A Field Study Covering the Situation of Syrian businesses in Istanbul

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Market Assessment about Syrian SMEs in Istanbul

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

SEF: The Syrian Economic Forum
GIZ: The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
BMZ: The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
SMEs: Small and medium-sized enterprises
TOBB: The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The main purpose of this study is to understand the business and investment environment in Istanbul, the needs of businesses there, and to identify the strengths and weaknesses and the challenges. Based on that the study provides recommendations to overcome these challenges, in order to secure the stability of the businesses.

BACKGROUND
Turkey’s first response to the Syrian crisis was focusing on short-term humanitarian aid, and providing free health care and education by issuing a temporary protection card from the Turkish Immigration Service.

As a result of Turkey being unprepared to receive large numbers of people within a short period of time, the labor market has become overloaded and unable to accommodate a large number of Syrian workers who are looking for jobs to meet their daily life needs. The Turkish government began to facilitate the establishment of small and micro enterprises for Syrians by allowing them to carry out their commercial and service activities without the need for legal authorization within a period of three years starting in 2013. This led to many benefits and resulted in reducing unemployment among Syrians and increasing demand for local commodities in Turkey.

After the legal deadline in 2016, local authorities in Turkish cities began demanding Syrian businesses to license and register their activities with the competent local authorities, which placed a new burden on some of these businesses, especially small ones such as retail stores and some professional crafts such as barbers and blacksmiths. As a result, many business owners closed their projects because they could not afford to license their businesses, or they don’t fully understand the laws governing business in Turkey because of the language barrier as well as the different laws and regulations between the investment environment in Turkey and in Syria.

Believing that the creation of new jobs is one of the strongest ways to promote economic and social stability and that SMEs are the key to achieving this, the Syrian Economic Forum (SEF), with the support of The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in Gaziantep worked on understanding the legal and legislative environment in Turkey, and to provide financial grants for the purpose of legally licensing their businesses in Turkey by issuing a tax bill for their business, registering them in a commercial or a professional chamber, issuing a work permit to the owner, and finally helping them obtain a municipal license. Indeed, the Syrian Economic Forum has succeeded in helping 309 Syrian small and micro projects in Gaziantep to get a legal license for their businesses and understand the legal environment in Turkey through the “Ruhsatim 1 and Ruhsatim 2” projects.

While Istanbul is considered the city that hosted Syrians more than all other cities in Turkey, according to the figures of the Turkish Immigration Service, and biggest incubator for Syrian commercial activities, both formal and informal, according to the figures of The Union of Chambers and Commodity
Exchanges of Turkey “TOBB” The reality of the Syrian business in Istanbul, and the possibility of assisting them, through the launch of a “Register project” Ruhsatim to help all the Syrian businesses. In order to understand this reality, it was necessary to communicate directly with the Syrian business owners in Istanbul in all its regions and thus conduct a comprehensive field study that gives the real picture of the challenges and difficulties faced by these businesses and their vision of the future to be able to find ways to help them and stand by them.

This study is a continuation of the market assessment carried out by the Syrian Economic Forum team, which included questionnaires distributed among formal or informal Syrian businesses, a series of interviews and dialogue sessions with a group of Syrian entrepreneurs, and interviews with most of the municipalities in Istanbul. Hoping to be able to determine the weaknesses and strengths of Syrian businesses, understand their requirements, and know the challenges they face as foreign entrepreneurs in Turkey and thus ensure the stability and sustainability of these investments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been more than seven years since the beginning of the crisis in Syria. During this period Turkey has hosted the largest number of Syrians fleeing war, where it has so far received more than 3.5 million Syrian. More than 90% of these people live outside refugee camps in urban areas and cities. The largest concentration of Syrians is in Istanbul, followed by some southern cities such as Gaziantep and Killis.

Since Istanbul receives more than 550,000 Syrians or about 15% of the total number of Syrians residing in Turkey, the volume of Syrian business is the largest in comparison with the rest of Turkish cities.

In the city of Istanbul, the Syrian business varies in terms of its legality to licensed official businesses and informal activities that operate illegally and within a small geographical area compared to those that are licensed. As for licensed Syrian businesses, the trade and restaurants are the dominating sectors, while handicrafts dominated Syrian unlicensed businesses.

In light of these facts, a thorough study was needed to define the Syrian business environment in a more precise manner in order to identify the challenges that these businesses face in order to be able to expand and develop, as well as the reasons that led to a large part of activities to take place without a legal cover that protects their rights, making it difficult for them to enter the Turkish market.

