Chapter 5
Integration



5.1 Introduction

Strategic temporality permeates the integration experience of Turkey's Syrians in a number of ways. First, given their temporary legal status, there is a grey area between reception and integration, which is highly symbolic of ambiguous inclusion (Kaya & Nagel, 2021). Until recently, there has been no publicly announced national integration policy; instead, there was only a discourse about *uyum* (social harmony) that is not premised on permanent inclusion or equal rights with locals. Further, refugees face liminality in every possible sphere governing long-term settlement, such as in the labour market, education, housing, health and citizenship. Most work informally and experience economic precarity; a third of Syrian children are not in school; refugees must secure their own (often substandard) housing; linguistic and other barriers prevent full health care access, and pathways to citizenship or long-term permanent residence are limited. All of this creates feelings of profound anxiety and uncertainty for refugees as they go about their day-to-day lives.

As we have argued, this context of disintegration (Hinger & Schweitzer, 2020), integration barriers (Federico & Baglioni, 2021) and differential inclusion (Cases-Cortes et al., 2015; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013) are not the outcome of policy gaps or failures but are the direct results of governance based on strategic temporality. Strategic temporality operates in both practice and discourse, meaning that migrants are not on a path to integration as is often imagined in other migration contexts. They are not moving along a spectrum between being fully integrated or wholly unintegrated. Instead, it is more accurate to see their integration experience as one of never-ending liminality or "being between."

In this chapter, we ask: How do those on the ground experience this strategic temporality and respond to it? Specifically, how do local actors negotiate spaces to act in support of integration on local levels? How do migrants respond to their situation of non-belonging and permanent liminality? We show how local-level actors

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and migrants more or less skilfully navigate strategic temporality. Despite difficulties, they demonstrate significant agency to forge (partial) integration.

The first section outlines the experience of strategic temporality in the major integration spheres (labour market, education, housing, health and citizenship). There are numerous studies that delve into each area in depth, so we only highlight the key factors that shape strategic temporality.[1] The next sections zoom in on the local level to examine how local actors and refugees navigate the context of strategic temporality. First, we look at how strategic temporality both results from and creates differentiated integration experiences. There are major differences in engagement in the integration sphere for actors in different regions and municipalities and significant incoherence and service provision overlap in integration programming. Thus, refugees in different locations and contexts have very differentiated experiences, contributing to ambiguity about their positions in society. This differentiation is both an effect of strategic temporality on the level of governance and also how strategic temporality is created on the ground and experienced as uncertainty and insecurity. Rather than clear guidelines, information, methods and pathways, both local actors and also migrants encounter ambiguity and uncertainty in their struggle to integrate.

Next, we take up the issue of agency (Bakewell, 2010; Triandafyllidou, 2017; Mainwaring, 2016). Migrants and non-migrants are not helpless. Migrants actively struggle against strategic temporality by embracing ideas of shared culture and belonging (cultural intimacy) as discussed in Chap. 3; they mobilize social networks and draw on internal resources for self-reliance; they actively make Turkey into a "home", and they participate in local organizations that help themselves and others socially and materially. Many local non-migrant actors also combat the strategic temporality of migrants via integration programmes and other forms of direct assistance. Although it is important to recognize the agency of the many caring people on these local levels, it is also necessary to note that agency is starkly limited and shaped by strategic temporality. There are few actions that can remove refugees' ambiguous social positions completely, but the impact of temporality is lessened, and a somehow partial integration is achieved.

5.2 Strategic Temporality in the Multi-Level Governance of Integration

Strategic temporality is apparent on the level of integration discourse via the widely used term, *uyum*, which is usually translated as "social harmony." *Uyum* literally means harmonization or social cohesion and is preferred because integration has a

[1] Some examples include the following: on employment (AIDA, 2019; ILO, 2020; Kirişçi & Kolasin, 2019); class (Belanger & Saraçoğlu, 2020; Şimşek, 2018); citizenship (Akçapar & Şimsek, 2018; Baban et al., 2017); education (Çelik & İçduygu, 2018); language (Rottmann & Nimer, 2020), gender (Açıkalın et al., 2020; Özden & Ramadan, 2019; Rottmann & Nimer, 2021).

bad connotation due to Turkey's migration history to Germany. German-Turks were continuously criticized for failing to integrate and disturbing German "leitkultur" (Rottmann, 2019). For this reason, integration and language courses, which are common in Germany and other European countries, were removed as requirements for Turkey's foreigners in the LFIP law drafted in 2013 (Açıkgöz & Arıner, 2014). Whereas integration is viewed as assimilation, *uyum* is perceived to be voluntary. *Uyum* is "felt to have a more innocuous meaning in Turkish and therefore better reflects the aim of the Turkish approach, which is to understand the indigenous-migrant interaction as a dynamic two-way relationship in which migrants are not confined to a passive role regarding issues which relate to them" (Açıkgöz & Ariner, 2014, 22–23).

While social harmony is a laudable integration goal, *uyum* contributes to strategic temporality, not ensuring long-term legal and practical inclusion. Rights are not part of the formulation of social harmony. Rather, the focus is on belonging, which is premised on cultural and religious harmony. Migrants are under pressure to profess their cultural and religious similarities to belong, and is an issue explored below. Viewed concerning migration policies, the temporal dimension of *uyum* and its link to the temporary protection system becomes clearer. For example, the long-term residence permit is often portrayed as a "gift" in the Turkish context. It is not connected to reaching specific integration goals and demonstrating *uyum*. In other words, *uyum* is not foreseen as the outcome of integration efforts to become long-term residents but instead is part and parcel of Turkey's precarious temporary system for Syrians.

Another problem with formulating integration in terms of *uyum* is its lack of specificity. Local actors in the public and NGO sector often told us that they were waiting for a social cohesion policy to be announced by state officials to be sure about what would be the component of *uyum*. For example, a representative from an international humanitarian agency working closely with the government explained,

> We are waiting for the State's Social Harmony Strategy to be published. They should expand the number of social harmony activities. They should strengthen society. And not only the society of people here but also they should strengthen and increase the participation of refugees. Correct information should be transmitted and disinformation reduced. NGOs need to arrange activities with local participation…." (Interview_İstanbul_ 9 November 2018_Bilgi).

