been revealed that the high rates of the Syrians unregistered but lives in some specific cities and districts could be one of these gaps. In this regard, the Altındağ municipality case is that perfectly shows how the lack of fair refugee distribution among the districts could pave the way for the ghetto gatherings by the time and undermine the local integration efforts of the municipality in the field. That's because the findings of previous researches appear to conclude that homogenous relationships between the Syrians in specific neighborhoods made the Syrian urban refugees to live in more spatially clustered neighborhoods in the Altındağ district, which could be regarded as the ghettoization (Erman 2017; Kavas et. al., 2019). When to examine the Strategic Plan (2020-2024) of the Altındağ municipality it was also seen that the ghettoization issue is addressed as a kind of problem that should be dealt with the urban transformations.

Even if it was the case in the Altındağ district, it has seen that the Altındağ municipality is taking political risks while providing both social cohesion activities and sometimes aid provision. In this regard, it has been found that cooperation with other stakeholder in the district is the most important part of the holistic approach of the integration defined by the Altındağ municipality. However, based on the interview findings, it has been revealed that the cooperation model of the Altındağ municipality was a kind of passive mode that it does not initiate but involved in the cooperation if there is an offer by other stakeholders namely NGOs. That's because it was stated by the Altındağ municipality that unless there is a certain and strategically designed national integration

policy by the central government the municipalities could not take any further initiatives that could possibly create financial and auditory problems in the future. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that to some extent the approaches of the Altındağ municipality to eliminate the social tensions and prevent the ghettoization of Syrian refugees in some neighborhoods for the sake of local integration and cooperation at the local level could be seen as a part of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy, which inevitably limits the activities of the Altındağ municipality both on legal and practical grounds.

On the other hand, the Çankaya municipality case provided different inputs in terms of interpreting the legal framework when to organize or design any integration programs. When scrutinized the Strategic Plan of the Çankaya municipality, it was seen that there is no room for Syrian urban refugees. Since there is a low number of Syrians living in the district, it could be regarded that the Çankaya municipality does not define any service area for the Syrian urban refugees. However, in the Social Aid Regulation which was prepared to justify the expenses of any cash or in-kind assistance for the residents of the Çankaya district, the Syrian refugees are also ignored. In that regard, it can be argued that this regulation is a good indicator to show the main approach of the Çankaya municipality that is more ignoring the Syrian refugees in its district. So, it can be argued that the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy can be seen to a certain extent in the approach of the Çankaya municipality, which is hesitating to include the Syrian refugees in newly prepared regulation so that not to have any fiscal problems during the audits of the Court of Account.

In addition, it should be noted that the relations with central government is another area that the national policy ad-hocracy could be seen. On the legal ground, the Municipality Law, LFIP and the TPR can be regarded as the documents that frame the relationship between the local and central government. When examined, it has been seen that the central government plays a steering role in terms of making law and amending regulations if needed. Considering the LFIP in terms of integration framework it was put that the municipalities are not assigned any authority to take part in specific part of the national integration policy, which could create a legal ambiguity for the municipalities to take role in the local integration governance. However, it can be argued that the PMM's request for information from Altındağ municipality about activities organized for Syrians

in 2018 is a good indication that the relationship or cooperation between the central government and Altındağ municipality is limited unless any information is asked.

On the other hand, it has been revealed that the Çankaya municipality could not get some data from the General Directorate of Population and Citizenship Affairs, which is affiliated to the Ministry of Interior, to detect the needy local people in the district. In this regard, it was also remarked that it is not possible to have the related data on the Syrian urban refugees living in the Çankaya district. Regarding the governing party of the Çankaya municipality, the main opposition party RPP, it can be argued that the political reservations have big impacts on the willingness to cooperate in the field. However, it should be noted that the party policies also could limit the activities of the municipalities at the local level as could be seen in the Çankaya municipality's approach regarding the Social Aid Regulation.

Furthermore, this thesis tried to explore why and how the political reservations and party policies could contribute into the wider national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy. In the view of the findings, it was discovered that the political reservations are generally shaped by the demands of the local people. The interview findings of the Altındağ municipality showed that it was not accepted by the local people that the limited resources of the municipality is shared among all residents including the Syrians who are not taxpayers and contributed to the budget of the municipality. In addition, the Çankaya municipality has also same abstentions with the Altındağ municipality regarding the hesitation that if the local people disagree on the approach of the municipality and show their reactions in the elections. In this regard, it can be argued that the politicization of the service/aid provision is a major obstacle to local integration.