After interviewing more than 700 Syrian trade points in Istanbul, we noticed that most Syrian informal activities are small and micro projects. These activities started with small capital but with great experience acquired by their owners through their work in their home country Syria, these experiences helped owners to stand up to competitors who have greater financial capabilities and legal expertise, but the owners know perfectly well that they will be able to hold up their businesses for long, especially that their work is illegal and therefore subject to close at any moment, but their
aspirations for the future is great, as more than 58% of them believe that their future and their children will be in Turkey, but need a little support for their business license and having a legal frame as well as legal guidance to explain all their obligations and legal rights.

Therefore, we can say that the weakness of financial ability, ignorance of Turkish laws and regulations, inability to pay taxes and monthly obligations, and lack of stability, are all factors and major reasons for these Syrian informal businesses to work without a license or a legal form. Syrian activities are of great importance in the local economy in which they operate, because of offering jobs to a large number of unemployed Syrians. This means that these activities benefit a larger number of their owners. We found that Syrian businesses employ an average of 9.2 people, and some employ Turkish workers in an attempt to enter the Turkish market.

It was noted during the study that there is no real effective communication between the Syrian businesses as well as the absence of any legal body that unites them and brings them together and to make their voices heard to all the concerned parties who are interested in knowing their problems and helping them develop these businesses which will positively affect the Turkish economy.

As the Syrian activities operate within the Turkish economy, they are also affected by external factors such as exchange rate fluctuations, security threats, and economic attacks on Turkey.

We reached several conclusions after the completion of the analytical and theoretical study, the most important of which is organizing awareness campaigns and workshops to target Syrian businesses to explain all Turkish laws and regulations related to practicing their work. Syrian informal businesses must also be supported by entities that have good experiences in licensing their businesses and giving them legal guidance to avoid any legal implication that may affect their future business. There is also a great need to organize joint meetings between Syrian and Turkish business people and entrepreneurs, to bring together views and benefit from the experiences they have, to be able to establish partnerships between them, but before that it is necessary to unite the word of Syrian businesses and unite them by creating an entity that put them all together.

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

This study examines the reality of Syrian businesses in Turkey in general and Istanbul in particular, and the changes that have taken place since the businesses were established in Turkey in late 2011 until the date of preparation of this study in November 2018.

The study is based on field assessment covering 735 Syrian small or micro projects in Istanbul, it was conducted by asking a questionnaire of 42 qualitative and quantitative questions in different categories and sectors including business information, nature of the business, employment, sales, and access to local markets. The survey also had a special sector that covers the informal businesses that explains the reasons of why they were not licensed, the impact of having an informal frame for the business, the future expectations of the business owners, and the biggest challenges facing
these businesses. The interviews were concentrated in the municipalities of Esenler, Fatih, Esenyrt, Sultan belly, ümraniye, Sultan Gazi, and the municipality of küçükçekmece.

The study also included a series of interviews with Turkish stakeholders and executives in direct contact with such businesses as the municipalities of küçükçekmec, Sultan belly, and Esenyrt. In addition to the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce.

After collecting all the data, they were validated by selecting a random sample of respondents, interviewing them, asking them the second question and comparing them with our initial data to make sure they were correct. After confirming the validity of the data, the data were analyzed statistically and reached statistical results from the questionnaire, this study was conducted based on the results we have reached.

**THE REALITY OF THE SYRIANS IN ISTANBUL:**

The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey reached 3424,000, of which 3093256 live outside the refugee camps and 330,744 live within the refugee camps in Turkey. More than 90% of the Syrians in Turkey live outside the camps, according to the Ministry of internal affairs and the Turkish Immigration Service.

According to these statistics, children aged one to four years are the largest group of Syrians residing in Turkey, and more than 515 thousand, and around a million Syrians who live in Turkey are between the ages of five and 18 years.

The number of Syrians between the ages of 19-70 years is estimated at 1883,000, while Syrian youth aged between 19-24 years exceeded 513 000, while the number of elderly between the ages of 70 and 84 years did not exceed the 26 thousand.

The previous figures show the size of the large labor force that entered Turkey in less than two years, already suffering a relative rise in the unemployment rate of about 10.8%.

The city of Istanbul is the preferred destination for Syrians coming to Turkey, despite the high cost of living compared to the rest of the other states, as well as the geographical distance from Syria, this is due to the increase in the size of the business sector compared with other states in Turkey, and the acceptance of the local community in Istanbul for foreigners, is a tourist city of the first rank and the people of the city are used to see foreigners in their city and deal with them.