Without a national policy, the civil society organization's integration efforts are uncoordinated and limited. In 2020, a national integration strategy prepared with the collaboration of IOM was finally announced. "The Harmonisation Strategy Document- National Action Plan" for 2018–2023 (DGMM, 2020) consists of six comprehensive strategic priorities as well as numerous sub-objectives. The priorities include social *uyum;* awareness building about rights and responsibilities about harmony, education, health, labour market and social support (DGMM, 2020). In the sub-goals of these priorities, there is a strong emphasis on the local level. For example, the first priority, social harmony is to be performed through (1) managing public perceptions and attitudes about migration and immigrants in a way to contribute social harmony; (2) strengthening co-existence and reciprocal dialogues at

local levels; (3) including migrants in consultation and information exchange mechanisms at local levels. Monitoring and assessment of all priorities and objectives are also elaborated by introducing precise indicators in the Strategy Document (DGMM, 2020, 33–51). Nevertheless, how these will be implemented via policy is still an open question.

So far, temporality as a governance strategy for controlling and managing refugee situations is clear in the policies, practices and experiences in the labour market, education, housing, health and citizenship sectors, as will be discussed below. Each sector is in a constant process of transformation, resulting in a high level of policy incoherence, duplication of services and gaps.

Within the labour market area, migrants are relegated to the informal sector, and too low paid, irregular and sometimes dangerous work (AIDA, 2019, 136–137; ILO, 2020; ICG, 2019, 17; Kirişçi & Kolasin, 2019, 3). Syrians with temporary protection status (TPS) were permitted to work under a law governing work permits for migrants (Regulation on Work Permits for Foreigners under Temporary Protection Regulation – Law no. 4817) that were passed in January 2016. However, several barriers are preventing Syrians from receiving permits, including complicated and costly bureaucratic procedures for obtaining work permits (Baban et al., 2017) and reluctance from employers to pay minimum wage and social security insurance (see also, Akgündüz et al., 2015).[2] Before the enactment of Law 8375 in January 2016, which allowed Syrians under temporary protection to have work permits only under certain conditions and with certain restrictions, only 7351 work permits were issued to Syrians. They were mostly issued to those who started a business. Although Turkey has allowed refugees to apply for work permits since January 2016, most cannot overcome the financial and bureaucratic hurdles associated with acquiring a permit and are unsure whether their employers will want to obtain work permits for them because doing so would increase the costs of employing refugees (as employers must pay pensions and other social contributions). As stated in the previous chapter, the other reason for Syrians' reluctance to apply for work permits is that they would lose all in-cash and in-kind aid. The number of Syrians who received work permits in 2019 was around 65,000 (TR24, 2019).

Child labour, exploitation of men and women in the labour market, low salaries, lack of social security, difficult working conditions, lack of formal channels to help migrants find jobs, and lack of official controls in the labour market were repeatedly expressed as problems our interlocutors face in the labour market. Further, refugees' qualifications are often not recognized, their educational backgrounds tend to be undervalued, and they face difficulties entering or returning to university in Turkey.

These comments from a 37-year-old married man married with four children living in Balat, İstanbul, show how migrants struggle with the experience of child labour:

[2] For more information on the labour law, see Turkish Labour Law (2017).

> The children's rights… their rights aren't guaranteed. For example, my sick son worked in a shop, and he used to work a lot, from 7 in the morning till 7 in the evening. He is now sick, but he wanted to work so that he would escape this misery. His boss used to give him 1000 TL, not all of it, though. And once for ten days, he didn't give him any, and it is his right. When it comes to the treatment between the boss and the worker, they do it without lifting their heads. They are exploiting workers, and the salaries are weak. For example, the dollar rose and fell, and that affected their living and their salaries. They don't deal with them accordingly (Interview_İstanbul_ 1 August 2018_Bilgi).

Besides such challenges, one of the predicaments that have made the inclusion of Syrians in the labour market difficult is the differences in the work ethics of Syrians from the locals in Turkey. A 23-year-old married man with a new-born baby residing in Esenyurt, İstanbul,

> Life in Syria at the beginning was much better, we used to live, and thanks to God, we were well. Here, also the same, it's like in Syria, but there we were comfortable enough that there isn't the word "çabuk" [quick] or "Hadi" [come on]. At work, they keep telling us, "çabuk, hadi, hadi, hadi!" even if you just get out for a minute, they would call you in immediately. However, in Syria, we used to have a cigarette on the machine, coffee, tea. I told them here "nefes" [breathe], he said, "Nefes Yok!" [No time for a breath]. "Olmaz!" [Not possible]. I asked him, are we in the military?! If we're in the military, they won't do that. He told me we do it like that here; if you want to work, you work! Otherwise, leave; God be with you! I worked for several people, and it was the same story. In Syria, we used to work comfortably, true it was a low salary, but we lived, and it was sufficient. If it wasn't for the war in Syria, we wouldn't have come here. I wouldn't have come here, and this and that wouldn't have come here, people would have stayed in Syria, nobody would've ever come here. But the war in Syria is the reason for causing that (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi).

The situation of Syrian refugees in the Turkish labour market has a strong gender dimension. Syrian women work as flexible labourers at the workplace and, at the same time, look after their families. They struggle on both ends, i.e., the production and reproduction sides of life. At the workplace, they are the most affected and vulnerable members of the labour market because they are employed with lower wages than men from other nations (Tören, 2018). Syrian female refugees also take responsibility for their children's education and have to struggle with the language barrier and peer violence and discrimination practised against them in school. All of these problems, low working conditions without social security or registration, discrimination, stereotypes, language barriers, violence, prejudices, low-quality housing, and integration problems into society create many barriers for Syrians who may want to access their rights at the workplace. While the Syrian refugee population constitutes a cheap labour force for the Turkish economy, the state has become a factor in creating this situation by neither exercising control nor granting equal rights to Syrian refugees (Tören, 2018).

As other studies have reported (e.g., Şimsek, 2018; AIDA, 2019, 136–138), migrants in our study often described mistreatment in workplaces ranging from dirty and dangerous conditions and low salaries to not receiving their salaries when expected refusal to provide work permits. One young man in İzmir explained, "I looked for a job for a month, then I found one in this coffee house. I am making tea, serving it, and cleaning the place. Here, we are working for long hours with no insurance. I work 12-hour days. The work conditions are difficult here"

(Interview_İzmir_2 August 2018_SRII). Some jobs result in injuries for which migrants have little recourse for compensation.[3] A representative of an international organization based in Şanlıurfa reported, "We encountered cases in which construction workers fell from the building, but they do not have insurance. They are not paid. The employer only gives a small amount of money to silence them" (Interview_Şanlıurfa_27 July 2018_SRII). One woman in İzmir related, "It's very difficult for my husband to find a job. He was injured on a construction job and had to have an operation. He cannot use his hand much now" (Interview_İzmir_31 July 2018_SRII). On many occasions, Syrian children work in unsafe labour conditions like other Syrians and locals in the informal job market, resulting in deadly job incidences.[4] As one interviewed woman from Şanlıurfa explained, her son, who is the main breadwinner at home, faced an incident at a construction site. As he did not have any official insurance, no compensation was given; they only rely on the small monetary help of their former employer and local villagers where they live.

