

On April 25, the first section of Bosphorus Migration Studies Seminars was held in Boğaziçi University South Campus, Albert Long Hall.

Two participants, Selin Ünal, from UNHCR Turkey, and Başak Yavçan, from TOBB University, presented their works on the issue.

The main focus was an insight into Syrian immigrants in the Turkish labor market and universities.



The conference started with Selin Ünal's presentation

Selin Ünal: UNHCR Mission in the Crisis

Ünal started with UNHCR's mission and responsibilities, especially among Syrian refugees both in camps and outside. She underlined that the number has reached over three million of documented refugees.

She showed that there are over 800,000 school-age children but 40% of them cannot access an education program. So, UNHCR conducted several projects to support their reach to primary and secondary education.

The spokesperson also informed the audiences about their efforts to empower employment projects collaborated with İŞKUR, the official organization responsible to increase employment opportunities

Başak Yavçan: Syrians in Turkish Universities

In the second part, Başak Yavçan, assistant professor at TOBB University, gave a general view of the issue. In the presentation, she mentioned a number of researchers that examine the access of Syrians to Turkish universities.



Başak Yavçan's presentation

She highlighted that there are over 200 Syrian academicians in the country. So it should be taken as an opportunity for adaptation policies. It is not possible to say that the all qualified ones want to leave Turkey.

Yavcan then, with contributions of audiences, called attention to certain prejudices about immigrants that are popular among almost all countries that host foreigners: “They stolen our jobs, they tend to be criminals, etc.”

She finally told *adaptation goals* of the government, which should be dealt with again. Since some Syrian families have concerns about the danger of assimilation by intense Turkish courses, these policies need to comprehensive revisions. Yavcan stressed the significant role of NGOs in this regard.



BMS Staff thanked warmly her to accept the invitation



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