Istanbul leads the Turkish states in terms of the number of Syrians in it, according to the figures issued by the Turkish Immigration Service in 2018, as the number of Syrians residing there reached 537,829.

In the same context, Istanbul holds the largest share of Syrian companies in Turkey to exceed the limit of five thousand registered companies out of 7599 companies registered in all the Turkish states, according to figures issued by the Federation of Chambers and TOBB in Turkey.

The Syrians are distributed in all municipalities of Istanbul, but the municipalities of Fateh, Bağcılar,
Sultan Gazi and Esenyurt are the biggest hosts of Syrians, according to a study published by the Union of Municipalities of Marmara, where the Syrians are distributed among various areas of the city according to the following plan:

**DOING BUSINESS IN ISTANBUL:**

Practicing businesses in Istanbul is not different from that of other cities in Turkey in terms of the procedures used in the process of licensing any commercial or service businesses. According to Turkish law, the licensing of any activity begins with getting a tax number from the competent financial department, then registration in one of the chambers of crafts or commerce or industry according to the specialization of the business that would be licensed, and then get a work permit from the Turkish Ministry of Labor, after issuing the work permit an application can be submitted to the competent municipality to complete the licensing process. See figure 1.
The real problem for Syrian entrepreneurs is getting the work permit that allows the business owners to work in Turkey on a regular basis. The time taken by the applicant is not specified. It can be obtained within one month from the date of submission or it should take several months. This problem exists in Istanbul as well as in all other Turkish states.

A large proportion of Syrians consider that the monthly fees to be paid to a work permit holder are relatively high. In fact, the labor permit fees take the highest proportion of the monthly expenses paid by the owner of any licensed business in Turkey to the legal authorities.

As for the differences between Istanbul and the rest of the Turkish cities in terms of practicing business relate to how the host community deals with the business owner. In Istanbul, the interaction between government officials and Syrians is more flexible than in other Turkish cities. The staff is keen to see foreign investors wanting to start a new business in Istanbul, but the dilemma is that the Syrians are considered as foreigners to start small and micro businesses in Turkey. All other foreign investors in Turkey plan to establish medium or large projects, but officials in public departments are not used to a foreigner wanting to establish a barbershop, a butcher shop, or any other profession. This is a real challenge for any Syrian who wishes to license his work because he does not understand the Turkish law, lack of experience of the Turkish employee, who was not previously exposed to a similar situation, and the Turkish law itself didn’t deal with such a situation in great details.

MARKET ASSESSMENT RESULTS:
I. Syrian Business Environment in Istanbul

The features of the Syrian business environment:
Most of the Syrian entrepreneurs in Istanbul have previous experience in establishing enterprises and companies in their home country of Syria, with 89% having their own businesses in Syria, but only 58% have established businesses with similar competencies as their previous business activities, this can be attributed to the difference in business culture as well as the different social and economic environment between Turkey and Syria.

The majority of Syrians residing in Istanbul (56%) carry the temporary protection card issued by the Turkish Immigration Service, while 26% have regular work permits. This gives us an indication of the high rate of irregular employment, given that most Syrians living in Istanbul depend on their own work or they are workers or employees of a Turkish or Syrian institution or company to pay their daily living expenses.

Most Syrian companies operate in the commercial sector, especially in the field of import and export, forming 74% of the total number of the Syrian companies, followed directly by companies operating in the service sector, while the industrial sector does not exceed 5%.
“According to the General Organization for Statistics of Turkey (Foreign Trade Department) in its report issued in May 2018, it reported that export took place for the first time in several states of Turkey, including” Killis “example: export for the first time since 2011, for Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. (with a clear reference that the Syrian companies played a big role in opening up new export markets in Arab countries).

Male owners take over the Syrian projects in Istanbul, with 98% of Syrian enterprises owned by males, while the percentage of businesswomen is only 2% of the Syrian companies in the formal sector in Istanbul.

56% of the Syrian SME projects completed the licensing stages fully, while 28% operate informally, and the reason for the increase in the percentage of Syrian licensed businesses is the desire of the Syrians to get the Turkish nationality. The number of licensed Syrian companies has increased significantly after the Turkish government announced its intention to grant Turkish nationality to Syrians, especially those who have an active business in Turkey, and a large proportion of these businesses work in import and export and therefore cannot carry out their business without a legal license in Turkey.