Based on the findings, it becomes possible to assert that there are some areas in the approaches of the municipalities that could be regarded as dissociated and overlapped areas in the implementation of the national integration policy at the local level. For example, while the understanding of the integration by the municipalities differs, both of the municipalities are not pursuing a kind of definition regarding the local integration because there is not any fixed integration policy framework developed by the central government, and this creates an ambiguity regarding the responsibilities of the municipalities in the field.

It was also an interesting finding that even if the two municipalities are governed by two different political parties, the reflection of the national policy ad-hocracy in integration policy at the local level was underlined by the two municipalities while defining the integration on an institutional basis. In this regard, while the Altındağ municipality was prioritizing the initiatives taken in the field not based on any legal framework or *de-jure* integration framework, and acting in accordance with the *de-facto* situations, the Çankaya municipality addressed the integration issue that should be dealt with by the central government in the first place and added that the responsible ministry should be the Ministry of Family and Social Services instead of the Ministry of Interior in the integration policy making at the national level. That's because the expert in the Çankaya municipality remarked that the integration issue is beyond any administrative procedure and necessitate a holistic approach that is expected to takes account the social dynamics of the existing society while developing a nation-wide integration policy.

In addition, it can be argued that to some extent above-mentioned reflection also seems to be present in the local integration efforts of the municipalities. Based on the evidence that the municipalities are not equipped with both the legal and financial authorities/capacities by the central government to provide a proper and strategically planned integration program at the local level, it can be argued that the case studies in this thesis revealed a fact coming from the field that the municipalities are not delegated a legal authority, but delegated a responsibility to manage the diversity at the local level with insufficient budgets. Moreover, the municipalities like Altındağ, which pragmatically shoulders the burden of the density of Syrian urban refugees in Ankara had to take initiative in most times to provide service and social cohesion activities in the field. Under the social cohesion activities, the initiatives of the Altındağ municipality could be analyzed on the ground that plays a facilitator role between the local people and Syrians in such a vague legal framework on the integration.

Additionally, it can be argued that the Altındağ municipality pays special attention to the cooperation with NGOs actively working for social cohesion in the field. However, when examined the models of cooperation and how the Altındağ municipality included it can be seen that the Altındağ municipality is not leading the cooperation, but involves in the cooperation generally because it has opportunity to reach out wide-range and different participants for the social cohesion activities. It means that the administrative pathology,

ad-hocracy, at national level seemingly also reflected in the approaches of the Altındağ municipality. On the other hand, it should be noted that the initiatives of the Altındağ municipality on the integration of Syrian urban refugees like organizing the schedules of the sports center in a way that both local people and Syrians could use at the same time could serve the spontaneous interactions and cohesion between them, which is another face of the facilitator role played by the Altındağ municipality.

When the Çankaya municipality, other case study, examined in terms of the social cohesion activities and service provision regarding the effort of local integration, its approach is quite important that it does not fully ignore the Syrians in the Çankaya district. Since there is very small numbers of Syrians live in the Çankaya district compared to the Altındağ district, this study has found that the Çankaya municipality does not want to be criticized by the residents and voters in the district in terms of conduction any social cohesion activities for Syrians in the field. Based on this fact, it can be stated that the Çankaya municipality provides Turkish language courses in the Çankaya houses at neighborhood level wherever it is asked by Syrians, but not initiated to organize any separate Turkish language courses only for Syrians. That's because the Çankaya municipality to just let the Syrians, if they wish, to participate in the courses that have already been designed for other foreigners in Ankara. Additionally, this study findings have emerged that the Çankaya municipality is having distance to the social cohesion activities because of two reasons: i) the hesitation that if the local people oppose it, ii) the abstentions coming from the RPP, currently governing the Çankaya municipality.

This study has also discovered that there is an individual efforts in the Çankaya municipality to be engaged in social cohesion activities aiming to facilitate the interactions between local people and the Syrians in the district. In doing so, it has appeared that the Çankaya municipality provides some logistical supports for specific and individual events if there is any request by the NGOs in Ankara. This approach seemingly has a similar pattern that the Altındağ municipality sees the cooperation with the NGOs; not initiated but involved in the cooperation somehow.