Forced migrants are often paid less than Turks for the same jobs. For instance, one man in İzmir explained to us, "Jobs for which Turks are paid 100 TL are given to Syrians at half the price. It's hard for us. It's very hard to pay the expenses of our children." (Interview_İzmir_14 August 2018_SRII). One of the most persistent complaints that migrants relate to during interviews is not receiving payment on time or sometimes at all. Strategic temporality means that refugees are not able to access their rights to a work permit, payment, insurance and workplace safety. All of these factors lead to extreme anxiety and the inability to securely plan for the future.

Despite all shortcomings in the labour market, a number of refugees found training opportunities offered by NGOs useful. Some of our interlocutors addressed appreciation for the Association of Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM) for giving them training to help them find jobs. A 37-year-old married man with four children living in Balat, İstanbul, shared with us his experience with ASAM:

> In ASAM, they took us to a general health workshop. In ASAM I participated in other workshops too. I also did a computer course, and I took Turkish language courses at ASAM. And I told them they had my number; whenever they have a workshop, they call me, and I participate. I have hobbies and interests. I like designing and making inventions, I have a design, but I didn't find someone who would adopt my design. I have a design I presented in Syria but without results, protecting the environment from pollution, and I have a design for a motor that works without any source of energy. It generates movement without a source of energy, I have the design, of course not complete just a study, a design. And I have interests in weaponry, too (Interview, 1 August 2018, İstanbul, 13_Bilgi).

The field of education integration is relatively better than the area of job market integration. Since 2016, migrants under TPS have been eligible to attend Turkish schools, including universities (AIDA, 2019, 138–140; Kaya, 2020a, 52). For the

[3] For example, see this article pointing to workplace deaths among Syrians in Turkey (Worker Health and Safety Council 2017).

[4] See the news https://www.ihd.org.tr/ankara-sitelerde-cikan-yanginda-5-suriyeli-iscinin-yasamini-yitirmesine-dair-on-gozlem-raporu-2/

2020–2021 academic year, there were 1,197,124 Syrians of schooling age, and 768,839 pupils (64.22% of schooling age Syrian population) were enrolled in schools.[5] The gap between the refugee child population size and the school participation number is particularly high for high school students. Barriers to educational access include a lack of proper registration or prior schooling documents as well as a family's need for the child to work and contribute to the family's support (Gee & Bernstein, 2015). One Syrian man in İzmir related, "I dropped out after high school, but I promised myself that my children would study. But they didn't. We came here with no money, so the children were forced to work. We came to İzmir. We didn't have identity (ID) cards. We faced many difficulties. For this reason alone, I want to go to Europe" (Interview_İzmir_3 August 2018_SRII). The problem of child labour was raised by several interlocutors during interviews.

Another educational challenge for migrants is parental concern about cultural loss and tensions in schools, among children and between children and teachers. Syrian parents struggle to understand and navigate the school system, and they are anxious about maintaining their children's Arabic language abilities. As in previous studies, we found significant limitations in incorporating Syrian refugee children into Turkish schools because the schools have a "monocultural organization and exclusionary institutional habitus" (Çelik & İçduygu, 2018, 254). Prior studies provide evidence that children face discrimination and bullying in schools (AIDA, 2019, 139). We also found tensions among children to be high. For example, one man in Şanlıurfa felt that Turks and Syrians should not be mixed in the same schools because of existing conflicts.

> Syrian children should go to the Turkish national schools, but not mixed with local children. There are problems when Syrians and Turks go to the same schools. There is a crisis. The customs and cultural differences create a reaction and start problems. There is othering. Now, we need to integrate with Turks. We need a roadmap for this that will work with both Turkish and Syrian psychology (Interview_Şanlıurfa_16 August 2018_SRII).

Strategic temporality – manifest in bureaucratic barriers to inclusion and economic precarity of Syrian families – results in problems in accessing education. Even if they enter schools, they face challenges to inclusion from teachers and fellow students, and parents worry about maintaining their children's linguistic heritage. Syrian parents thus experience uncertainty about their children's education, even if their children are in school.

Housing is an important part of the integration of urban refugees. Syrian refugees are responsible for securing their own housing. The average size of a Syrian refugee family is just above five people, with an average of two families in each household. Housing and living costs are higher for Syrian refugees due to abuse by landlords, and rents are generally higher in İstanbul than in other parts of the country, resulting in multiple families living under the same roof. A majority of Syrians navigate their way in Turkey with overwhelmed public services and support systems, coupled with

[5] These figures are taken from the National Ministry of Education and may be found here (MEB, 2019).

a language barrier. Even though many aid agencies are sporadically providing assistance and protection to the refugee population settled in urban areas, urban refugees struggle to secure a minimum of social and economic rights. Many families live in abject poverty, often in unsanitary, even dangerous, housing conditions.

The majority of our interlocutors have tremendous difficulties in finding private housing. The interlocutors repeatedly expressed higher rents, stereotypes, discrimination, racism, and difficult housing conditions. The interviews also demonstrate that informal settlement, such as staying with friends and/or in squats, is also a common practice among Syrians. It is also a common practice, especially in İstanbul, for some landlords to offer their make-shift shops, stores and workshops for rent in a rather more exploitative way. A 50-year-old married man with four children from Deir Ez-Zor residing in Fatih, İstanbul, said the following when he was asked about his housing conditions:

> We have been living in a shop (ground floor "Dükkan") for the last four years. Thank God they know me well. Excuse me, if they found something on me or my family, they wouldn't let us live there because it is their right… I have been settled in my home for four years (Interview, 1 August 2018, Fatih, İstanbul, 15_Bilgi).

Poor housing conditions remain a big problem. It is common for refugee families to live in sub-standard accommodations with poor water, sanitation and hygiene conditions, especially in big cities such as İstanbul and İzmir. MDMT (2019) research shows that water, sanitation and hygiene conditions are poor amongst the Syrian refugee population, and one in five households (20%) does not have access to clean drinking water. Access to clean drinking water greatly varies according to location, and those living in rural areas tend to have less access to clean drinking water (47% do not have access) compared to those in urban settings (13%). This may be explained by their living conditions and dwelling types, which mostly consist of unfinished buildings and tents in informal camps. Cost, financial instability, and the lack of facilities were the most reported barriers to having suitable and safe hygiene conditions. It is also reported that refugee households complain of poor sanitation conditions at the community level. Issues range from the presence of garbage in streets (especially in İstanbul), the presence of rodents and pests, flooding (İzmir Centre), open sewage and open defecation (mostly in İzmir and Şanlıurfa).