Syrian companies witnessed remarkable growth during 2018, despite the economic difficulties experienced by the Turkish economy, especially the fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Turkish currency against the US dollar, as 58% of them increased business in 2018 compared to the previous year.

Other studies show that the number of Syrian companies established during 2018 increased by 85% compared to 2017, equivalent to 11.8% of the total number of foreign companies established in Turkey during the same year, which puts the Syrians in the first place in the Arab world as the most foreign nationals that have established companies in Turkey, according to a study by the Center for Economic Policy Research of Turkey (TEPAV) in 2018.
The largest proportion of small Syrian enterprises do not use banking services in their transactions, 58% of them, due to the weakness of the banking system in their home country, “Syria”, which makes them as strangers to a completely new system than what they were used to, and many of them work informally preventing them from benefiting from banking services in Turkey, in addition to some difficulties and restrictions imposed by some private banks in Turkey in the opening and acceptance of opening accounts for Syrians in their banks.

Employment in the Syrian business sector:
Syrian entrepreneurs create many job opportunities. They employ an average of 9.4 people. Most of their employees work in the informal sector and have previous experience both in their home country, Syria and Turkey.

Male workers predominate in Syrian enterprises, as female employment does not account for more than 15% of all activities covered by this report.

Most of the workers have Syrian citizenship, and projects employing Turkish citizens do not exceed 5% of the total number of participants in this report. This is because most of these businesses are owned by individuals or family members, and they absorb large numbers of Syrians seeking jobs. These businesses also provide services similar to the services they provided in Syria, which makes the Syrians more capable of working with their past experiences (eg Syrian bread production).

Syrian business and the host society:
• Most of the small and micro Syrian enterprises participating in the survey belong to Syrians in full. Not more than 5% of joint ownership Syrian-Turkish. A study published by the Turkish Economic Policy Research Center (TEPAV) in 2018 shows that the number of Syrian companies which were established in Turkey during the past seven years is 7599 companies, and more than 16% of these companies with joint capital between Syrians and Turks.

These figures show that the proportion of companies / Syrian - Turkish / increase in the case of companies with a large capital, but in the case of small or micro projects, we find that the proportion of these companies significantly decrease.
Syrian businesses still rely mainly on Syrian customers in particular, and have not yet been able to enter the Turkish market significantly, due to the language barrier, and the view of the host community to the Syrians as foreigners to Turkish society, and providing services and products that are not related to the customs and traditions of the Turkish society, in addition to the fact that a large number of Syrian businesses work informally.

However, 18% of the Syrian projects were able to attract Turkish customers due to several factors including:

1- Lower prices of goods and services offered by Syrian shops compared to the equivalent offered by Turkish shops.
2- Providing some services and products that did not exist before in the Turkish market before.
3- The quality of service provided by the Syrians is a crucial factor to attract more customers to them.

Most businesses are optimistic about their ability to enter the Turkish market more in the coming months, as 93% of them indicated that the proportion of Turkish customers is increasing, and this is a very good indicator for them to ensure stability and the providing of services and products more efficient.

II. Syrian Informal Business in Istanbul

Reasons for not licensing:

Informal activities are defined as a set of commercial or industrial economic activities that are not registered in the official records of the government, they are not subject to the regulating laws, or to the payment of taxes and registration fees, and are far from governmental control.

The reasons for the emergence of informal activities worldwide vary for purposes of tax evasion and fees imposed by the executive authorities in the countries, the spread of unemployment, high rates of poverty, in addition to bureaucracy and the complexity of the laws.

But when we talk about the reality of informal Syrian activities in Istanbul, the story has another side! We cannot explain the spread of the phenomenon of the evasion of licensing in the Syrian business community to the above factors, the case of the Syrian business in Istanbul is very special, because of their sudden transition from an uncontrolled and disorderly society to a more disciplined and structured society, in addition to a rigorous, pre-designed, phased tax system in a highly entrepreneurial society in one of the world’s 20 largest economies. Although Turkish non-official estimates indicate that more than 30% of the Turkish business sector is considered informal!

Therefore, we had to study thoroughly the real reasons that led a large proportion of Syrians to practice their work informally and without any legal license, thus posing the risk of prosecution by
the executive authorities in the municipalities and cities in which they work, and the instability of their work on a continuous basis.

