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# REFREC-TR Project

## Integrating Syrians into Turkish Higher Education through Recognition of Qualifications

Assoc.Prof.Ayselin YILDIZ

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## Project Consortium:

1. Yasar University UNESCO Chair on International Migration
2. Turkish Ministry of Interior, Izmir Provincial Directorate General of Migration Management (Izmir DGMM)
3. Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

Period: December 2017-February 2019

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## AIMS of the Project

- **To develop a comprehensive, functional and tailor-made suggestion of a recognition tool** for Turkish higher education concerning Syrians with documents that needs to be validated and more specifically Syrians without proper documents
- **To publish a comparative research report and a guideline for Turkish higher education system** by conducting an evidence-based academic research on how to better cope and integrate Syrians and prospective refugees into Turkish higher education system.

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- Testing NOKUT's “Qualification's Passport for Refugees” and benefit from the interview technique, recognition experience

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## Training Programme on Recognition Processes

- 22 May, 2017, Istanbul
- 44 participants from universities, policy institutions and NGOs
- Procedures, prospects and challenges on Syrians' access to Turkish higher education



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## TESTING NOKUT'S QUALIFICATIONS PASSPORT

- 11 Syrian candidates were interviewed in 2 days by 3 credential evaluators from NOKUT
- Interviews took place in cooperation with Turkish Red Crescent Sultanbeyli Community Center and Refugees Association
- What we observed? How to contribute to the cases in Turkey?
  - Divergent refugee profile in Turkey (admitted in Syria (not yet enrolled), graduate in Syria, high school diploma?)
  - Need for academic evaluation and assessment of qualifications
  - No problem at all in accessing higher education, procedures are clear and flexible within university's competence area
  - Challenges: Regular attendance, recognition of courses, equivalency of competences
  - The technique is useful for advisory boards at universities for verbal evaluation
  - Companies, civil society might also benefit from the QP in terms of working with refugees.

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## Achievements

- ✓ QP works well in Turkish case as well
- ✓ We need a database as NOKUT has
- ✓ Different context of candidates' profile in Turkey
- ✓ Contributions to NOKUT's QP
- ✓ How Turkey can benefit?
- ✓ New partnerships

## Challenges

- ✧ Reaching candidates and informing them
- ✧ Participation of female candidates
- ✧ Advice for further guidance
- ✧ Translator

Special thanks to Turkish Red Crescent Sultanbeyli Community Center and also Refugees Association


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**Qualifications Passport for Refugees**  
**REFREC-TR No 1<sup>1</sup>**  
**Assessment Part**

Issued: 16.07.2018  
Valid through: 16.07.2023

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Surname: **ÖZKANAN** Given name: **ÖZÜLÜ**  
Date of birth: **15.4.1985** Place of birth: **Damascus, Syria**  
Nationality: **Syria**

**ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS**





Highest achieved qualification: **(2010) Bachelor Degree in Law, University of Damascus, Syria<sup>2</sup>**


**ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM THE APPLICANT**

Language: **Arabic (native speaker); Arabic (language of instruction); English, Turkish (other)**  
Work experience: **2010-2012- Trainee, Law firm in Damascus, Syria<sup>3</sup>**  
Membership in professional organizations: **Member in a bar association in Damascus, Syria, (since 2010)<sup>4</sup>**  
Interview and documentation assessment is conducted by credential evaluators from NOKUT.

Marina MALGINA Head of Refugee Section, NOKUT	Marius JENSEN Credential Evaluator, NOKUT	Kristina AARDAL Credential Evaluator, NOKUT	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Ayşelin YILDIZ Project Coordinator, Yasar University
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<sup>1</sup> The Qualifications Passport for Refugees, issued within the REFREC-TR project is neither a legal document nor replacement for the national recognition schemes, but a statement intended to be of help in connection with applications for employment/internships and studies. The evaluation is based on available documentation and a structured interview with professional credential evaluators.  
<sup>2</sup> Available documentation: Graduation Certificate  
<sup>3</sup> Available documentation: No available documentation  
<sup>4</sup> Available documentation: No available documentation

  
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**The Qualifications Passport for Refugees**  
**REFREC-TR No 1**  
**Explanatory Part**

**About the Project**

The project titled "Integrating Syrians into Turkish Higher Education through Recognition of Qualifications" (REFREC-TR) aims to offer an improved, functional and tailor-made recognition tool for Turkish higher education concerning Syrians with documents that needs to be validated and more specifically Syrians without proper documents. As one of the project activities, NOKUT's Qualifications Passport for Refugees is tested in Turkey. The project is implemented as part of the Grant scheme of the HOPES project funded by the European Union's Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis, the "Madad Fund" and implemented by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) together with the British Council, Campus France and Nuffic.

The contents of this document and are the sole responsibility of Yasar University and NOKUT as part of the testing phase of the project and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the EU, nor the HOPES consortium and partners.

**The Qualifications Passport for Refugees**

**What is it?**

The document explains the qualifications a refugee is likely to have based on the available evidence. Although this document does not constitute a formal recognition act, it summarizes and presents available information on the applicant's educational level, work experience and language proficiency. The evaluation methodology is a combination of an assessment of available documentation, the considerable experience gained through previous evaluations and the use of a structured interview. Thus, the document provides credible information that can be relevant in connection with applications for employment, internships, qualification courses and admission to studies.

**Who is it for?**





"The Qualifications Passport for Refugees" is issued to refugees who claim to have completed or partially completed studies at the level of upper secondary school and above, including qualifications for which there is insufficient or missing documentation. The aim is that it will help applicants continue further studies, improve their language proficiency, apply for formal recognition or authorization or find employment.

**What is it not?**

Qualifications Passport for Refugees is not:

- a formal recognition / statement / decision
- a substitute for identification or educational documentation;
- a substitute for regular recognition statements/authorization issued by the national recognition authorities;
- an automatic system that guarantees admission to studies or employment.

**Period of validity** - The Qualifications Passport for Refugees is valid for five years from the date of issue

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## Interviews conducted: Good Practices

- Gaziantep University
- Mersin University
- Cukurova University
- Koc University
- INGEV (HOPES Project)

**! Not a good practice due to administrative approach: Bilgi University**

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## INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

COMPARATIVE COUNTRY CASES

**WORKSHOP**  
5th December 2018  
Yasar University  
Senate Room



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Report:

# REFUGEE STUDENTS IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION: COMPARATIVE COUNTRY CASES

(Germany, Netherlands,  
Norway, Spain, United  
Kingdom, Turkey)



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## TEŞEKKÜRLER

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