Local municipalities, central state actors and local NGOs have expressed their limited capacity to address the housing problem. During the field research, it was only IOM officers in Şanlıurfa who described activities to help Syrians under temporary protection find proper housing conditions. The IOM officer in Şanlıurfa described the work of a shelter team:

> If houses need repairing or reconstruction, they work with Syrians in towns such as Suruç, Akçakale and Siverek. IOM makes an agreement with the landlord and the refugees living in this house in poor conditions. They first do the assessment. They do not make full renovations. It is not on the coverage of the project, rather, they repair if the window glasses are broken, or there are electricity line issues, or toilets are in bad condition if women are not going to go to the toilet outside the house, lighting, bathroom, roof etc. IOM, just this year, repaired around 1000 houses. We first talk with Kaymakamlık [local governorship]. We also repair schools, and we built a washing room, with water and machines, in Siverek and

> Harran at a place allocated by the local municipality. These rooms serve both locals and refugees, and the municipality covers detergent and electricity (Interview_Şanlıurfa_13 July 2018_SRII).

The mass migration of Syrians has radically changed the housing market in Turkey in general. The change has affected not only Syrians but also local populations. Balkan et al. (2018) found that housing rents have exhibited a statistically significant increase following the mass migration of Syrians to Turkey. Contrary to some of the previous findings documented in the literature, they found that the rental price increase mostly comes from high-quality units. Accordingly, the natives who used to reside in low-quality neighbourhoods have now moved into high-quality neighbourhoods, and refugees replaced them. The demand for low-quality dwellings did not change significantly, but high-quality neighbourhoods experienced a sharp surge in demand. As testified by our interlocutors, low-quality houses are now being occupied by Syrians in different parts of the big cities; in return, they are required to pay high prices.

Many migrants express a general feeling of insecurity due to their housing conditions. As one woman in İstanbul explained, "Here, I am staying in a rented house, so at any time, the owner can tell me to leave. Then, how can I find another house to stay in?! But in Syria, we were staying in our own houses. Nobody could tell us to leave. So, it is different" (Interview_İstanbul_16 July 2018_OzU). A 23-year-old married man with a new-born baby in İstanbul related,

> We went around to many houses, and they did not give us any. We kept looking around, and nobody gave us any house for rent. They would tell us Syrians are "pis, pis, pis" [filthy, filthy, filthy], and thank God. Finally, we found a paper written here outside [saying for rent], even the rent is 700 liras [meaning cheap, around 120 Euro]. We even told him we were only four persons, and we had relatives. He said another family lived here before us, and they used to have a lot of relatives and guests and people. If we had guests coming to visit us, should we kick them out? They came for an hour or two, and he said no, it couldn't be possible. We told him, ok, it won't work then. But we needed the house to stay. We were not going to stay on the street, we used to live in a flat down in the basement, and it had mould and rot. It wouldn't work out for the children. We needed to leave that house. We came here and thank God, and they gave us the flat. Every now and then, he would come home and inspect it, see the cleanliness of the house and leaves if there's any dirtiness or something. Thank God… (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi).

Unfortunately, such stories of difficulty finding adequate housing are very common among migrants and reflect the overall growing animosity towards them in the broader society. Since the state takes no role in helping migrants secure quality housing, they must respond as best they can to changing market and societal conditions. As with the labour market sector, they experience strategic temporality in the sense of needing to be totally self-reliant to address their insecurity and being unable to access their rights (in this case, their right to shelter).

As noted in the previous chapter, Syrians are entitled to free healthcare, and they generally speak positively about the healthcare system. However, issues of access remain, including location-based registration requirements, lack of translators, understaffing and sometimes discrimination on the part of medical staff, as also mentioned in Chap. 3 (see also, Cloeters & Osseran, 2019, 14). In addition, the

stratified legal statuses, such as international protection and temporary protection, result in different levels of access to public health-care services for migrants, asylum seekers or refugees based on their fragmented protection statuses (Gökalp-Aras et al., 2021). Access to health care is differentiated not only between local citizens and refugees but also among the refugees and migrants based on their legal status as shaped by their country of origin (Ibid.). One elderly man related,

> May they be blessed! The Turks didn't come up short, but we had the issue of the ID cards, which was a bit troubling. It was our problem here… they produced for us ID cards that are registered in Şanlıurfa …but when we came to İstanbul, we suffered a lot from this issue… Now, I have my wife who got sick or when my daughter got sick or my son, or if we need any medical treatment… We go to the hospital. My brother, they tell us that your ID is registered in Şanlıurfa, we only receive emergency cases that are critical. (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi).

Mental health is an area in urgent need of additional resources. Access to mental health services is free of charge in public hospitals, but without access to translators, many migrants cannot access the services (AIDA, 2019, 72). Many migrants' express sadness and stress in interviews and often claim that they do not know how to find help. For instance, one woman explained, "Sometimes I feel depressed, but what can I do? I don't talk to anyone, and my mother is sick in Syria. We didn't have the feeling of Ramadan here. There is no social life. I feel sad." (Interview, İstanbul, 2018, Bilgi_5). Not surprisingly, many find life in Turkey to be very stressful, which has a negative impact on their psychological well-being. One man in Şanlıurfa explained,

> Due to the financial problems and lack of a proper job fitting my qualifications, we are under stress here. My wife and I are fighting a lot. Although we married for love, we are just living… If there was no psychological and financial pressure, it would be better. Compared to other Arab countries, our conditions are still better. Also, compared to within Syria conditions, we are doing better (Interview_Şanlıurfa_25 July 2018_SRII).

Some refugees claim to be psychologically stressed and in constant fear due to how they are being treated by Turkish neighbours. Specifically, woman interlocutors in Izmir mentioned that the Turkish locals overlook them and think of them as inferior. In Şanlıurfa, only Syrian women working outside of their homes noted bad treatment from locals, while housewives seem to have positive local relations. As İstanbul is a very crowded city with foreigners and tourists, Syrians seem to be more easily invisible compared to those who live in Şanlıurfa and İzmir. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Chap. 3, many prefer living in certain vicinities, such as Fatih or Sultanbeyli where they feel a more cultural affinity.

Although health is by far the best integration sector for Syrians, access barriers remain. As in the education sector, a major problem is bureaucratic barriers and linguistic difficulties. Mental healthcare is a pressing need, with mental health issues resulting from traumatic experiences as well as strategic temporality and its accompanying insecurity. The personal implications of long-term uncertainty about their future and being in-betweenness are felt when we conduct interviews with Syrians, particularly those middle-aged people with children. Additionally, untreated mental health issues further create precarious conditions for migrants.