The results of the survey showed a number of reasons why the Syrians do not get a license for their business:

1. Poor financial capacity: Most Syrian businesses are classified as small or micro projects, with very little capital, and their owners rely on their income to meet their monthly obligations of rent and living expenses. Most of them cannot even provide financial reserves to expand their business in the future. A large proportion of these businesses employ many Syrians residing in Istanbul, who rely on their work to earn their daily living. Therefore, most of these businesses cannot afford the legal license. The cost of licensing any project in Turkey is approximately $1000. This amount is great for such businesses, especially handicrafts such as barber, blacksmith, etc., grocery stores, as well as second-hand furniture stores.

2. Inability to pay taxes: The financial benefits of the smallest licensed business in Turkey are equivalent to 1000 Turkish lira per month. This amount is relatively large for some informal Syrian business activities. Given the tax system adopted in Turkey, it is designed and imposed on Commercial activities that offer their services and products to the Turkish community in the region in which they operate, but Syrian businesses have not yet been able to enter Turkish society and depend on Turkish clients as their main customers. Therefore, the Syrian activities will not be able to keep up with their Turkish counterpart with the same income, which leads to the inability to bear the taxes borne by the Turkish counterpart, which is the main danger threatening its sustainability.

3. The feeling of instability: Despite the fact that more than seven years have passed since the coming of a large number of Syrians to Turkey, but many of them consider their stay to be temporary, but in the same time they want to establish and license their businesses, but they can’t guarantee their own future under conditions beyond their control. As the licensing of any business in Turkey is a physical and social obligation, the authorized business owner cannot close his business overnight. There are legal obligations that must be fulfilled for up to six months after the closure, while the Syrian is used to making quick and bold decisions and implementing them in time Short.

4. Ignorance of the Turkish laws and regulations because of the language barrier and the difference between the Turkish business environment and the Syrian business environment in which they were working, which is an obstacle in understanding how they run their business legally after licensing. The ignorance of the laws and regulations expose them to the risks of doing business such as fraud or not benefiting from Government incentives, or paying taxes higher than usual and many cases of misunderstanding of the law.

5. The desire to return to Syria: There is still a group of Syrians who do not want to stay in Turkey, and consider their businesses a temporary situation to earn daily living expenses and will soon expire, they want to return to Syria as soon as possible, and therefore do not care about licensing their work or working legally in Turkey.

6. Access to humanitarian assistance: There are many non-governmental organizations and others that are supporting the Syrians financially or in kind, the most important of which is the Turkish Red
Crescent, which gives a special card to many Syrian families with five members, then transfers a specified amount of money monthly to the card account.
One of the important conditions for obtaining the card is that the beneficiary is unemployed, so if the beneficiary of the card has a work permit for him or work with any other party and issued a work permit of his own, the Red Crescent card will stop automatically.
This applies to most humanitarian aid and financial grants to Syrians living in Turkey. Some Syrians, who benefit from these grants, do not want their work to be licensed so as not to cut off their grants and consider their work a secondary source of income.

Effects of informal businesses on Syrian commercial activities:
Informal Syrian business activities in Istanbul suffer from the negative effects resulting from their illegal licensing and operation, especially those activities which were forced to carry out their activities informally.
Most of these activities can not fully conduct their commercial business, they can not publicly promote their services and products, they are forced to operate in a relatively small geographic space for fear of being prosecuted, and they are not welcome in the Turkish society, especially by Turkish-like activities. The non-compliance with the obligations of the other licensed commercial activities, whether Syrian or Turkish, in addition to the fact that they can not benefit from the incentives and benefits provided by local authorities for licensed business activities.

The future vision of Syrian informal businesses:
Despite the difficulties and challenges facing informal Syrian activities in Turkey, their owners are very optimistic about their future in Turkey, and most of them wish to stay there even if it was safe in their home country of Syria, 56% of them want to stay in Turkey, while 35% can never guess their future.

Those who wish to stay in Turkey certainly want to license their work fully and for a number of reasons, the most important are:

- Ensuring the sustainability of their activities, thereby ensuring their future and the future of their families.
- Avoiding violations by local authorities.
- Many Syrian business owners see that their legal licensing gives them a great chance of obtaining Turkish citizenship in the future.
- Development of products and services provided by Syrian businesses, and the possibility of entering new markets, whether local or international.
- The desire to integrate into the Turkish society and enter the Turkish market, and to achieve equality of rights and duties between the Turkish and Syrian communities, in order to reduce the
gap between them resulting from the preference of one another as a result of working in informal ways that frees the owners from the obligation to pay taxes, but this deprives them of enjoying the benefits and incentives that are provided by local authorities.