Considering the service provision dimension of the local integration efforts of two municipalities, this study findings revealed that the Altındağ municipality is having much burden than the Çankaya municipality because the ratio of Syrians to the local population

in the Altındağ district is %12,62 while this ratio is %0,43 in the Çankaya district. Based on this fact, it can be argued that the lack of fair refugee distribution mechanism in Turkey create asymmetric burden sharing between the districts in the same city, and put the burdensome only to some municipalities. Besides this challenge, this study has discovered that the Altındağ municipality is taking initiatives while interpreting the legislation (Article 13 and 14 of the Municipality Law) and sees the Syrians with low income who stays in the same neighborhood with Turkish people so that the distribution of aids and service provision for Syrians justified.

Even if it looks like justifiable on the paper, it can be argued that without any fixed legal framework it could pose a fiscal challenge in the future for the Altındağ municipality. It has been also revealed that the demands of the local population that not sharing the limited resources allocated by the central government from the pool that consist of the taxes of local people appear to affect the aid provision time and manner of the Altındağ municipality, which has been discovered during this research that the Altındağ municipality sometimes distribute aids for Syrians with a vehicle does not have the municipality logo at nights so that the local people cannot detect the municipality gives aid to the Syrians. So, it can be argued that taking initiative is not a sustainable solution for the Altındağ municipality unless there will be a fair distribution mechanism and extra budgets in accordance with the ratio of the Syrians to the local population as a result of the distribution.

On the other hand, the approach of the Çankaya municipality in terms of the service and aid provision is different than the Altındağ municipality. While the Altındağ municipality is taking initiatives based on the Article 13 and 14 of the Municipality Law so that aids to distribute for the Syrians living in the district, the Çankaya municipality prefers to be in the safe side legally. So, not to have a fiscal problem in the audits of the Court of Account, the Çankaya municipality has prepared a binding regulation to use while even providing aids for the local people. Based on the evidences that there is no room for Syrians in that regulation and in the strategic plan of the Çankaya municipality, it can be argued that the Çankaya municipality is prone to be ignoring the Syrians in the district even if there are some social cohesion aiming events organized and hosted by the Çankaya municipality in cooperation with the ASAM and UNICEF.

In conclusion, it can be argued that common findings have emerged both as a result of this study and also the previous local integration studies that the local turn in the integration studies is inevitable and the interplay between the local and central government is an important factor that should be considered while developing a strategy-wise national integration policy. However, this study discovered that individual and not strategically planned integration interventions are generally project-based which means they are not efficient and not serving a permanent solution in the long-term. Lastly, it can be argued that the individual project-based integration governance is inevitable in the Turkish context where there is an intentional policy ad-hocracy at national level.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions for Municipalities

1. What do you understand by the term integration/harmonization?
 - a. Does the municipality have its own definition?
2. How do you see the future in terms of integration of Syrians in Turkey and in your municipal district?
3. Do you frequently communicate with the headmen of the neighborhoods where Syrians are concentrated?
4. What kind of activities do you organize as a municipality to improve social cohesion for Syrians living in your district?
5. Is there any institution that you cooperate with? If so, can you specify?
6. In this context, is there a project or platform that you are involved in and that you find important?
7. Do you think the legal framework is sufficient for the integration of Syrians? How does the current legal framework affect your activities?
8. How is it possible to implement the local integration policies you desire? What obstacles do you have in front of you? What should change? What are the shortcomings?
9. How would you develop a local integration policy and what would you do if there were no obstacles to realizing what you want?
10. Do you think municipalities should be a part of the process of integration of Syrians into society? Why?

Appendix B: Interview Questions for NGOs

1. What do you understand by the term integration/harmonization?
2. Could you tell us about your integration activities in Ankara and what you do?
3. How do you see the future in terms of integration of Syrians in Turkey and both in Altındağ and Çankaya municipal districts?
4. How is your relationship with the municipalities in your district? Do you find the opportunity to work together?
5. Have you had a specific work with the municipalities in Ankara in the field of local integration?
6. Do you think that you have developed enough cooperation as a non-governmental organization both in your relationship with the central government and in your relationship with local governments?
7. How do you think the current legal framework on integration affects the integration of Syrians?
8. Which actor do you find most beneficial to work with to ensure social cohesion?

CURRICULUM VITAE

MEHMET YEĞİN

PERSONAL INFORMATION

EDUCATION

2018 – 2022	Social Sciences University of Ankara, Ankara Institute of Social Sciences/Political Science (MA)
2013 – 2017	Marmara University, İstanbul Department of Political Science and International Relations

WORK EXPERIENCE

2018 – Present	Research Associate at The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV)
2020 – 2022	National Researcher at International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
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2019 – 2019	External Expert at Ministry of Interior (MoI)

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