Citizenship is one of the last stages in local integration, as it appears as a durable solution to the transitional situation of being a refugee. Regarding Turkish citizenship, most migrants claim they want to become citizens. For instance, one man explained, "If they gave me citizenship, I would be honoured to have Turkish citizenship" (Interview_İstanbul_15 August 2018_Bilgi). Citizenship for Turkey's Syrians is related to a need for feelings of safety, access to rights and social acceptance in the host society (Akçapar & Şimsek, 2018). As one migrant in İzmir related, "We do not have citizenship here and no residency permit. What will my kids do in the future? I am concerned about this. Maybe an order will come to force us to return to Syria. Who knows? We are not able to make any plans. There is no stability. We do not know anything about the future… about the future of our kids" (Interview_İzmir_28 July 2018_SRII).

Syrians can obtain citizenship like all other newcomers via a long naturalization process but also have access to citizenship through a policy implemented by the DGMM and announced for the first time in 2016. The Turkish government grants citizenship to Syrians under temporary protection through "exceptional citizenship". According to the Article-12 (exceptions in acquiring Turkish citizenship) of the 2009 Citizenship Law (Law No. 5901)[6] 'those persons who bring into Turkey industrial facilities or have rendered or believed to render an outstanding service in the social or economic arena or in the fields of science, technology, sports, culture or arts' can acquire the citizenship. Turkey has so far issued citizenship to around 150,000 Syrians. In the meantime, according to recent data, there are 94,803 Syrians living in Turkey with residence permits as of June 2021 (Erdoğan et al., 2021, 9).

Granting citizenship to Syrians is one of the more sensitive issues for the Turkish public and for policymakers. In a meeting with journalists in 2016, President Erdoğan referred to the need to grant citizenship to Syrian refugees residing in Turkey, saying: Today, a Turk can go to Germany and become a German citizen; [a Turk] can go to the U.S. and become an American citizen; why can't the same be possible for people living in our country?"[7] This statement brought about a big commotion in Turkey, making Turkish citizens conclude that all Syrians would be granted citizenship immediately. Due to the disturbance of the public in general, Deputy PM Numan Kurtulmuş had to announce that the Ministry of Interior was working on a proposal, implicitly meaning that the government considered granting citizenship only to those with cultural and economic capital:

> Our citizens should be comfortable. We have not yet completed the proposal about granting citizenship to the Syrians. The Ministry of Interior is working on the proposal. There are so many skilled people [among the Syrians] who can make contributions to Turkey. To this effect, we can propose some criteria. When there is nothing concrete, some oppositional groups are trying to create chaos for the sake of opposition; and these groups are gossiping about the uncertain things as if everything is clearly laid out by the government. These are all incorrect. (Sabah, 2016).

[6] See Legislation Online (2009).

[7] For news coverage about President Erdoğan's discourse on the Syrians being granted citizenship, or dual nationality, see *Hurriyet Daily News* (2016).

However, it is still not clear what Turkish state actors mean by granting citizenship. The field research findings indicate that Turkish citizenship is mostly granted to those who are young, educated, skilled, employed, multilingual, Turkish-speaking, and with lower or upper-middle-class background. It is also a common practice to be granted Turkish citizenship through marriage with a Turkish citizen. However, those of Kurdish origin, old age, unemployed, working-class backgrounds and without qualifications are much less likely to be granted citizenship. A middle-class 19-year-old Arabic and English-speaking male working as a translator in the private service sector in İzmir explained his experience of being asked by the local authorities in İzmir whether he wants to be granted Turkish citizenship:

> I did not apply for citizenship, but they called me in my working place for an appointment one day, and they said that I was eligible to be granted citizenship. We went to get it, prepared the documents, and now we are waiting for the Turkish ID cards to come. No one in my family applied, but it was granted to all of us. Maybe because of my father's job. He works in an insurance company. Though he is not a university graduate person, he works in a good company (Interview_İzmir_5 August 2018_SRII).

Another young person from İzmir told a similar story about her experience of being granted Turkish citizenship. This middle-class 24-year-old Arabic, English and Turkish-speaking female working in a migration-related NGO in İzmir said the following:

> First, we got residence permits in İzmir. A year later, we were given ID cards [temporary protection status]. Now, we are Turkish citizens. We were granted citizenship like eight months ago. As my father is a teacher working here, they permit qualified Syrians like teachers, doctors, and engineers to become citizens. My father applied for citizenship, and the whole family became Turkish citizens (İzmir_30 July 2018_SRII).

In Şanlıurfa, 5 out of 22 Syrian interviewees reported that they had recently been granted Turkish citizenship, while 4 additional reported their applications are in process. They are mainly university graduates and those having financial and cultural capital, such as teachers, dentists, engineers, and businessmen. One of them is an old man, but he had pre-war trade relations with the local businessmen in the province, and he transferred his capital in Syria to the same province in the first years of his arrival.

The announcement that Syrians would be able to obtain citizenship was seen as an "important step in the Turkish government's recognition that the settlement of Syrians in Turkey could turn into a long-term and/or permanent settlement" (İçduygu & Şimsek, 2016, 62). Though lauded by most academic commentators, granting citizenship to Syrians has been controversial in local communities. The lack of clear procedures for obtaining citizenship coupled with animosity towards Syrians in local communities leads to feelings of liminality for refugees. They are included in society via TPS but excluded in lacking a clear path to citizenship and access to full rights. As in the other integration sectors, strategic temporality in terms of citizenship is neither a means of fostering integration nor of totally excluding refugees. It keeps them completely "in-between."

5.3 The Local Turn in Integration Governance: Differentiated Negotiation of Strategic Temporality

As scholars have noted, in many contexts, the local level has become the key actor in the integration sphere of migration governance (Kutz & Wolff, 2020; Lowndes & Polat, 2020; Dekker et al., 2015; Kaya & Nagel, 2021). In Turkey, there is wide variation in terms of how the local level is able or willing to respond. Spatial difference is an important factor. We found that integration is smoother for migrants due to shared linguistic and social ties in Şanlıurfa. For example, a representative from the Metropolitan Municipality Migration Centre in Şanlıurfa claimed, "There is a brotherhood feeling in the city. Religion also influences it." (Interview_Şanlıurfa_20 July 2018_SRII). Many meso-level actors in the city referred to the strong historical, cultural and kinship links between Şanlıurfa and the cities of Syria (Şahin Mencütek, 2020).