III. External Challenges Facing Syrian Businesses in Istanbul

Syrian businesses, like other active businesses in Turkey, face many economic, legal, and social challenges in the course of their activities. These challenges are the result of external circumstances that are not related to the policies or methods of business. Such as:

1. Exchange rate fluctuations of the Turkish lira against foreign currencies, which is one of the most important challenges facing foreign investors in general, and Syrians in particular.
2. The Turkish economy is diversified and depends on the free market principles of non-interference by the State in determining prices as well as supply or demand. Thus, the average prices of products and services in Turkey are determined by the competition between the companies and the institutions that provide them. This is the exact opposite of what was happening in Syria, where the monopoly of products was the permanent status as well as the government's intervention in determining prices and controlling markets as well, so the prices of products and services in Syria are generally stable and unchangeable.

This situation in Turkey is unusual for the Syrian trader or investor, so he has to enter the fierce competition in the Turkish market, and into direct confrontations with merchants and investors from the host country, which has financial capacity that exceed the capacity of Syrian investors.

3. Lack of full understanding of Turkish laws and legislation for Syrians, due to different business environments between Syria and Turkey, and different languages of the two countries.
4. The difficulty of getting the necessary funding, and full access to banking services in Turkey, even if the activities wishing to benefit from banking services were licensed, operating legally, and achieving good profitability!
5. Restricting the movement of Syrians, especially those with temporary protection cards, whether between Turkish cities or outside Turkey. This also applies to licensed and formal Syrian businesses. It also limits the ability of Syrian businesses to expand within Turkey, and not to reach more customers outside Istanbul, thus losing competition in advance with competing for Turkish businesses.
6. High taxes and financial obligations As we mentioned previously, the Syrians came from a country that does not apply the tax system to a large extent and is dominated by tax evasion to a state that relies entirely on tax revenues and chasing evaders, so they consider taxes whatever their amount is a new financial obligation they have not paid before, and therefore consider it a financial loss without considering the substantial benefits that they can benefit from by committing to pay these taxes. The percentage of these businesses is very small and their financial returns are very low for an important reason that they can not reach the Turkish customer, but are still dependent on the Syrian customer.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Organizing awareness media campaigns aimed at informal Syrian activities highlighting the importance of formalizing and the positive impact on their works. It ensures their stability, helps them expand their activities, and facilitates their entry into Turkish society.

The licensed Syrian businesses should also be targeted through providing legal and social advice to them in coordination with the relevant Turkish government agencies to explain the investment environment in Turkey, especially the tax system with its importance and its advantages to the Turkish economy. In order to bridge the knowledge and cultural gap between the Turkish and Syrian communities.

2. Continuing to provide technical and financial support to unregistered Syrian businesses on an ongoing basis, in conjunction with awareness-raising campaigns to highlight the importance of licensing and its impact on the lives of Syrian social and economic business owners.

3. Facilitating the integration of Syrian businesses into Turkish society by overcoming the obstacle of language difference and working to guide them and help them understand the Turkish business environment and the Turkish community.

4. Organizing workshops that bring together Syrian and Turkish businessmen to bring their views closer to each other and work on linking their work in an integrated manner to benefit the two parties and introduce Turkish society to the advantages of Syrian investments in the Turkish economy and society.

5. Increase communication between Syrian business owners and Turkish governmental bodies related to their businesses (such as the KOSGEB Small Business Support Agency, the ISKUR Labor Office, the State Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the offices of development and support agencies, business incubators and technology centers in universities and industrial zones.) To explain the nature of their work in full, and to highlight their importance to the Turkish society and economy, ask for permanent advice from them, and to inquire about the Turkish laws and legislation affecting their work to fully understand, to avoid errors of misunderstanding local laws that could significantly affect their businesses, and benefit from the support, advice, and training provided by these bodies to small and medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurs in Turkey.

6. To increase the chances of Syrians obtaining the necessary financial funding to implement their entrepreneurial ideas by creating a comprehensive platform linking entrepreneurs who wish to get funding to expand their business and among funders who wish to operate their money in a profitable project.

7. Sharing knowledge and connecting local ecosystem leaders with Syrians entrepreneurs is a key importance in terms of building healthy and thriving entrepreneurial communities.

8. To assist Syrian investors in obtaining residence documents for themselves and their family members for 2-3 years; to ensure the stability and expansion of their investments.
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