Besides differences among cities, there are a variety of other integration factors that differ throughout the country. For example, employment opportunities differ in the three cities we studied, with higher rates of unemployment in Şanlıurfa. Adequate housing may be easier to secure in İstanbul rather than in the other two cities. Yet, such issues are not experienced in a uniform manner – migrants with strong social ties and language abilities can find employment and housing in any city. Instead of a uniform experience of being a refugee in Turkey, migrants' experiences are varied based on their location, which is, in turn, varied based on his/her social network ties as well as class.

One of the key integration actors are local municipalities (Betts et al., 2020; Erdoğan, 2017; Genç et al., 2018; Genç & Özdemirkıran Embel, 2019; Kale & Erdoğan, 2019; Lowndes & Polat, 2020; Kaya et al., 2020a, b, c). However, their service provision is very uneven due to uncertainty as to whether municipalities can provide services to non-citizens. Even within İstanbul, "municipal services for refugees dramatically differ from district to district. While some municipalities have developed systems related to the issue, it has been determined that some municipalities have consciously avoided providing services" (Erdoğan, 2017, 77). Not surprisingly, many service gaps can be expected in this context. Some İstanbul municipalities, such as the Sultanbeyli, Şişli and Zeytinburnu Municipalities, have taken the lead in fostering integration by setting up affiliated associations or finding other ways to serve refugee communities within their service provision mandate. One exceptional model of refugee political inclusion is the Sultanbeyli Municipality in İstanbul, which has created refugee councils through their linked migrant association. A representative related in an interview that they "were set up for the purpose of finding solutions to the problems faced by the Syrian refugees living in Sultanbeyli district" (Interview, İstanbul, 2018, OzUMeso_7).[8] Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipality has also actively worked with Syrian community leaders through affiliated NGOs. It particularly seeks faith-based organizations' inclusion if there is a need for mediation between Syrian and local communities (Şahin

[8] For more information about their activities, see: https://multeciler.org.tr/

Mencütek, 2020). Municipalities also provide (or support the provision of) vocational training and job placement services, healthcare, child care, legal aid and social and economic aid to varying degrees.

Municipalities that are not active may be inactive because they fear legal and social repercussions. "It is understood that these municipalities are afraid of the negative reaction of locals/electors, and they are trying to avoid the problem thinking that if they conduct some support programs for refugees, it would encourage more refugees to come and settle in their districts" (Erdoğan, 2017, 77). An additional reason for low service provision to migrants is that the budgets of municipalities may be insufficient because they are determined based on the population of citizens.[9] An interviewee in Şanlıurfa related, "According to the [Research of the Turkish Municipality Association], Şanlıurfa is a city that takes a minimum of national and international funding. When we look at the population-funding ratio, it is inadequate… Although the municipality has a population of 2.5 million, the budget allocated for us is only 1.9 million because Syrians are not counted when calculating the budget" (Interview_Şanlıurfa_20 July 2018_SRII).

The presence of differentiation in terms of both regions and even municipalities within the same city is a result of strategic temporality and the lack of a national, standardized integration policy. Municipal actors do not know what they are allowed to do legally, so decisions are made individually and ad hoc. Migrants, in turn, experience this strategic temporality as not knowing what services they may be entitled to receive and what rights they have. They do not know why parts of the same city differ in their treatment of refugees. Often, they must navigate services with the help of co-nationals or other sympathetic individuals. If they move from one region to another, they may confront a totally different context that they may not understand. All of this produces anxiety and the feeling of only liminal inclusion in their cities.

Within the integration service sphere, there are numerous programmes run by NGOs, but there is no centralized system for reporting activities and needs assessments, meaning that there is a lack of coordination. It is impossible to know how the needs of women, men, children or LGBTQ+ migrants might be getting served (or not) systematically via the various integration programming. There are many programmatic overlaps. One national NGO director related, if two organizations want to do the same project in an area that is technically being coordinated by the UN, the UN doesn't have the authority to tell either what to do to avoid duplication. "If there's money, both organizations are going to do something," he said. "That is why you see a lot of organizations in the same place and none in other places" (Interview_İstanbul_9 October 2018_Bilg, 2018_Oz). For example, programs for refugee children's protection and integration are run by state agencies (e.g., ministries, directorates), local institutions (e.g., municipalities, city councils), IOs (UN agencies), I-NGOs and local implementing NGOs. However, program outcomes are

[9] A UNHCR (2019) report also notes that population increases due to migration are putting pressure on some municipalities: "The increase in demand continues to strain infrastructure and accessibility of services, in particular waste and waste management, public transportation and fire-fighting services" (6).

seriously affected by a lack of coordination and cooperation among these actors, actor hierarchies and short-term earmarked funding. Barriers related to the strategically temporal policy environment and bureaucratic resistance worsen the scene and impede remedies not only for urgent protection risks, such as gender-based violence and child labour, but also for establishing a long-term rights-based perspective (Şahin Mencütek et al., 2021).

Uyum and the meaning of cohesion may be interpreted very differently by different actors, with different targets and strategies implemented to achieve it. Some organizations mainly implement social activities, while others focus on celebrating religious or national holidays and educational programming. Even municipalities do not offer similar services to one another, thereby demonstrating disparate understandings of migrant needs and state expectations. Further, the main target of services often differs. Some organizations focus on women or children, others on all members of a neighbourhood. Men are rarely a focus of targeted programming, even though they have specific unaddressed needs, especially for psychosocial support. Many I/NGO workers related those men seem to not want to participate in their activities either due to their long working hours or to "cultural taboos" against expressing any problems, which might be seen as weaknesses.

In sum, strategic temporality as part of multi-level governance has created policy incoherence and uncertainty about who does what and who has what role. There is no total absence or lack of integration programming but getting access to services or understanding one's rights is a matter of chance, luck, or learning to successfully navigate for individual refugees. Refugees may not know how or why they can or cannot do something or obtain something in a certain place. They can never be sure that a policy or programme will continue over time and that local actors can be relied upon to support them indefinitely. Further, access to resources is never total, always partial, making survival possible but never easy. Given that spatial differentiation doesn't have clearly apparent reasons from a governance level, those who work in this differentiated system face uncertainty too. Even with the best intentions of local actors, there is no guarantee that their programmes will continue. They themselves cannot know what will be expected of them in the future.

5.4 Agency and Navigations of Strategic Temporality

Migrants are thrust into a difficult integration context, where navigating strategic temporality is critical for survival. Navigation implies "agency" or the ability to act within structural and historical conditions (Bakewell, 2010; Triandafyllidou, 2017; Mainwaring, 2016). In situations of strategic temporality, agency is limited by uncertainty and a chronic inability to make long-term plans and be assured of safety, security and autonomy. Instead, actors rely on short-term planning, react to changing circumstances and use ad hoc emergency measures. However, migrants do still manage to challenge their temporality: they perform *uyum* by asserting their cultural and religious similarity; they mobilize social networks and draw on internal

resources for self-reliance; they emplace themselves in their cities and make a home in Turkey, and they form civil society organizations to help themselves and others. Many local non-migrant actors also challenge the strategic temporality of migrants via integration programming, charity, and simple human kindness and aid.

As noted in the previous chapter, migrants often assert that they are culturally and religiously similar to locals as a way of navigating strategic temporality and meeting the terms of *uyum* (Rottmann & Kaya, 2021). For example, a young woman in Şanlıurfa, explained, "Since there are a lot of Arabs and maybe also Muslims, in Şanlıurfa it is always said that, 'we are all Muslims and need to help one another" (Interview_Şanlıurfa_27 July 2018_SRII). Pointing to cultural and religious similarities, shared activities and even professing to become more religious are ways of highlighting *uyum*, which is part and parcel of the regime of strategic temporality.

Migrants are not helpless while navigating strategic temporality. They activate social network connections to secure employment, education and healthcare services and social support. For example, one man in İzmir explained, "The employer at my job is my mother's friend. She helped to employ me here. She is an Arab from Hatay" (Interview_İzmir_5 August 2018_SRII). Another man described coming and finding employment through his former employees: "I came to my friends who used to work with me in Damascus. Immediately I came to work with them on the machine" (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi). Some people mention receiving psychological support from friends and family. One woman described how her husband supports her psychologically when she feels sad. "I love my husband. He loves me. When he sees that I'm sad, he comes right away and cares. I support him the same way. I never needed psychological support" (Interview_İzmir_3 August 2018_SRII). For many people, their children are an immense source of support. In the absence of access to professional mental health care, migrants lean on their families to get positive, supportive resources.

To confront their loneliness and fear, some refugees explained that they developed inner strength. One man explained, "For one year, I didn't leave my house. I did nothing. I thought nothing. I looked and said, 'nothing is worth living for.' I thought everything was bad. But then I slowly started, started new… I realized that sitting at home thinking about nothing means I would have nothing. I decided to start a new life for myself" (Interview_Şanlıurfa_20 July 2018_SRII). Another migrant described how language learning enabled him to form social relations with Turks. He explained, "I was in a students' dormitory, and I was the only Arabic speaker. I didn't know Turkish at all. I was feeling very lonely. Then, when I started to learn Turkish, it was better. I started communicating with people. Nowadays, there is no time to think about depression (laughing)" (Interview_İstanbul_10 August 2018_OzU). Strategic temporality means that there is no formal integration system that migrants can plug themselves into, rather, they achieve more or less integration based on individual efforts. Importantly, these efforts are not possible for all migrants to the same degree. Efforts are successful (or not) depending on the individual migrants' social, cultural and economic capital.

As noted, one major issue for migrants is their sense of instability due to the necessity of living in rented housing, difficulty finding new apartments and dirty and substandard housing. Nevertheless, some migrants manage to make a real home through the purchase of furniture and decorations. They also vividly emplace themselves in their cities through newly opened restaurants, shops and cultural centres. For example, one woman explained how she changed her home decoration to make herself feel more at home. She gave an example during Christmas time in which she hung pictures of herself and her husband at parks and gardens in Turkey (Interview_İstanbul_24 August 2018_Bilgi). When asked about decor changes that have been made, one migrant responded, "Well, many things, for example, all of the home's furniture is new, that is the first thing. The second thing, the dining table that I have is completely different, and the kitchen, because I love the kitchen as well. These simple things that I could bring to the kitchen, those are the things that would bring me happiness and create a new atmosphere in the home" (Interview_İstanbul_27 July 2018_Bilgi). Having new furniture may symbolically signal that one is at home, as many migrants are quite poor and have to rely on furniture donations of second-hand furniture in their first few weeks.

Migrants also spoke very positively about their neighbourhoods. One migrant explained, "Fatih became like our country, Syria. We can't live outside of it" (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi). Another migrant described his neighbourhood as follows:

> I felt it is popular [Sha'biyya; this word could describe a neighbourhood that is lower-class, crowded and could have a positive connotation of familiarity and neighbourliness or a negative connotation of lower-class, slum or disorganization]. I felt myself in Syria because there are many Syrians, Syrians you find them in the street wherever you go. Syrians or Arabs, you find them and feel that you are in Syria. You go to another neighbourhood that is all Turks, you feel that you are a stranger. Like those who travel to Germany, and they go there for example, and they feel themselves are in a different country, in a different area. Here, thankfully, we feel ourselves in our own country. We don't feel estranged. Even the Turks, when you are buying something, he would start to understand you, 'Khamse' [five] he would say it in Arabic, five or ten. In the markets the same thing, you go to the bazaar and ask him, 'how much is that?' He would tell you in Arabic five or ten. Because of that, we are comfortable with life here, in this neighbourhood (Interview_İstanbul_1 August 2018_Bilgi).

As this loving description of his neighbourhood shows, migrants are making comfortable homes in Turkey, despite insecurity and less-than-ideal housing conditions. Despite all hardships, many migrants feel a sense of comfort in Turkey (Kaya & Kıraç, 2016; Kaya, 2017a, b; Rottmann & Kaya, 2021).

Civic and political participation of migrants in Turkey is limited but not absent, with many migrants getting involved in Syrian organizations or non-political Turkish migrant assistance associations (Sunata & Tosun, 2018). Syrians themselves also established several forms of organizations under the labels of forums, cultural centres, cultural houses, community centres, associations and courses. They vary in size, outreach, trajectories and event types. While some Syrian-led organizations provide humanitarian aid to their home country, others assist the Syrian

refugee community within Turkey. A number of them also collaborate with transnational organisations of the Syrian diaspora abroad and seek to represent Syrians on international platforms. Through this civic activism, Syrian refugees in Turkey exercise agency by forming both deliberate and spontaneous collective action, therefore going against common characterisations as passive actors and recipients of aid only. They navigate the conditions they are subject to by creating solutions to their problems, carrying out complementary roles in assisting refugees, alleviating suffering and enhancing coping mechanisms. Although few even seek to invent a space for further empowering refugees through claiming rights or aiming to change the status quo, they are increasingly bound by the rulemaking and monitoring of the central Turkish state (Şahin Mencütek, 2020). Nevertheless, they gradually turn into new actors in migration governance who claim agency and space to act. While many focus on improving their survival conditions and integration pathways in Turkey, a few keep political opposition active. For example, we interviewed a leader of a Syrian opposition association in Şanlıurfa. He said, "We are hopeful. We are making a call to our nation not to lose hope. We are saying that hope is here. We can reconstruct our homeland, our cities. We are first doing cultural activities and publishing a magazine. We are trying to raise awareness for creating a resistant society" (Interview_Şanlıurfa_17 July 2018_SRII). One representative of a Syrian humanitarian aid organization related,

> Only 5% of Syrians know their rights. There is a need for awareness-raising like organizing courses about it. I personally read about refugee rights from Arabic sources, which were translated from original English sources. As an institution, we need to learn about these rights. In this regard, Turkey did not demonstrate successful performance in terms of legal rights awareness. European NGOs are more active in this regard (Interview_Şanlıurfa_18 July 2018_SRII).

Some Syrian organizations could be considered part of local political networks. For example, the Syrian Nour Association undertook activities "together with Fatih municipality, and it also has strong ties with IHH [Humanitarian Relief Foundation – a national NGO] …on account of the efforts of Doctor Mehdi Davut, one of the founders of the association, who previously worked for IHH" (Sunata & Tosun, 2018, 13). There are also a number of Syrian hospital clinics that employ Arabic speaking doctors and offer treatment for a small fee and without asking about legal status" (İçduygu & Şimsek, 2016, 67–68).[10] All of these examples of civic and political associations and Syrians working at clinics assisting their co-nationals show that refugees are not passively accepting precarity and liminality. They are organizing to find places of belonging, to educate, to heal and to support one another.

Local non-migrant actors are also agents of integration. They face a difficult context in which to implement integration programming, but they are not helpless.

[10] For more information on the Syrian Migrant Health Centres, see https://hsgm.saglik.gov.tr/tr/gocsagligi-anasayfa

As noted above, municipal workers and NGO workers run a variety of integration programmes. Even lacking a national integration programme, they forge ahead. There are also many individual locals in communities across Turkey who are embracing and helping Syrian neighbours. Many migrants enthusiastically told us about the charity they received from locals. "We came without anything," one woman explained. "The people around us helped us, the Turkish people; they brought us clothes, furniture, fridges, washing machines… I didn't buy anything" (İstanbul_25 July 2018_OzU). This charity from Turks is remembered very fondly. One woman related how helpful she found her neighbours.

> The Turkish people around my house helped us with the furniture. The owner also was helping us with goods. He kept helping us with stuff for one year… Even though my house is so old, I won't leave it because the people are so good. The owners are so good. They don't help with money nowadays, but they treat us so good. Whenever they hear my kids crying, they come and ask us, 'do you want anything?' Or if they are ill or something, they don't feel disturbed by us. They only try to help us (Ibid.).

Many migrants can provide 1–2 examples of a person who greatly helped them, such as a teacher, landlord, *muhtar* (local political official) or doctor. For example, one Syrian woman said, "The teachers of my daughter would come to my home. They'd stay with me. If there was anything wrong, they'd come. When my son was in the hospital, they didn't leave me. Those are the Turks" (Interview_İstanbul_27 July 2018_Bilgi). One mother from İstanbul explained the difference that caring teachers made in the life of her 8-year-old son:

> The school was so hard on him in the beginning; he didn't accept leaving me at the school door. He was crying a lot and screaming as if I had died, and he was saying goodbye to me. The school's manager and teachers helped in that regard until he got used to things. Especially his teacher (a woman) helped. I wish her all the best. She helped a lot. She always says to him, 'I am your mother, don't worry.' And she stayed with him all the time until he became better adjusted to the school. Also, there was a teacher (a man). Every day when he saw him, he hugged him and said, 'how are you?' So, my son likes the school very much, and he doesn't want to change it (Interview_İstanbul_19 July 2018_OzU).

Some refugees felt welcomed, even warmly embraced by local Turks. Thus, it is clear that both migrants and locals are able to challenge strategic temporality; they find ways to forge connections across the space of "being between".

As mentioned in the previous chapters, envisioning the return of Syrians has been one of the initial components of strategic temporality designed by Turkey's policymakers. As they are primarily the affected party to all of these discourses on return, it is vital to explore Syrians' aspirations and the actors behind their intentions. A recent study, drawing from the quantitative analysis of survey data, notes that

> Many Syrians condition their return on the provision of security, regime change and livelihood opportunities in Syria. However, their integration in Turkey also matters, albeit paradoxically, for return aspirations. Specifically, perceived and experienced discrimination and socio-cultural distance influence aspirations. These emerge as indirect implications of the economic, social and cultural integration. (Kayaoglu et al., 2021)

Hence, the paradoxical outcome of strategic temporality is that integration on the one hand and return on the other are both considerations of Syrian refugees, locals and policymakers. There is not an easy solution to make them fit together.

5.5 Conclusion

Strategic temporality is slippery and hard to pin down – it comes into being via a lack of a coherent national integration policy and the presence of conflicting discourses – making it hard to address. Further, it does not affect all places and actors in the same manner. The resulting differentiation then augments the feeling of liminality for migrants.

This chapter suggests that the starting point for observing strategic temporality in the integration sphere has to be the concept of *uyum*, which is widely used by governance officials in the Turkish context. *Uyum* contributes to strategic temporality by substituting an unspecified social harmony for codified individual rights. Next, by taking a close look at the complexity and uncertainties in policies and practices governing refugees in the labour market, education, housing, health and citizenship sectors, our research shows how temporality operates as a governance strategy. Challenges such as obtaining a work permit or enrolling a child in school keep refugees continuously betwixt and between. Difficulty accessing suitable housing, mental health services and citizenship lead to a state of disintegration and to a sense of differential inclusion rather than to a sense of becoming integrated.

As in research in other contexts, we found that the local level plays a key role in integration governance throughout Turkey, but this does not necessarily reduce uncertainty as refugees navigate spatial differences as well as temporal changes. There are diverse integration approaches in different regions of Turkey and even within municipal districts of major cities. We observe a cycle whereby strategic temporality creates a context in which spatial differences can emerge and these spatial differences in turn contribute to strategic temporality. The result is both service and programme gaps and also duplication of services and programmes.

Yet, against all odds, through a difficult struggle, many refugees do achieve a fragile, tenuous and partial integration. They create social networks, make homes and participate in local organizations that create inclusion for themselves and others. Many local non-migrant actors also assist them in navigating temporariness and finding belonging via a variety of integration programmes. Although this chapter has highlighted moments of agency and "success," strategic temporality should not be viewed as anything other than a very difficult integration context. Even enacting the agency they do have, migrants' starting and ending positions are liminal and ambiguous. They can never fully overcome strategic temporality. The publication of a national integration strategy is potentially a major improvement in the integration situation of Turkey's Syrians. However, unless or until it is implemented in actual policies, integration will remain partial.

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